

Na'im Akbar: servant of the people

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the discipline," he said, adding that he eventually joined the Nation in 1973.

"I sold fish and papers like everybody else," Akbar, recalled, adding that within three months he was the assistant minister of Mosque No. 15.

Dr. Akbar remained an assistant minister until he came to Chicago in June, 1975. "The Honorable W.D. Muhammad asked me to send him some of the material I had written.

IMMEDIATE RECOGNITION

"He saw the ideas that we were working with and he knew that I was a minister," Akbar said, explaining how he returned to the North.

"His orientation was already toward the development of the mind. He was able to see that I was grappling and trying to work with those same ideas, so he felt that I would be of some value in helping to do the kind of work that he wanted done here," the widely published scholar added.

Because of his radical approach to psychology, Akbar along with psychologists Wade Noble, Phil McGhee, and Cedric Clark eventually locked horns with traditional Bilalian and Caucasian psychologists.

A member of the Society for the Study of African Sciences, Akbar said he and his fellow psychologists had real problems when the Chief started teaching.

"But I knew that I couldn't find anything any better than what he had to offer. The words of the Chief Imam fit into my ears like natural nectar. It was like a bee making honey. The language and the whole conception of what the human being was all about was right in line with the kind of understanding that we had already developed.

"We knew that the problems confronting Bilalians had to exist in the mind," Akbar noted, "so when I heard the Chief Imam say 'Man means mind,' I was 'home free.' It made everything fit in place.

"TEACHINGS" vs DEGREES

"I never respected degrees. I knew that degrees were jive so it wasn't hard for me to accept the teachings of the Honorable Master Elijah Muhammad or the Honorable W.D. Muhammad. Akbar said, "The achievement that he saw was 'in people's commitment to giving themselves to the good of large numbers of people. That kind of commitment is of more value than degrees were.

"I knew that if I was ever going to do what I wanted to do fully in terms of working with the needs of our people — I knew there couldn't be any better teacher that I could find than the Chief Imam.

Since assuming the position of special aide to Chief Imam Muhammad, Akbar has traveled and lectured extensively. His lectures or



DR. NA'IM AKBAR and his wife Renee share a lighthearted moment prior to embarking on a recent speaking tour of Virginia; Washington, D.C.; and other mid-Atlantic states.

Photo by Muriel Lim

representation of the Chief Imam have been received in Libya, the Caribbean and in hundred of U.S. cities.

Other duties include dealing with mosque problems, directing policy for Bilalian News, writing materials for Imams, and answering correspondence and telephone complaints.

A prolific writer, Akbar is noted for his output of written materials which include a book called "The Community of Self."

commentary on the mental life, the social life and religious life of a community growing in knowledge." Akbar wrote in the book's foreword.

Other materials have been published in the Journal of Black Psychology, and the International Journal of Social Psychiatry.

"I've also had a paper published in the book 'Social Research in the Black' published by the Howard University Press," Dr. Akbar said. The paper is called "The Religious Experience of Afro-Americans."

"The Community of Self" is a brief



BLUES IS becoming increasingly popular among college students as the above photograph indicates.

Photo by Eric Soltz

Blues, a 'risky' commodity

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KoKo Taylor, Son Seal, Fenton Shabazz, Big Walter Horton and the late Hound Dog Taylor have all recorded on the Alligator label.

In 1975, Alligator Records netted \$50,000 in profits. Iglauer explained that most of his profits went back into the record company.

The blues industry has its ups and downs; Chess Records, which prior to 1969 was the largest blues label in Chicago, made a fortune on blues. Iglauer contends, however, that the

blues industry, though prosperous for some, can be "risky."

"Blues albums are not startlingly good sellers but they tend to be extremely steady sellers. My best selling record, the first one, my label turned out (Hound Dog Taylor) five years ago, still sells about 1,000 copies a year.

"Now that's not going to make Columbia Records very happy," Iglauer said laughingly, "but it puts food on my table and on the table of Hound Dogs' family."

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