

# Farrakhan: 'New Muslim Direction'

## New Views Told

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This week, Minister or Imam Abdul Haleem Farrakhan, International spokesman for the World Community of Islam, was in Los Angeles and he talked candidly and at length about the changes that have taken place in the sect, formerly known as the Nation of Islam, including the failure of businesses, the inclusion of whites, the acceptance of Malcolm X's teachings and the new dress code.

Slightly built and extremely well-dressed, the eloquent spokesman for the group maintains the image that most muslims were once known for.

Dressed in a dark suit and a white shirt and tie, the youthful-looking minister talked about the changes that have taken place since the elevation of Wallace D. Muhammad to the post of chief minister, following the death of his father, the late Elijah Muhammad.

"There have been several changes since the Honorable Wallace D. Muhammad assumed the leadership of the nation of Islam. The beginning steps deal with just a step up from nationalism, or black nationalism, to the universal creed of Islam. And all

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ISLAM'S VOICE — Minister Abdul Haleem Farrakhan, left, official international spokesman for the World Community of Islam (The Nation of Islam) explains to Sentinel editor Jim Cleaver the many changes that have taken place in the nation since the death of the Honorable Elijah Muhammad and the advent of the Honorable Wallace D. Muhammad, present chief minister of the World Community of Islam.—GUY CROWDER PHOTO

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laughed aloud and said, "It doesn't matter what a man wears or how long his hair is. If he wants to wear a beard, then let him wear it. It is what is in his head and in his heart that counts.

"People are beginning to recognize the Muslims and the changes that have come about within this group. And some of the most profound changes have taken place in recent history."

Reflecting on his relationship with the late Malcolm X, Farrakhan grew thoughtful and said, "After Malcolm left the movement, I really didn't understand where Malcolm had gone. I began to dislike the man that had taught me; who had reared me and taken me as a child and fed me. I was very

close to him. I would have given my life for Malcolm.

"But when he left the movement and began to, what I call, attack the moral character of the late Honorable Elijah Muhammad. Then I turned away from Malcolm. Only later did I learn what Malcolm knew 12 years before me; that I had to walk in his shoes to understand where he was coming from. And God has blessed me to walk right in the shoes of Malcolm X. To walk up the mountain of lead-

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## Farrakhan

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of the changes evolve around that one step."

He pointed out that in order to understand the step, it is necessary to understand the change from nationalism to universalism.

Likening the current trend to the teachings of the Bible, Minister Farrakhan explained, "If you notice, when Jesus first began preaching, he told his disciples to 'Go ye, not in the way of the Samaritan nor even in the way of the Gentile. But go ye to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.'"

"They had a specific charge to go to a specific people who were suffering under specific condition. Then later on in the scripture, Jesus told his disciples, 'Take this Gospel into all the world. To every nation. To every kindred and to every town!'"

"Now here you have a nationalist approach to the lost sheep of Israel, and then you have a universal approach, moving from Israel to the whole world. We had the same approach with prophet Mohammed. His message started in Arabia. But after it was solidified in Arabia, then He moved his followers and disciples to the ends of the known world."

"The late Great Elijah Muhammad (May God be pleased with him) recognized that white America had a serious problem. And that problem was that we had been overtly, systematically and subliminally taught to hate the blackness of our skin, the kinkiness of our hair and our roots and culture in Africa.

"So he started where the problem was then, with skin. And he made us proud of our blackness and proud of our heritage. And he made us desire to love ourselves, unite with ourselves and do something constructive for ourselves. So, many books that have been written about him, referred to him as a black nationalist.

"But Islam is a universal creed. And the Honorable Wallace D. Muhammad realizing that blackness, if taken to the extreme, would turn inward and become self-destructive, brought to us the universal message of the Prophet Mohammed, the uni-

versal message of the Koran which elevated the community from a nationalist standpoint to the universal creed of Islam."

Speaking to the issue of changes within the Nation of Islam Minister Farrakhan pointed out, "I think it is natural that people fear change. When things remain stagnant, they are in a state of death. But Almighty God had ordained that everything must evolve; attain stage after stage until it reaches its eventual perfection. And to understand the changes that have taken place in the World Community of Islam, one should look at the magnificent and beautiful life of the late great Malcolm X.

"Malcolm started off in the ghetto. Drifted off into a criminal life and then met the great Elijah Muhammad and became a religious zealot for Islam. But Islam on a black nationalist level. He called the white man the 'devil' as the Honorable Elijah Muhammad taught us for forty-four years. And I think that teaching did more to help solve racist problems in America than any other teaching. But we will talk about that later.

"But Malcolm then outgrew the message of the late Honorable Elijah Muhammad and under the influence of the present leader of the World Community of Islam, began to think differently. His horizons began to broaden. Then Malcolm went to Mecca. There in Mecca, he sent cards back to his friends, saying he saw white men, black men, asians, and all manner of men worshipping together in a bond of brotherhood. This

made him see that Islam as a powerful spiritual force could cause human beings to live as human beings. So he returned to the United States with a different philosophy."

Asked how Malcolm's new found belief differed from that of Elijah Muhammad, Minister Farrakhan explained that Elijah's message was strictly to the black man. His concerns were strictly for the black man in America and dark people around the world. But Malcolm began to see that all human beings can become one under Islam."

He said that when Malcolm came back to the U.S. many of the black revolutionaries who had been nurtured under Malcolm's wing, became disillusioned with his new found teachings.

"And we of course in the Nation of Islam, became embittered by Malcolm's change and we said that Malcolm was a traitor: Malcolm is no longer for the black man, and Malcolm is this and Malcolm is that. And in Malcolm's autobiography, he said, 'I tried to turn the corner but my people don't understand.'"

The eloquent minister was queried about Malcolm's contention before his death that it would be Muslims who would kill him. He answered, Malcolm understood the psyche, the mentality of the Muslims and he understood that the Honorable Elijah Muhammad was a messenger of God and we believed that any disobedience to Elijah Muhammad or any break in organizational discipline was tantamount to treason and if Malcolm was to attack the late Elijah Muhammad, some zealot in the movement would