

## On Life In the Sudan

By BAYYINAH SHARRIEF  
(Continued from Last Week)

On the return trip to Khartoum, Sudan from Atbara, I thought much of how to rid myself of my police escort and slip off of the train without him. Knowing that some of the university officials would be waiting for me at the station in Khartoum, I was afraid to go to that station. I could think of no way except trying to convince the policeman that I had to get off at the station in Khartoum North (one stop before the main station in Khartoum) to go to the house of some of my friends; for this was the weekend and I did not want to be alone in the hostel (dormitory).

I TRIED to reach his sympathies by saying that I was very hurt and upset about the whole affair and that I could not face the university now. I told him that they did not mean for me to be at the university now for this was the end of the week and classes would not be held for another day and most of the students were at home. I told him that once I was back in Khartoum North that I knew my way around and that I had a family there with whom I could stay until classes resumed. I talked a

long time to him, trying to make him feel sorry for me so that I could get away from him. He sympathized with me, and he said that he hoped that everything would be alright.

When we reached Khartoum North, he agreed to let me get off and saw me to a taxi cab, carrying all of my luggage. I was so happy to get away from him. I went to a white American family and complained to them of my treatment and of course seeing some disunity among the Blacks they helped me to criticize the Sudanese and their "rigid Muslim Society." The father of the family was the World Bank representative to the Sudan. He worked within the Ministry of Finance (before the revolution) in the Sudan. I spent that evening at their house and the next day I returned to the university. As I expected there had been someone waiting for me at the station and being that they did not find me they thought that I did not return to the city.

I HAD TO report to the men's warden (who is like a dean or captain over men). He told me that I did not seek the permission from the Dean of the Faculty of Arts (my faculty) to be absent from classes at the university to go on this excavation in Wadi Halfa with the foreign archaeologist and his wife. And that Dr. Shibeka (the Dean) did not know of my intentions to go.

When I questioned their issuing me the free travel warrant to travel second class on a student's ticket, he said that he was under the impression that I would be going during the Id (after Ramadan) holidays. He told me that I would have to make a formal apology to Dr. Shibeka for not seeking his advice and permission.

Dr. Shibeka was the first Sudanese to receive a doctors degree in history. He was criticized by Dr. Adams for being a "contemporary historian" (only interested in the history of the late 1800's—the time when all of the whites and Egyptians associated with the Ottoman Empire were killed or driven out of the Sudan by one who declared himself the Mahdi, declaring a Holy War, and drove the infidels out of the Sudan—to the present). Dr. Adams did not care for Dr. Shibeka.

Now that I am a Muslim, a follower of the Honorable Elijah Muhammad, I can understand that perhaps Dr. Adams felt a bit uneasy being a white Christian among Black Muslims trying to prove that Christianity was there in their land before Islam. He received no assistance from Dr. Shibeka, nor from anyone at the university.

I DID apologize to Dr. Shibeka, and when I did, he told me, "I have no desire to hinder you from learning about the Sudanese people, nor of the Sudan, that is why you are here. In fact I want you to learn much about us; for you are one of us. You are one of our own daughters, you were taken away from us over 300 years ago and now you are back to learn of your home. We cannot allow you to go running around the country with just anyone." He told me that Dr. Adams may not have had good intentions and being so far away from civilization (on an excavation in the desert) I would be at Dr. Adams' mercy.

I learned later that they relayed a telegram to Washington to their Cultural Attache, Dr. Amin, who in turn contacted my parents by telephone and explained this incident to them. My parents were told that it was for my interest that they took me off of the train to Wadi Halfa.

Being a historian, and a Black man, Dr. Shibeka did not want me to take the falsehoods which Dr. Adams (the white man) was trying to prove as truth.

(to be continued)

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