

## Part 2 of Life in a Girls' Hostel at University of Khartoum in Sudan

By Sister Christine

The white English house mother at the University of Khartoum was about 65 years old when I met her. She had never been married, and was very insulted if anyone made the mistake of addressing her as "Mrs." Bryant instead of Miss Bryant. The lone fact that she was white led me to keep a good distance from her and I avoided her whenever I saw her.

**I RESENTED** the fact that she was over the Black girls at the university, and I closely observed her actions towards them.

She permitted the few Copts (Christians) at the university to sit on her terrace, the use of her kitchen, her office and her private telephone whenever they wished. But she always was rude, hostile, and inconsiderate to the Muslim girls.

Often I would find a Sudanese girl crying because of the rude manner of the house mother.

**AS I WAS** passing the house mother's home one day I overheard her speaking to a Sudanese girl. The girl was a third-year student and married. Her husband was away, and she

needed to stay in the girls' hostel in order to be near the university and have easy access to the library.

After hearing the Sudanese girl's request to stay in the hostel, the old white English house mother began shouting that she had no room for her or anyone in the hostel.

In the Sudan, as in Muslim societies in general, the people will never say or think that they have no room for one more person to sleep or eat. This was a shock to the young lady. She tried to explain her case again to the house mother, but the old woman just continued shouting and insulting the student.

**SHE WENT** on to say that perhaps the girl did not understand English, which was really a ridiculous charge, for most of that student's lessons were in English at the university. To say that she did not understand English was really an insult.

The house mother then called her black Christian helper, Sit-Ruth, and told her to explain in Arabic to this Sudanese student that there were no facilities available for her.

Sit-Ruth told the girl in Arabic what Miss Bryant wished her to say.

**THE FACT** that it is disrespectful for a Sudanese to speak in a loud or rough manner to an elderly person kept the girl silent through this ordeal.

The Sudanese girl excused herself and left when Sit-Ruth finished her explanation. Miss Bryant continued to fuss over this matter, calling that girl and all Sudanese in general uncouth, uncivilized, ignorant savages, etc.

Another day I was called to see Miss Bryant about a message which had been left with her for me by a Sudanese family. As she was giving me the message, I folded my arms in front of me. She shouted at me that I was being uncouth. She asked me where my manners were, and did not I know that it was disrespectful for anyone to stand before a superior with arms folded? She kept shouting this over and over.

**I INTERRUPTED** her shouting, raising my voice while doing so, for I did not want to react like the Sudan-

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ese girls, (silent) and not explain myself. I told her that I was not aware of the fact that I had insulted her by folding my arms.

I told her that I was not raised in England and that in America, it was not a gesture of disrespect to fold one's arms in front of adults, superiors or anyone, and that I did so before my parents whom I love. She told me that she had been in New York, and that she never saw any Americans display such disrespectful gestures.

I did not unfold my arms. I said that if I offended her, I was sorry but that in my society this had no bearings of disrespect — and walked away.

**ANOTHER** time, she caught me with both of my hands in my house coat pockets. She again shouted

at me that I had no manners whatsoever, and that she had to change me into the correct way of behaving, i.e. white English mannerisms.

To be continued

## Black Youth Draft Resistance Grows

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member, Jan Bailey, who has received his draft notice. Bailey said:

"The war is inhuman, cruel, disgraceful, iniquitous, evil and stupid. It is a part of a plan to completely eliminate Black people. I will not go."

Mr. Bailey read brief excerpts from a proposed letter to his draft board:

"... I see no place in Uncle Sam's army for this angry Black man. . . . My concern is here within these borders of North America, in the streets and alleys . . ."