

By Sister Christine

I arrived at the girls' hostel of the University of Khartoum about 8:30 p.m. Darkness had just settled over the city of Khartoum, and the heat of the day could still be felt in the air. One of the assistant registrars of the University drove me from the airport to the hostel, and carried my luggage inside the gate.

EVERYTHING looked so different to me—that is, the structure of the dormitory with wide terraces and balconies, the abundant green foliage and the pleasant sweet aroma of yasmeeen (jasmine) which filled the air.

I was taken to a single house with a very large terrace and told that I was to meet the girls' warden (house mother). I was full of excitement, and as I waited, I could hear the chattering and the laughing of the girls in their quarters.

I thought to myself, finally I am in Africa, among my own black people with a scholarship awarded to me by the black government of the Sudan — independent of the white man—to study in a black university staffed with black professors and instructors.

I TOLD myself, here I will be able to be educated without hinderances of race and color prejudices. I stood waiting in all anticipation to meet the house mother.

All of my happy emotions of excitement and joy left me when I saw her. I am sure that this was evident to her, for the smile on my face faded when she came into view.

An old white English woman with grey and white hair hobbled out, grumbling and muttering to herself. As she approached me, she asked in a stiff voice what could she

do for me. I was really baffled. I never expected a white woman to be in a black university as a house mother over black students.

RESENTMENT rose in me and I felt hostile to her, for I thought that I had left the white oppressors in America. I explained briefly my being from America, with a scholarship from the Sudanese government.

She rudely asked the registrar what he was doing there. She did not know that he was the assistant registrar. (I found later that she seldom distinguished one black from another).

He was a dark man of small stature and she mistook him to be a male student at the university. He told her who he was, but she never listened to him and told him to leave with her cold, rough voice. He told me that he would be seeing me in the near future and if I needed anything to contact him.

THE OLD English woman began calling for "Sit-Ruth," and continued muttering to herself. Soon an elderly black woman in a long dress and tavra (headscarf) appeared—Sit-Ruth.

Sit-Ruth and I stood before this English woman while she fussed about where she would put me. She complained about not having enough beds and facilities for the black students, not to think of providing for blacks from America. She told me that she did not have a bed for me.

She spoke in a very hostile manner. I asked if she was serious—that after I'd come

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Begins Story of Life in Girls' Hostel

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all the way from America, there was no place for me. She said yes, that she did not know when to expect me and that she had not prepared for me. I experienced a real let-down.

SIT-RUTH, whom I later found to be a Christian, educated in a missionary school, spoke English fluently. She introduced me to some of the girls. I was so happy when I saw them, for many of them looked like the black girls one would see here in America. Their hair varied in degrees of curliness as does the so-called American Negroes. They were all speaking in Arabic, and made me feel so welcomed.

They got food and hot milk for me. They assumed that I was Sudanese, and did not speak much, because I was

lonesome for my family and shy among strangers. They were surprised when they found that I could not respond to their questions in Arabic. The fact that I only spoke English was a real jolt to them.

They could not imagine one who looked like them born and living in America. They kept saying, "but she looks like one of us." I told them that there were millions in America who looked like them. They were fascinated. They had met only whites from America, and had seen only few blacks in roles of servitude in American motion pictures.

THEY HAD been taught a brief synopsis of the American history, but naturally that of the American so-called Negro was passed over briefly.

Being educated by the devil on their own land, they were kept ignorant of us here in the wilderness of North America, as we were kept in ignorance of them in Africa. Had it not been for

Allah, Who came in the Person of Master Fard Muhammad, to Whom all praises are due, raising up from amongst us a leader and teacher to bring out the true history of the Black man and make it available to us all, a large majority of us would still be ignorant to the knowl-

edge of God, ourselves, our true brothers and sisters, and the devil.

JUST THINK for a while. Why was a white English Christian woman placed over the Black female students at the university? Why was her helper, Sit-Ruth, a Black Christian?

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