

A JOHNSON PUBLICATION ©

EBONY

THE FIRST GENERATION

The birth of black America
BY LERONE BENNETT JR.



The legacy
of my husband

MALCOLM X

BY BETTY SHABAZZ

JUNE 1969 60c

80500000SH1193000092
MAY 70
BARBARA SHOATS
193K W 91ST PL
LOS ANGELES
CALIF 90047

The Legacy Of My Husband,



'His faith in black youth has been totally vindicated'

Surrounded by her daughters, Mrs. Betty Shabazz poses in living room of her Mount Vernon, N. Y., home beneath multiple portrait of her slain husband, Malcolm X, who adopted the name El-Haji Malik Shabazz following his ouster from Black Muslims and after turning orthodox Moslem. Children are twins Malika Saban and Malaak Saban, 3, (L rear) who were born seven months after their father's assassination on Feb. 21, 1965, Qubilah, 8, and Ilyasah, 6 (L foreground), Gamilah Lamumbah, 4, and Attallah, 10. Above, young widow flashes smile of a woman who has learned to control her grief for her children's sake. "I always try to present to them a picture of positiveness, not ever letting them see me depressed," she says.



Malcolm X

By Betty Shabazz

MALCOLM gave his life for his belief that black people are being denied their human rights in this society and that they have not only the right but the responsibility to stop this oppression by any means necessary. He was killed because he would not compromise his principles, because he had become a threat to powerful interests in this country that favored to maintain the status quo.

Today, more than four years after his death, I feel gratified about the way Malcolm's ideas have struck a responsive chord among black people in general, but particularly among black youths. Like Malcolm during his lifetime, they refuse to accept the old expression, "You can't fight the system." They operate on Malcolm's conviction that "if the system wishes to remain, it must voluntarily change or be changed—anything made can be unmade." Black youths are demanding a change and a reinterpretation of this society. They understand that Malcolm fought for that change, that he tried to make that vague, intangible spiritual freedom which they yearn a reality. They seem to identify with Malcolm because he, like themselves, was not a romantic but a realist. Many of them have expressed their feelings toward my husband in various ways, the most important being the continued fight for freedom and equality of people of African descent and oppressed people all over the world. One example of this is a letter I received recently from a 17-year-old brother in Philadelphia. I had been there for a TV show and he was one of two students on the panel. The letter reads in part: "Dear Mrs. Shabazz, I am writing with an effort to attempt to express the joy and honor your presence bestowed upon me. To refresh your memory my name is Ronald White. Your presence was a dream-come-true. When reading Malcolm's autobiography some things lingered on in my mind. I had wished someday I could meet someone who was close to Malcolm, never imagining that someday it would be his wife.

"I figured you to be very plain, shy and all those other things that make a plain housewife, but I was shocked when you walked in the door. Your entrance was so dynamic with your graceful smile that said with its expression 'I am black and I am proud and will accept no substitute for freedom.' I just can't seem to find in the English vocabulary words to express the happiness your presence brought to me. It motivated and restored my energy to fight on for justice for the black man.

"We the students of Malcolm X High will continue to push for the official change of the name, but in event they don't officially change the name, we will hold in our minds that our school is Malcolm X High and no one or anything can change it or make it otherwise, now or forever more. Yours with all my sincerity—Ronald." It was for young brothers like this that Malcolm lived and died.



In backyard of her spacious, eight-room home (top), busy mother consoles Gamilah, who got into hassle with sister Malaak over weighty question of "who gets next turn on swing?" Above, she attends to her correspondence. She receives steady stream of letters each month, mostly from young people who are telling her how much they admired and respected her late husband.



Continued on Next Page

173



At Harlem boutique (left) Mrs. Shabazz shops with two friends, Mrs. Amina Baraka (Mrs. LeRoi Jones) and Mrs. Evelyn Neal (l.). Lady behind counter is Mrs. Sandy Michaels, co-owner of popular shop. Below, Mrs. Shabazz visits with old friends, novelist and Mrs. John Killens. Famed author was a founding member of the now nearly defunct Organization of Afro-American Unity, once headed by Malcolm X.



