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Y'a Bon les blancs
(Um, Good, De White Folks)
(FRENCH-SPANISH-ITALIAN)

A Gaumont release of a Camera One/JMS Films/Cia Iberoamericana de TV (Madrid)/-23 Giugno (Rome) coproduction. Executive producer, Andres Vicente Gomez. Produced by Armand Barbault. Directed by Marco Ferreri. Screenplay, Ferreri, Rafael Azcona, with Evelynne Pieller, Cheick Doukouré; camera (Eastmancolor), Angel Luis Fernandez; editor, Ruggero Mastroianni; music, Guy Eyoun, Armand Antonio-Tamba Kyata, Jacob Diboum, Alejandro Castillo, Cisse Fode, the Tissinitg group; sound, Jean-Pierre Ruh; art direction, Ferreri, Fernando Rosales Sanchez; production managers, Jesus Maria Lopez Patino, Abderrahmane Khayat. Reviewed at the Gaumont Colisée cinema, Paris, Jan. 24, 1988. Running time: 100 MIN.

Nadia	Maruschka Detmers
Michel	Michele Placido
Diego Ramirez	Juan Diego
Father Jean-Marie	Michel Piccoli
Peter	Jean-François Stevenin

Paris — Marco Ferreri, the European cinema's erstwhile scandal-monger, turns his satiric sights on European relief organizations for Third World trouble spots, but "Y'a Bon les blancs" has as much shock impact as spitballs on an elephant. This Franco-Spanish-Italian coprod marks another step down in Ferreri's reputation as provocateur and filmmaker and will be a hard sell in overseas markets.

Humanitarian aid operations have been the subject of much hot discussion and debate and are juicy targets for satire. But Ferreri shoots wide of the mark with a script that makes facile fun of well-meaning nincompoops rather than take apart the socio-political ambiguities of the theme.

Script follows the misadventures of a motley band of Europeans who are bringing a convoy of foodstuffs (spaghetti, tomato sauce and powdered milk) to a famine zone in North Africa's Sahel region.

Sidetracked by corrupt local officials and fleeced by a resort hotel manager, the 5-truck expedition soon is lost in the desert, where it runs the gauntlet of sundry guerrillas and mad tribal chieftains, not to mention an occasional African who has lived in France but has returned home.

Ferreri feebly tries to revive memories of his "La Grande bouffe" in a macabre climax in which costars Maruschka Detmers and Michele Placido decide to quit the convoy and are eaten by a tribe of nomads, infuriated that the whites have polluted their oasis water hole.

Rather than enforce Ferreri's message that Europeans have no business being in Africa and that in any case the latter couldn't care less for their aid, the cannibal twist merely deflects attention from the central theme. Ferreri doesn't show us what happens to the food when the convoy reaches its (offscreen) destination.

Detmers and Placido are listless as two Europeans along for the ride for the wrong reasons, while Michel Piccoli makes a disappointing guest star turn as a disgusted missionary who only wants to go home. Juan Diego fares a little better as the fumbling expedition leader.

Script and cast are disserved by Ferreri's limp direction, which lacks the aggressive vitality of effective satire. Tech credits are mediocre. Pic was shot on location in Tunisia.

—Len.