

MOURNS

ELIJAH MUHAMMAD



Thousands of Muslim followers convene in Chicago to attend the Messenger of Allah's funeral

IT WAS more like a celebration than a memorial service, but then that is what it was meant to be: a jubilant reaffirmation of faith, a positive assertion of pride, a public display of unity and strength.

To the devout, the thousands upon thousands of believers in the teachings of the Hon. Elijah Muhammad (membership estimates range from 25,000 to 250,000), their leader was not dead, he had merely passed from this world to another, finer, state of being. His seed and thought remained, especially in the form and presence of his son Wallace D. Muhammad, chosen by a select committee of family members to succeed his father as spiritual leader of the Nation of Islam. There is no need for sorrow, the waiting faithful were told. The Messenger, though he had succumbed to an earthly inevitability and died of congestive heart failure in the 77th year of his life, had not deserted his flock; his spirit lives. Muslim minister after Muslim minister proclaimed to their followings.

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