During afternoon tea at residence of U. N. Ambassador A. B. Danieli of Tanzania, widow chats with hostess, Mrs. Dorah Danieli, who is holding a little guest. Mrs. Shabazz often attends United Nations affairs to maintain the ties of friendship established by her late husband during his travels in Africa and the Middle East. At right, she examines African sculptures which decorate her fireplace.





Black bereted youths provide tight security for Mrs. Shabazz at Junior High 271 in Brooklyn where she attended a memorial in honor of her slain husband. Widow is not affiliated with para-military group, did not request guard.

Malcolm X Continued

From what I can see, Afro-American youths have totally vindicated Malcolm's faith in them. Against staggering odds, as if by a miracle, they have gone beyond such crippling historical forces as slavery and found themselves. Like their ancestors in ancient Africa—where life and civilization began—they are once again the givers of the Code of Brotherhood and the originators of the mutual recognition of another's right to exist. Malcolm made them understand that this Code of Brotherhood was taken from them by the white man who, in turn, used it to maintain his own freedom and to oppress and enslave the rest of the world. While many blacks hoped that some day things would change, Malcolm drove home his message that hope is not enough—that we black people in America must form our own destiny. Malcolm's entire program was geared in that direction, and everything he did in public and at home was done with that in mind.

I am often asked if I have gotten over his assassination. Of course not! It took my children and me two years before we could even hang pictures of him in the house. Now there is one in practically every room in the place. When we did put the pictures up, I thought that we had finally reached the point where we could talk about him without tears. But now I doubt this will ever happen. I don't think we'll ever outgrow it, but I think that we have developed the strength to live with it. I always try to direct my children's memories of and conversations about him. They were very young when he was assassinated and I project happy memories of him for them. I always try to present to them a picture of positiveness, not ever letting them see me depressed or hysterical. When they speak of their father, they speak of the times when he played with them, took them somewhere or bought them something they liked. You have to remember that the three oldest girls can recall three different times when someone tried to kill their father. I can't completely erase this from their minds, but I can stress the happy times and put their minds at ease.

My husband had very definite opinions about raising children. He believed that parents should provide proper images for their

children and should give them guidelines as to what they can and cannot do. Some of his basic aims were to see that our girls are taught to face reality, to accept themselves, to be able to function under supervision, receive some formal training and education and be made to realize that it was their spiritual and moral duty to help oppressed people. He believed that children should have a belief in a tradition and that this should come originally from the home. He did not believe in spoiling children. Many times people would tell our girls that they didn't have to do something because he was their father. He always put a stop to this, saying that other people will spoil your children and be the first to criticize them for their apparent lack of training.

I still follow his guidelines with the girls. His indoctrination was so thorough, even to me, that it has become a pattern for our lives. This is true so much so that I can say to my three-year-old twins, Malaak and Malika, who were born after he was assassinated, "Do you think your father would like that?" And they can get very teary because they don't want to displease him, even though he's dead. One day one of the twins had a little friend over who said something about her father. Suddenly I noticed Malaak pulling her friend into the living room where she pointed to the large painting hanging there, letting her friend know that this was her father. I felt kind of misty behind that.



