

First official interview with the Supreme Minister

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M.S.: I understand that all your brothers and sisters have pledged to your leadership. Is it true that one of your younger brothers, Dr. Akbar Muhammad, of Vanderbilt College in Nashville, Tenn., is not considered in good standing by the Nation of Islam?

Is it also true that Dr. Akbar Muhammad has a great deal of knowledge in Islamic laws and history and speaks Arabic fluently? And could he be of assistance to the Nation of Islam?

SUPREME MIN.: For the first part of the question, I would not like to use the expression, "not in good standing." I choose not to use this expression because he has pledged his allegiance, just as did all the other members of the immediate Family, members in leadership, and the general body of believers.

As for his background as an Islamic and Arabic scholar, it is well known among the members of the Family and the National leadership that Akbar's command of the Arabic language is on a level with that of the best Arab scholars.

I have already discussed with Akbar his resources and his worth in the Nation of Islam and the need for whatever he is willing to contribute. He has assured me that he will answer our call whenever it is made, though he is occupied at present as professor over Black Studies at Vanderbilt College in Nashville, Tenn.

All of my brothers and sisters have pledged their allegiance to this office, to me and to this leadership.

M.S.: Minister Wallace, have you held council with your Father's top ministers on their continued support for the Nation of Islam under your leadership?

SUPREME MIN.: It is not

"Whom do you consider as your most important aide?"

Supreme Minister: "Those who have truth in their hearts and love in their hearts for that truth and the willingness to sacrifice for that truth, the true believers."

well known, but a great majority of the top ministers of the Honorable Elijah Muhammad were expecting me to come into this leadership. I was busy arranging my personal affairs, and at the same time, they were busy arranging to come to me for consultation.

M.S.: Do you expect to have a meeting with them in the near future to discuss your future goals and immediate goals for the Nation of Islam?

SUPREME MIN.: Immediately, I called a meeting of the ministers upon the passing of the Honorable Elijah Muhammad, our great Leader — may the peace of Allah be upon Him — at the

close of our annual convention. I again called a meeting of the National figures and the Family members, that is, the immediate Family. We all sat down in council together.

M.S.: Supreme Minister Wallace, when do you plan to have your first official press conference as the new leader of the Nation of Islam? Or have you considered the subject?

SUPREME MIN.: I have considered the subject, but as of now, I cannot give any date for such conference.

M.S.: Could you elaborate on some of your short-term and future goals for the Nation of Islam and the Black community? Or will this question be considered by you for a future date?

SUPREME MIN.: Certainly, I could elaborate—but I think I would not be fair to the great work-load that the ever-advancing Honorable Elijah Muhammad, may the peace of Allah be upon Him, left with us.

This work-load required that we stay busy in those things that were already in progress under the leadership of the Honorable Elijah Muhammad, may the peace of Allah be upon Him. It would be improper at this time to talk of future plans under my personal direction.

M.S.: It is understood that the Honorable Elijah Muhammad, your Father, stated that the Nation of Islam no longer turned towards the East for leadership. Will this be the prevailing policy or will the Nation seek leadership in the East?

SUPREME MIN.: It is true that the Hon. Elijah Muhammad taught us not to turn to the East for leadership. Turning to the East was symbolic. For the Sun rises in the East and the Sun brings us light to begin our day. This is symbolic of truth coming to the West from the East, but is

also prophesied that the Sun of Truth would rise in the West. The Hon. Elijah Muhammad's leadership and His work is the answer to that prophecy.

No, we do not turn to the East for leadership. The Nation of Islam will not seek leadership in the East.

M.S.: Minister Wallace, due to your answer that we do not seek leadership from the East, we also noted that your Father spoke of the numbers of Muslims on earth. He included the same number that any orthodox Muslim would give for the total number of Muslims on earth, and He considered all Muslims as brothers. He taught His

followers that they were a part of that great, vast body.

How is it that He taught this on the one hand, and on the other hand, He did not have white Muslims or foreign Muslims in His meetings? Still He considered them as being brothers in Islam, to Him and to the Muslims in Islam. Do you care to elaborate on that?

SUPREME MIN.: Yes — the Honorable Elijah Muhammad has referred to or called the Nation of Islam the "baby" Nation. And a baby remains under the private care of its mother until it is strong enough to go out into the broad world of society.

M.S.: What will be your relationship with Orthodox Muslims?

SUPREME MIN.: All Muslims are brothers. Our relationship will be that of one independent community of Muslims with other independent communities of Muslims.

M.S.: Do you have plans to travel throughout America and into foreign countries or remain mostly at your Headquarters here in Chicago?

