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JET

ELIJAH MUHAMMAD
(1897-1975)

Nation Mourns Muslim Leader



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Born under the Libra sign Oct. 7, 1897, Muhammad died Feb. 25, 1975.

Muhammad Leaves Great Legacy Of Pride And Respect

With no public viewing of his body, Messenger Muhammad was eulogized at \$4.4-million Muslim Mosque located on Chicago's Stony Island Avenue.

A so-called Negro stumbled slowly onto Chicago's Stony Island Avenue from a tavern as the funeral procession proceeded to the Moslem Mosque to pay last respect to the Honorable Elijah Muhammad.

The man stood there clutching a barbecue sandwich in one hand and a bottle of beer in the other.

As the funeral cortege cruised cautiously along the route, the man with the barbecue and beer looked about him and addressed his remarks to no one in particular:

"You know something, brother," he said sadly, "if Elijah Muhammad hadn't put down such a bad rap against the pig and pork, all Black folks would be Muslims."

Measured against the teachings of the Messenger Muhammad, whose body was being borne toward a final resting place, the unsolicited eulogy of the so-called Negro placed him only a pork chop and a bottle of beer away from becoming a Black man.



Until his heart became congested and failed to pump life into his frail body on Feb. 25, a day before his sect's Saviour's Day, Elijah Muhammad had spent 40 of his 77 years as leader of the Nation of Islam, whose mission was to transform the Black race into a Black nation characterized by clean living, self-respect and self-uplift—independent of the white community.

Starting with the simple belief that "the Black man by nature is Muslim," the Messenger spent four decades getting the message across. How well he succeeded is, perhaps, explained by the Nation of Islam's National Secretary Abass Rassoull who made this assessment:

"If you want to know how many registered Muslims there are in this country, the number is changing daily. The Black man is flocking to the teachings of the Hon. Elijah Muhammad and the number increases daily. Consequently, at no one time can any one tell

you the exact number of believers or followers of Elijah Muhammad who are registered Muslims."

While one may question the number of converts Messenger Muhammad brought into the Nation of Islam, no one questions the economic assets amassed under his leadership. Throughout the United States, the Black Muslims own and operate businesses. An estimated 25,000 acres of land belong to them. In Chicago, where the Nation of Islam has headquarters, the business properties include Salaam Restaurant, Muhammad Speaks newspaper, a commercial office building, National Clothing factory, Shabazz Bakery and a \$4.4-million religious temple.

The Muslims own farms and cattle in Georgia, Alabama and Michigan. They maintain 40 schools throughout the country for the education of their children. They own a fleet of trucks and a jet plane for transportation.

At the time of his death, the

Included in the Nation of Islam's housing program is the Muhammad family development on Chicago's South Side. Messenger lived in dome-top home.



Muhammad Was One Of Most Important Black Men

Messenger had started implementing an imported fish project in Peru to provide fresh fish for his supermarkets.

Considered the Messenger of Allah by his followers, Muhammad was believed by persons inside and outside his Muslim following to be one of the most important Black men in America.

He had a unique penchant for reforming those thought to be among the most incorrigible criminals and drug addicts, turning their lives around until they were among the cleanest and most industrious of citizens.

Through his leadership, the fiercely loyal Nation of Islam developed a financial empire, including restaurants, sprawling farms, schools, grocery stores and other properties, with an estimated worth of \$80 million.

The Messenger for 40 years taught those who would listen that the Black man is "the first and the last, and the maker and owner of the universe."

For years he predicted that the world would eventually face food shortages, an economic crisis and said the Western world would eventually fall because of it.

His teachings of love and respect for self were adopted by such civil rights stalwarts as Stokely Carmichael and H. Rap Brown.

Muhammad was born Elijah Poole in Sandersville, Ga., on Oct. 7, 1897. He was the seventh of 13 children born to Wali and Mari Poole, a couple who scratched out a meager existence on wages Wali earned as a Baptist preacher, sawmill worker and tenant farmer.

Sprawling cattle farm owned by Black Muslims produces meat products which are processed and sold to customers in supermarkets owned by Muslims.