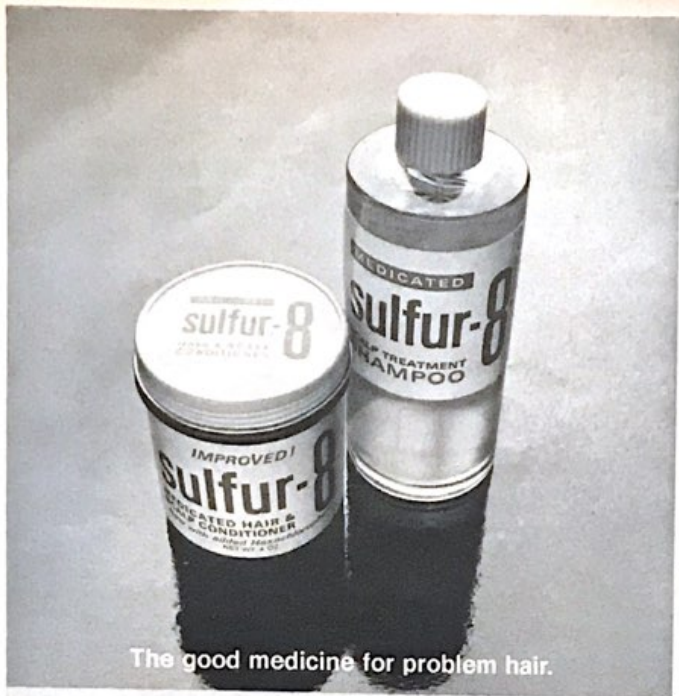
Informal discussion sessions like this one at Killens home are favorite forms of relaxation for Mrs. Shabazz. She shuns celebrity status, says, "I would like to be treated like a person rather than as some kind of institution."

For a long time after Malcolm's death, the first thing that Attallah would mention about a new school friend was that her new friend had a father. Qubilah remembers her father. This past February 21, the fourth anniversary of his assassination, she gave me a 4 by 6 card on which she had written a passage about him. Entitled "Malcolm X, A Black Leader," the passage read: "Malcolm X was a brave leader, he fought for rights for all black people. His black preachings were in everybody's heart. In 1964 he was at the autobaum preaching. And everyone was listening instead of falling asleep. Listening to his black word. Then for not long he was shot. He dyed, but his black beautiful soul is in every black person's heart." The sentence structure, the spelling and the year of the assassination may be off, but it expresses the way she feels about her father.

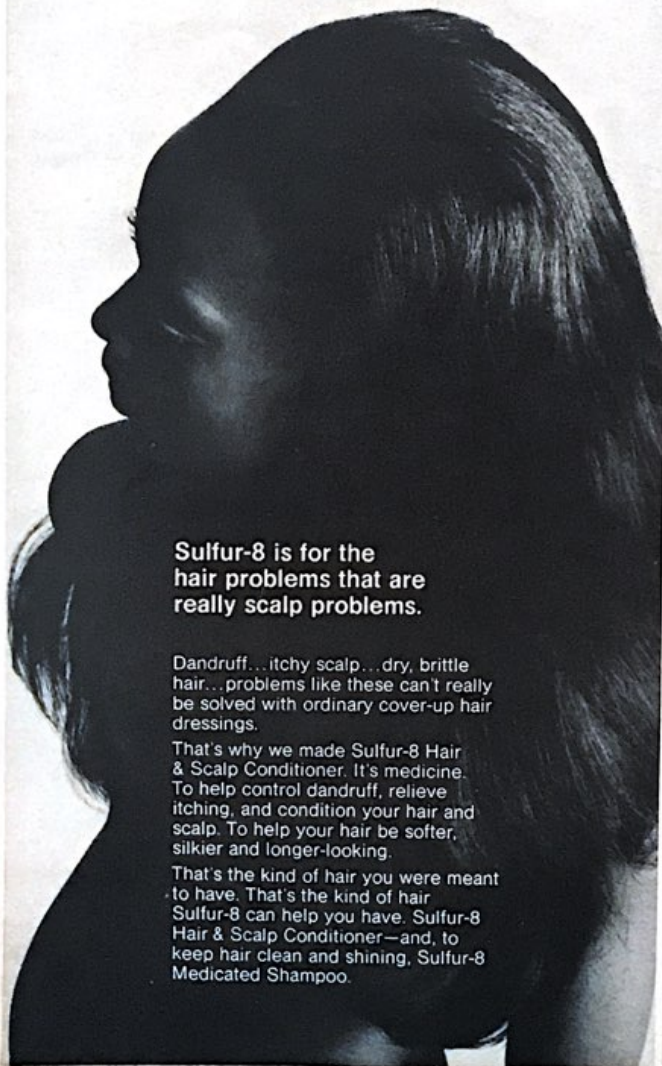
Like the girls, I remember many happy times with Malcolm. For instance, he used to enjoy coming home to a house filled with the odor of baked bread. He would never eat store-bought bread when he was home. I used to make all of our bread, although when we were married, I didn't know how to cook; I had to learn with on-the-job training.

