

Sudan Students Want to Know About Blacks in U.S.

By Bayyinah Sharrieff

My presence at the University of Khartoum, Sudan brought many inquiries from the students of my Black people in America. The students were very eager to learn about Blacks here in America, and many evenings asked me to tell them about the Black people in America.

AT THAT time I was not really acquainted with Muhammad Speaks newspaper, but I had read on the history of the American so-called Negro from works by the late A. J. Rogers.

I had also had the honor of studying under the late Dr. Leo Hansberry on the history of the Black man, and therefore gave an account of our life during the times of shackled slavery to the present bounds of economic and social slavery of the so-called American Negro.

With the exception of the brief outlines of the triangular trade of molasses, rum, and slaves (dealt primarily by the Europeans, with West Africa, and the West Indies) mentioned in the world history books, no other books on this subject were available to the general public or to the average university student.

I WAS often asked "why do not you be a Muslim and stay here and live with us?" The girls at the hostel listened to my description of the American so-called Negro's history with tears in their eyes when they heard of the brutality under which we suffered.

I was asked many times by my female colleagues, "why do not your people come to the Sudan?"

They told me, "we have a large country which is underpopulated, and we have much room for your people." I was really surprised by their request, and I tried to answer as best I could, explaining the moral, and general habitudes and customs of our people, which would prevent them from being accepted in the Islamic Sudanese society.

KNOWING how their men and women do not speak, in public, to those who are not in their families, I could not imagine these two different cultures (American-Christian, and Sudanese-Muslim) mixing and existing in peace and harmony. I tried to explain to them the diffi-

culties involved by citing one simple example where an American so-called Negro might drive up in a red convertible sport car along side of a Sudanese Muslim girl and say "hey baby, what's happening."

They were amazed at this example, and thought that I was exaggerating, especially when I labeled this as being a "typical" example. I told them that our people as a whole could not fit into their society unless they went through a total recivilization training.

The young male students said that if the American so-called Negro accepted Islam, and became Muslims, their adjustment to the Sudanese Muslim society would be much easier. I reminded them of how I (being one of America) had to be checked constantly when I first went there, and had to adjust to their way of life of; speaking softly, not wearing perfumes to the university, not gazing into the eyes of the male students, etc., or leave my scholarship to the university.

THEY WERE dismayed at these problems. They said that they wanted to help our people, but then they had to focus their attention on their own to help develop their country.

They questioned me on the Honorable Elijah Muhammad, but at that time I knew nothing of the Honorable Elijah Muhammad, except that he was the Leader and Teacher of the "Black Muslims" in America. (Please keep in mind that these were university students).

Having now accepted my "natural religion" (as stated in the Holy Qur-an) and having come into the knowledge of myself and my God, Whose proper Name is Allah, and having heard the teachings of the Honorable Elijah Muhammad, I realize the

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DR. HOWARD L. SIMS

Optometrist

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brotherhood which Islam enhances.

THOSE WHO have accepted Islam as a religion are all members of one family. The unity of love in purpose and existence is Islam. One shares that which one has with his family members equally. Islam also outlines the proportions of which one shares his property with his brother.

On reading the history of Muhammad of 1400 years ago one sees that when Muhammad and his followers left Mecca and went to Medina that those of Medina who accepted the religion of Islam divided their property in half with their brother refugees from Mecca.

The Honorable Elijah Muhammad through his deliverance of the teachings of Islam is cleaning our people and civilizing them to the life and laws of a clean divine society—that of Islam. Not to live but to meet with our Brothers and Sisters in Islam on an equal understanding. Islam is not only a belief in the one God.

HIS LAST Messenger, and the history and scriptures of the prophets but also a way of life with rules of government based on Freedom, Justice and Equality.