A hard worker, the young Elijah had to quit school in the fourth grade in order to work to help support his family. Because working kept him from his studies while he was in school, young Elijah Poole was 16-years-old when he dropped out of school.

But as a teenager and young adult his sister taught him to read and write and he spent long hours reading the Holy Bible.

Although always physically frail, Muhammad was always stout of heart. He objected to the manner in which southern white employers abused Black employes and told whites in a firm way to fire him if his work was poor, but never to curse him.

The young Elijah Poole worked in Sandersville and later in Macon, Ga., for the Southern Railroad where he was a laborer and at the Cherokee Brick Co., where he was a foreman.

At the age of 25, Poole and his wife, Clara, whom he married in 1919, moved to Detroit, where from 1923 to 1929 he worked in a Chevrolet auto plant.

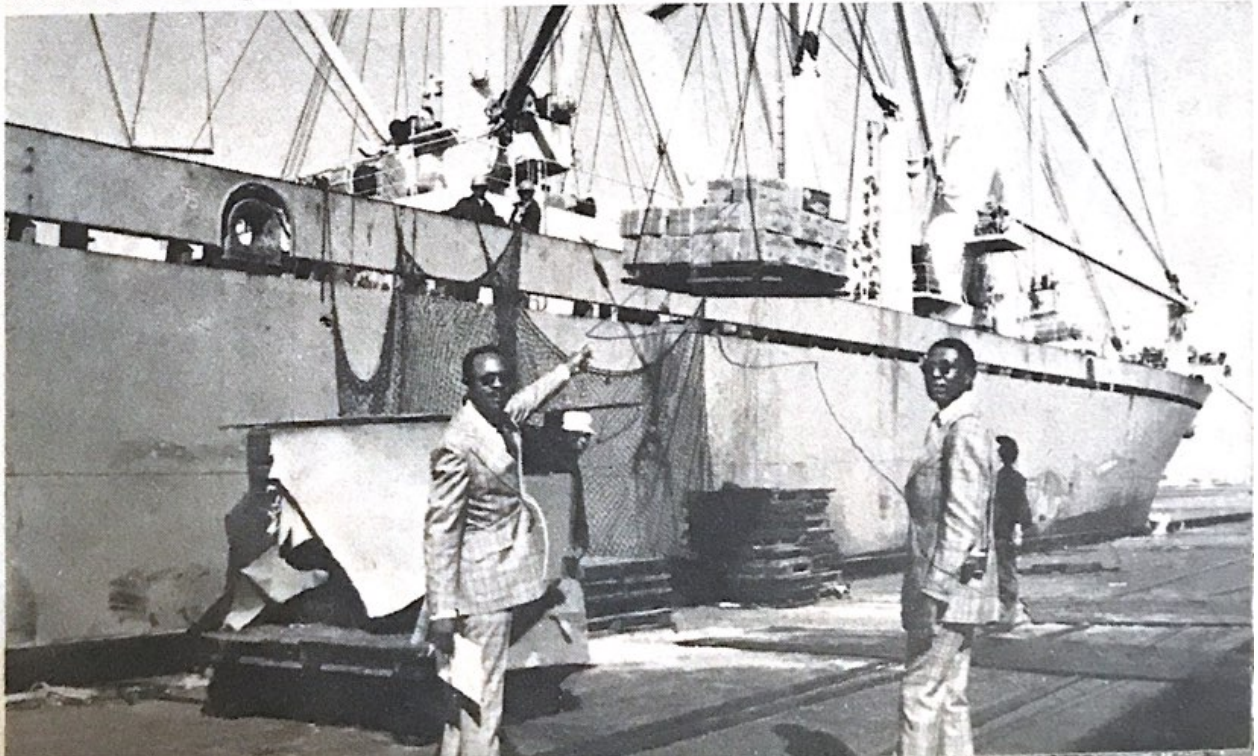
In 1930, his life changed. In the summer of that year he met a mysterious silk peddler called Wali Farrad, W. D. Fard and Farrad Mohammed.