He had very strict eating habits. While he was in prison he had become a Muslim and had stopped eating pork. In order to harass him, knowing his feelings about pork, the cooks used to always dip the serving spoon in some pork substance before serving him anything. To get around this, he had a friend who worked in the kitchen to toast a loaf of bread which he would then eat with cheese that he had bought in the commissary. This was his main diet during his last few years in prison. As a result, he developed a nutritional deficiency. When we married, he was taking all kinds of vitamin pills. As a nurse and because of home economics courses taken at Tuskegee Institute, I had some knowledge of the nutritional value of foods. I prepared a diet for him that included the basic essentials.

In the morning I served him three beverages plus coffee: freshly squeezed orange and grapefruit juice combined, a glass of fresh carrot juice combined with other fresh vegetable juices and a glass of milk with two egg yolks, honey or brown sugar and a flavoring. It was difficult to get him to drink anything other



The good medicine for problem hair.



Sulfur-8 is for the hair problems that are really scalp problems.

Dandruff... itchy scalp... dry, brittle hair... problems like these can't really be solved with ordinary cover-up hair dressings.

That's why we made Sulfur-8 Hair & Scalp Conditioner. It's medicine. To help control dandruff, relieve itching, and condition your hair and scalp. To help your hair be softer, silkier and longer-looking.

That's the kind of hair you were meant to have. That's the kind of hair Sulfur-8 can help you have. Sulfur-8 Hair & Scalp Conditioner—and, to keep hair clean and shining, Sulfur-8 Medicated Shampoo.

Malcolm X Continued

than the citrus juices and the coffee. After two weeks of coaxing, one morning I finally gave up and just served him his coffee. I had had enough of his resistance. "Is there anything wrong?" he asked. "Are you well?" "I feel fine. Absolutely nothing is wrong," I told him. He got up and went downstairs looking for the other beverages, saying nothing else. I felt horrible. The next morning I went back to the old routine and received no more resistance.

His dinner included half a grapefruit, a very light soup, a piece of lean meat (he didn't like very much meat), plenty of fruits and vegetables and a salad, wild rice and brown bread and a quart of milk. This diet appeared to be beneficial, because the symptoms of the nutritional deficiency disappeared.

I also remember and still marvel at his reading habits. He had a wide range of interests: the classics, anthropology, early and contemporary Africa, the origins of religion, anything by or about black people. His skill in reading had developed to such an extent that he could read a difficult book in three hours and easier ones in one to two hours. He had a special interest in books on social, economic and political developments throughout the world.

He also enjoyed music, classical and some popular (soul), but he had a particular fondness for jazz: He wanted our children to study music because he felt it would teach them precision, poise, timing and coordination. (Attallah plays the tonette and Qubilah the recorder.) He loved to listen to the drums.

Once a week he used to take me out to dinner. He seldom had time to go to movies and plays, but we did go to a movie once together. There was a new detective movie being shown that the brothers had urged him to see. While walking to the movie theater, we passed another one where *Nothing But a Man* was playing. Malcolm was especially fond of Max Roach and Abbey Lincoln. When he saw Abbey's name on the marquee he asked "Hey, Girl (this is what he always called me), would you like to see this?" Not particularly interested in seeing the detective movie, I quickly said yes. That turned out to be the first and only time we visited a movie theater together. We had plans to see others but never got the chance to do so. He really enjoyed that movie and I was happy to see him so relaxed.

