Newport

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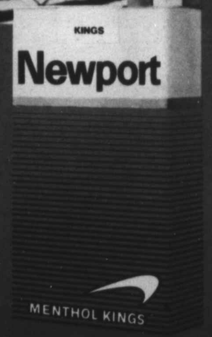
After all, if smoking isn't a pleasure, why bother?



Kings: 17 mg. "tar", 1.2 mg. nicotine av. per cigarette, FTC Report February 1985

SURGEON GENERAL'S WARNING: Cigarette Smoke Contains Carbon Monoxide.

African Americans As Ugly Americans

By Arthur W. Murphy

She was dressed as a Nubian Queen. Her hair braided, her gown of the finest linen. She walked erect. Elegant. Proud. African. She was also an American, Egypt bound to visit the land of the pyramids and to discover her African heritage.

She had worked hard to learn as much about her African history as possible. She had changed her name to reflect her new awareness. She was making great strides to eliminate the vestiges of her slave history.

She and about one thousand Americans of African descent had traveled thousands of miles to Egypt to learn more about the link between us and the ancient Africans.

We also received a thorough contemporary cultural education.

En route to Egypt, we had been standing in line for about an hour in the airport outside Aman, Jordan waiting for our required transit visas. Just as the immigration officials signaled that it was time for us to be processed, a Jordanian rushed to the front to be served first.

Enraged, the Nubian Queen pushed the man aside and insisted on being served first. As she was first in line and had waited for over an hour; it seemed to be a reasonable demand.

It was not. We were in Jordan. A Moslem nation. A nation where women are routinely placed in subservient positions. Traditionally, this treatment is accepted without argument and until very recently, without discussion. It is a part of the social contract.

Neither the immigration official, nor the Jordanian traveler, nor the airport security police agreed with our American Nubian queen. She had to wait — line or no line. This man was in a hurry and he was going to be served first — as it should be.

Many of us who had traveled in this part of the world tried, with moderate success, to calm her down. We explained we were in a different country, with a different culture, and if we were to complete our stay without incident, we would have to bend with the local wind.

Egypt is an African nation with a 10,000 year African past. It is rare to find anyone who remotely resembles "Ten Commandments" film star Yul Brenner or "Anthony & Cleopatra" actress Elizabeth Taylor.

In the summer, the temperatures go as high as 110 degrees. Even then, the women wear several layers of clothing. The women who are married generally wear black every day.

These two mid-western Americans were able to buy a complete linen, cotton and silk ensemble for less than $30 each. Here, they wear the galabia of women who are betrothed.

She reluctantly agreed. This was just the first of the many adjustments she had to make.

But to single out black women would be unfair.

A group of young black men purchased a bottle of expensive scotch at the airport's duty-free store. They left the store, opened the bottle in the middle of the airport lobby and began drinking from it using paper cups.

It was for us a familiar American urban street scene. It was then and is now considered criminal behavior in much of the Moslem world for anyone to drink in public. In some Arab states, drinking is prohibited entirely.

An armed Jordanian guard approached the men and directed them to stop drinking, and to pour the beverage down the sink. After initially resisting disposing of their $50 bottle of scotch, they complied, eyeing closely the rather large machine gun draped along the soldier's shoulder.

They had no idea that the gun was the least of their concerns. They could have

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