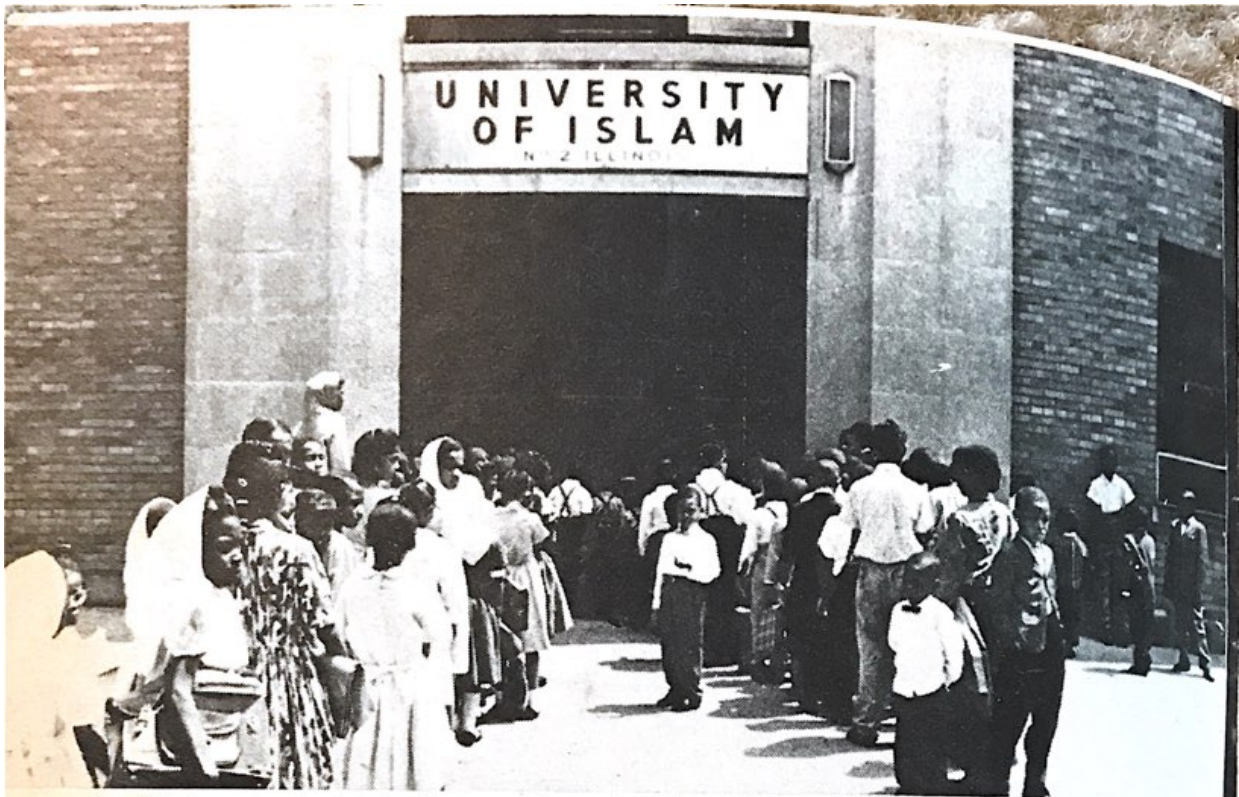
Fard, a self-described prophet, taught Blacks in Detroit that they were members of the original and most superior race of man. He taught them that he was sent by Allah (God) to reclaim his lost people and deliver them from "man-made" white devils who enslaved them.

Elijah Poole was attracted to Fard and became his closest follower. Fard's followers rented a hall for him to teach in, and at that point, the Nation of Islam movement was born.

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One of four ships containing a total of 550,520 pounds of fish for Muslims docks in Los Angeles Harbor as Abdul Karriem and Charles 67X (r) observe.





In Chicago, students line up to enter the University of Islam, one of many schools which the Black Muslims operate for the education of their children.

(Continued from page 9)

Fard established the movement in Detroit, developing a University of Islam to give secondary and elementary instruction to Blacks, and he established Muslim Temple No. 1 there.