Malcolm was a firm believer in the value and importance of our heritage. He believed that we have valuable and distinct cultural traditions which need to be institutionalized so that they can be passed on to our heirs. This is not to say that culture is enough by itself, for there must be political and economic power also. But knowledge of one's cultural traditions gives one the security and confidence and peace of mind to deal with himself effectively. This is primary nationalism: a love of the motherland, the family, the language, the folkways and mores of your people. (Call it black awareness, black consciousness or black pride—it's all nationalism.)



Arabic lessons are taught weekly to three oldest girls by K. Ahamad Tawfiq, Tawfiq, Iman of Mosque of Islamic Brotherhood. Since husband's death, widow has made Mecca pilgrimage, entitling her to "Haji" name prefix.

**RAISE FUNDS QUICKER, EASIER!
CHECK THESE FEATURES
COMPARE — YOU BE THE JUDGE!**

- PRAYING HANDS PEN is NOT PERISHABLE.
- Sell to EVERYBODY—Men, Women, Boys and Girls. (Thin OR Fat!) Who doesn't need a pen?
- 2 Trial Kits, NO OBLIGATION.

YOU MAKE 55¢ ON EVERY \$1.00 SALE!

- NO INVESTMENT! YOU pay NOTHING until you collect.
- RETURN GUARANTEE! Just return whatever you don't sell. Fair?
- Make as much as \$275.00 PROFIT IN ONE DAY! (20 Workers on a full Saturday)

**DON'T WAIT! IT'S EASY!
SEND THIS COUPON TODAY
NO SALESMAN WILL CALL**

- Send us the 2 KIT (50 Pens) NO RISK TRIAL PLAN. We will sell as many as possible at \$1.00 each; KEEP 55¢ for ourselves and send you 45¢ for each one sold; Return any unsold, NO OBLIGATION.
- WE BELIEVE! Send us Kits @ \$11.25 each. (One for each campaign worker.) We will sell each kit for \$25.00 KEEP \$13.75 for us and send you \$11.25 for each kit sold. (AFTER WE COLLECT) We can return any unsold pens with NO OBLIGATION!
- Please send folder and sample pen to present at next meeting.

SINCE WE SELL ONLY TO FRATERNAL, CIVIC, CHURCH, SCHOOL OR COMMUNITY GROUPS—WE CAN HONOR ONLY THOSE INQUIRIES WHICH GIVE GROUP AND SPONSORS NAMES AND AUTHORIZED OFFICER OF THAT GROUP.

Name of group Active workers
Sponsored by

Your name Top officer
(Organization such as YMCA, Church or other)

Title Age Title
(If under 21) (Pres., Treas., Sec., Pastor)

Address Home address

City State City

Phone Zip State Zip

Authorized signature
(Must be over 21)

COLLINGWOOD FUND RAISING

44 WARREN STREET, DEPT. 403F, PROVIDENCE, R.I. 02901

New! Exciting!

STRAND
HAIR COLORING
deluxe
Creme 'n color pak
with super gentle creme developer



See how easy it is to color in that youthful look at home. Gray, dull hair disappears. Leaves hair lovely, soft and manageable. Lasts shampoo after shampoo. Prove it to yourself.

- Five shades:
Jet Black,
Black,
Dark Brown,
Medium Brown,
Light Brown.

ASK FOR **STRAND DELUXE CREME 'N COLOR PAK** at your drug or cosmetic center. Nothing else to buy.

History Of The Black Man LP ALBUM

Lovett Records and the United Negro College Fund invite you to bring the Black Man's history into your own living room. Just \$4.95! Also available: The Black Man's Revolt (\$4.95) Both for \$8.00. Order today and give your children a piece of that knowledge which will make power a force instead of just a word. Check off M.O. payable to Lovett Records or UNCF. Send to: LOVETT RECORDS, Suite 1800, 230 Peachtree NW, Atlanta, Ga.

