

## Why Girls at University of Khartoum 'Struck' Against Rules of House Mother

By Bayyinah Sharrieff

After tea, one afternoon about six girls were in my room at the girls' hostel of the University of Khartoum, Sudan, discussing some of the differences between the American society and the Sudanese society.

I BELIEVE this was just after the publication of an article I had written for a news magazine in the Sudan. This article dealt with my first impressions of the Sudan. These Sudanese sisters were anxious to learn about the Blacks in America. I was asked about some aspect of my people here in America almost daily.

As the sisters and I were discussing the article, etc., Miss Bryant (the white English woman's warden) came in the open door of my room. We were all surprised to see her there for she seldom, if ever, entered a student's room. She asked us, did not we know that she had made a law forbidding girls to visit and gather in another girl's room and that the common (sitting) rooms were for us to socialize? The Sudanese girls were silent.

I spoke out that these girls were not visitors, but students of the university and residents of the hostel; that they were my guests and were visiting me in my room. I tried to compare my room at the hostel to a home, of which I had none, in the Sudan (I just said this to the warden in the way of an excuse, but I knew that every Muslim Sudanese girls' home was open to me).

SHE interrupted by yelling that we had violated her law. She then made the girls leave my room, and threatened to report us for breaking the laws of the hostel. I was furious, but no one protested. After she left my room, the girls and I met on the lawn and discussed what had just happened.

I was reported for break-

ing regulations of the hostel and for encouraging others to break her laws (I was informed later).

The brick wall that she erected to divide the hostel in two sections — as I have mentioned in my previous articles — proved to be a great strain on my Sudanese sisters.

A ROW of rooms in a long building made up part of this wall, and my room was one of these. I had a window opening on this wall. The girls would climb through this window and the other adjacent windows in order to avoid dressing in the tobe (national dress) and going outside of the hostel into the streets to reach the other side of the hostel.

All of this was done to check my relations with the Sudanese girls and attempt to make living in the hostel difficult for all of us who did not bend to Miss Bryant's bidding. She had hopes to make us capitulate to her by putting us under strain.

We got together and after discussing this matter, decided to strike until the wall was brought down or the door in the wall opened to enable us to pass to the other side of the hostel easily.

THE Honorable Elijah Muhammad said the white man always has divided a people and a country — north from south, east from west. One can see evidence of this by just observing our conditions here in America.

In the Sudan, the English divided the north from the south. They did the same in India. In Nigeria, they divided in reality, east from the west and the north. This is the pattern of the white man throughout the world, to divide and rule a people.

Many times a committee of female students would approach Miss Bryant with petitions to unlock the door or remove the wall, but these committees never were suc-

cessful. This being the case, we decided not to eat. This would be the most effective method of persuasion, because the Sudanese cooks would complain of our not eating, the parents of the girls would be notified and they would demand that our wants be met.

WHEN we, the girls on my side of the hostel, did not come to breakfast (9:00-9:30), the girls who did not know of our plan (those who lived on the other side of the hostel) did not eat. We returned to the campus for classes after breakfast time.

The news spread to the male students, who said that they did not know of this stupid and silly act of Miss Bryant and that they would join us in the strike of not eating. They would join us to protest the abuse of their sister students by this old white foreigner.

Before 2:00 p.m. (closing time of the university) came, the girls were notified to come to the administration building for a meeting with the Vice Chancellor (the vice president of the university) concerning the strike.

To be continued

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