SUPREME MIN.: I have been to the Holy City Mecca. I have made the Hajji and two Omerahs, that are also Jahhi out of Jahhi season.

My only plans for travel at present are visits to those regions in the membership of the Nation of Islam, the South region, the West region and the East region.

M.S.: What plans do you have for your successor should anything happen to you?

SUPREME MIN.: As God protected the work and leadership of the Honorable Elijah Muhammad, He will do the same for this. It is the same. We are not at this time bothered by this question. When the time comes, it will be made known.

M.S.: We have read that your Father, the Messenger of Allah, may the peace and blessings of Allah be upon Him, has received numerous awards and recognition from non-Muslims and whites. This tells us that your Father was respected as a leader, not only among the Black community, but among white people and high government officials.

In what way are you going to show these people who had so much love and respect for your Father that you are a leader who has respect for the people and leaders whose opinions and religion is different from yours?

SUPREME MIN.: First, I wish to say that the members of the white community have asked my Father to permit

them to be His followers because they sympathize with Him and His great work. They understood the problem and wished to make amends, not for themselves, particularly, but for their people.

There are many other such persons who have not indicated or perhaps have not even wished to become members or followers, but they have expressed their willingness to support the positive work of this office for social reform, etc.

The Honorable Elijah Muhammad treated all of His guests with the greatest respect and concern. Many of them who sat at this table were white. This same respect will be shown.

Also, government officials have paid great tribute to the Honorable Elijah Muhammad, the Nation of Islam and this great work. We honor and cherish their tributes. Mayors of great cities of the United States, Black and white, have paid such tributes.

The governor and the mayor of this city paid such tribute. We make no distinction between those government leaders who paid tribute to the Hon. Elijah Muhammad, the Nation of Islam and His great work.

M.S.: Do the Muslims hate white people? Will they (white people) be able to enter the Muslim Temple or Mosque?

The Honorable Elijah Muhammad has said Himself, and this is on record: "We do not teach hate." As for admission into the membership, this is still a "baby Nation."

M.S.: If the Whites want to support the Nation of Islam's economic program, such as by contributing toward the education and self-help program, how may they do so?

SUPREME MIN.: The contribution from white communities has been received here at the residence now occupied by me, then occupied by my Father, the Honorable Elijah Muhammad, may peace and blessings be upon Him.

They will send their contributions to this Home Office and they may feel free to contact this office for an appointment. We welcome, as did the Honorable Elijah Muhammad, peace be upon Him, all gifts and donations.

M.S.: Do you care to give the address of the Headquarters at present?

SUPREME MIN.: Yes, I do. I would like to give it: This address is 4855 South Woodlawn. All of your contributions, regardless of how small or how large, are received and appreciated with the same appreciation.

M.S.: Will you seek financial help from the city and state that is justly due' the educational department here in Chicago?

SUPREME MIN.: Yes, just as we have already done. This is also on record. We will not give up this effort.

M.S.: To what do Muslims attribute their high record of family solidarity and low rate of delinquency?

SUPREME MIN.: Divine Teachings.

M.S.: Honorable Wallace D. Muhammad—this question, I know, is in the minds of the people: Do you know how much personal wealth your Father has in money and in property? And are you allowed to tell us how much He left to His children and how much He left to the Nation?

SUPREME MIN.: The monies and properties belonging personally to the Honorable Elijah Muhammad are a private matter. If it is required, or if ever it becomes proper to make it public, we will not hesitate to do so. We have nothing to hide.

M.S.: The National Minister of the Nation of Islam is known to be Minister Louis Farrakhan. We understand he had pledged his allegiance to you just as he did to your Father before you, along with the other ministers of the Nation.

Do you feel that you can depend on their loyalty if outside influences and inside influences try to bring about a split in the Nation of Islam?

SUPREME MIN.: Their pledges, of allegiance were received in all sincerity. I have nothing to say that would reflect anything else. One correction here: The title of Minister Louis Farrakhan is National Representative of the Supreme Minister.

M.S.: Would you explain to us how it is that you were once out of the Nation of Islam and all of your older brothers, who never were in discord with your Father and His teachings have now accepted you totally as the leader of the Nation of Islam without any envy or jealousy of you. Would you say this is unusual?

SUPREME MIN.: Not if we look at it from a Scriptural viewpoint. Joseph was sold into slavery and became a help to his community in Egypt. Moses was raised in the house of the Pharaoh and acquired know-how that was needed by his people. It was Divinely planned that I should go out from the physical Nation of Islam to get those experiences necessary and come back to the Nation of Islam.

M.S.: We, who have studied your Father's teachings and watched its growth, have noted

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