PLEASE SEND: [] Both Albums [] History [] Revolt TO
NAME
ADDRESS
STATE ZIP

WIDE SHOES

Send for FREE CATALOG
SYD KUSHNER
Dept. B
733 South St.
Phila., Pa. 19147

Huge selection of ladies' wide shoes & boots. Choose from all heel heights, widths C to EEE, all sizes 4 to 12. \$5.95 to \$12.95 ppd.

SAVE... UP TO 50% ON CHOIR ROBES & UNIFORMS

Buy direct from Springer—serving the nation since 1937
CHOIR & PULPIT GOWNS
All colors and color combinations, custom-tailored and personalized free.
BADGES for ushers and organizations
CHURCH FURNITURE including pulpits, pens, communion tables.
HIGH-FASHION UNIFORMS Ushers, Missionary, Diaconesses, Stewardesses, Nurses, Organizations. Sizes 5 to 52

CHECK OUR PRICES! LOWEST ANYWHERE
Send for Free Catalog Today

SPRINGER FASHION UNIFORMS
912 F. Street N.W. Wash., D. C. 20002

Please rush me a copy of your () choir robe () uniform () other: specify catalog.

Name
Street Address
City State Zip

Malcolm X Continued

ability to organize to protect themselves against anyone who attempts to oppress or destroy them. Internationally, he regarded the black movement in this country as one manifestation of the desire of oppressed people everywhere to gain control of their destinies. When the American president goes abroad, they call it making contacts and cementing ties. This is exactly what Malcolm was doing when he traveled abroad representing black America, making contacts and cementing ties.

We must have allies and friends. That's one of many reasons why my husband traveled abroad. He believed this country violated our human rights, rights which cannot be legislated. Civil rights are legislated. That's why he was trying to get our case before the United Nations Commission on Human Rights. He believed that those whites interested in fighting white racism should organize themselves and work in their own communities, since this is the source of the disease.

In retrospect, marriage to Malcolm was hectic, beautiful and unforgettable—the greatest thing in my life. Remarriage at this time is unfeasible for me. I have six daughters who take up 99 per cent of my time. Malcolm domesticated me into feeling and believing that a woman is supposed to be able to give to a marriage. I don't have anything to give to a marriage at this juncture in life. At this point, I would like for the brothers and sisters to treat me like a person rather than as some kind of institution. I sometimes like to relax—to just sit down and enjoy people. There are a few people with whom I can do this without worrying that what I say will be misinterpreted.

My girls are all in school and very active. All have some of Malcolm's personality traits. They are all strong-willed. I often have to wrack my brains to convince my daughters that they have done wrong. Whenever I ask them why they did a particular thing, they can give me 10,000 reasons. This is a trait Malcolm admired in this generation of black youngsters. They are thinking more than their parents did and they don't have the same fears about expressing themselves. They are not a generation leaning toward accommodation and submissiveness. I was fortunate enough to find good schools for my children. I'm president of the PTA of the nursery school which the three youngest attend. They also attend ballet and black history classes on Saturdays. Attallah wants to be a doctor and is currently attending a weekly class at the Columbia University Medical School, which is designed for children interested in the medical field. The three oldest girls take Arabic lessons every Wednesday afternoon. Qubilah and Attallah have become quite fluent in French. I want all of them to get as much education as possible. I also want them to travel so they can know more about Africa, the West Indies and the Middle East. I want them to go to some of the places that their father visited. In this way I feel they will broaden their scope and become of maximum use to themselves, their families and their people. I am confident that that is the way Malcolm would have wanted it.



Being a mother to six fatherless daughters "takes up 99 per cent of my time," says young widow who considers remarriage "unfeasible" for the time being. "I don't have anything to give to a marriage at this point," she explains.