

On My Life in the Sudan

By Bayyinah Sharrieff

I was told one morning, while a student at the University of Khartoum, Sudan, that there were three American Black men who had been at the university a few weeks. I wondered why I had not been informed of their presence before this time. Usually, when Black Americans came to the capital city, I was told soon after their arrival.

THE GIRLS at the university told me that no one trusted the three of them. That the attitude and mannerism of the Americans were not in accord with the laws of Islam. The girls said that these men tried to look into their eyes when passing them on the campus, and due to their attitude and mannerisms no one was willing to help them.

I felt sorry for them and I told the girls that I wanted to meet them. My request somehow reached the three young men, for that afternoon at 1:30, after classes, I was taken to meet them at the university gahawa (out door cafe.)

They stood as I approached and the three of them seemed very eager to meet a female. I spoke with them for approximately two hours. I took them to the mugarin (the junction of the Blue and White Niles) where we had cold soft drinks, and sat on the Nile embankment. Only one of the three was an American. The other two were from Ghana. The three of them were students at the University of Accra, who said that they came to the Sudan to practice their Arabic. They were to stay in the Sudan approximately one month, then go to Egypt before returning to Ghana.

THEY TOLD me that they had received a very bad reception in Khartoum. No one came to meet them at the airport. They told me that they took a taxi into the city from the airport, and that they had to wait about two hours when they went to the administration building before they were able to get an audience with the Dean of Men. They had met no females other than myself, and said that they were very much interested in meeting some female Sudanese. The three of them were put into one room.

They did not like the accommo-

dations which they had, nor did they appreciate the cold austerity which the student body gave them in general.

I felt sorry for them and tried to show them the city. I took them to meet with some of the Coptic (Christian) Sudanese families.

They left within three weeks after their arrival. I tried to get some of my female colleagues to meet with these young men, a few of them agreed to meet with them, but when I took them to meet with the young men, they would leave before I could introduce them.

I went to my female Sudanese colleagues and asked them why they treated the visitors to their university in such a terrible way, for the Sudanese hospitality in general is extremely warm. I was told that when the three first came, they spoke only English, but acted as though they understood Arabic. They questioned the students about their government, which was a very tender subject. They came right after the overthrow of the Sudanese military government, in the fall and winter of 1964, which was spirited by the students at the university. They also wanted to know where they could get alcoholic beverages, and they continued to question the whereabouts of the females.

THE SUDANESE did not trust their visitors primarily because they were not Muslims, they were Christians. The type of questions which they asked made the Sudanese suspicious of them and the idea that they were spies for the American government began to spread among the students. Their continuous inquiries after the women of the university made the students erect an invisible wall of protection around the female students and they were not able to pierce this wall.

The Honorable Elijah Muhammad has called to our attention many times that it is the law of nature for each to go to its own, and to keep that one which is not of your own kind out. He has pointed out also many times how the animals in the forest and the birds in the sky all keep to their own.

How can you trust one who does not believe as you believe?

How can you trust that one's decision, in a matter, if that one does not respect your laws? What basis did that one have for his decision? How can you trust him in your home, if you have no basis on which to build this trust?

THIS EPISODE is just to illustrate that the Sudanese do not trust one who does not submit, comply or honor their laws. Islam is the basis on which they build their trust. If one does not submit and comply to the laws of Islam, then that one is not accepted into their society. These are also the teachings of the Honorable Elijah Muhammad, our Leader and Teacher.

OUR MESSENGER, the Honorable Elijah Muhammad quotes to the Muslims from the Holy Quran, "O you who believe, take not the Jews and the Christians for friends. They are the friends of each other. And whoever amongst you takes them for friends he is indeed one of them. Surely Allah guides not the unjust people." (Holy Quran 8:51).

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level that the scientific revolution must take place in developing countries like African countries if they are to break out from the bonds of superstition and tradition."

The results of this approach to the application of science to development has been demonstrated, as reported by *Far East Trade and Development*, April, 1968, "More than 1,200,000 members turned out each day in 1967 in Laioning Province to build irrigation systems. They built 470 small reservoirs and ponds, sunk 1,700 wells, terraced 40,000 acres of hilly land. The level of 8,000 acres of low-lying land has been raised