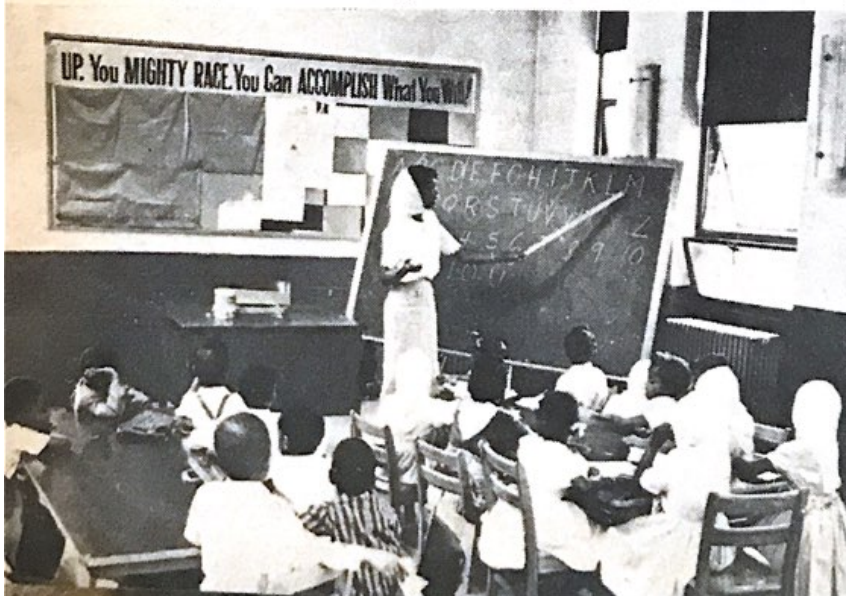
But as he moved farther into the background, he designated Poole to be the Supreme Minister of Islam and renamed him Elijah Mu-

hammad.

In 1932, Muhammad moved to Chicago where he set up Temple No. 2. But he returned to Detroit to aid Fard, who was jailed that year because of a follower's sacrificial killing of a brother.

Released and ordered out of Detroit, Fard went to Chicago with Muhammad but was jailed there also. After he was released he

Inside a classroom, teacher instructs young people how to read and write. At right, the Messenger receives education award from Prof. Jam Shabazz.





Living up to their philosophy to buy Black and buy cash, the Muslim's Your Supermarket in Chicago does big business with Muslims and non-Muslims.

stayed out of sight, and to protect himself from police and detractors, he formed the militaristic Fruit of Islam.

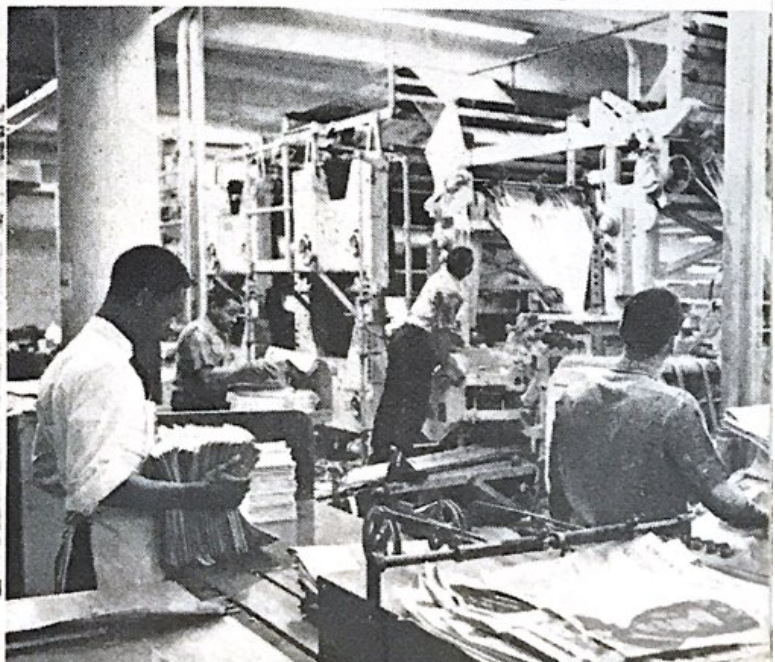
On March 19, 1934, Fard disappeared as quickly and mysteriously as he had arrived, leaving Muhammad as the leader of the Nation of Islam. "He put me over the whole nation," Muhammad once said in an EBONY interview.

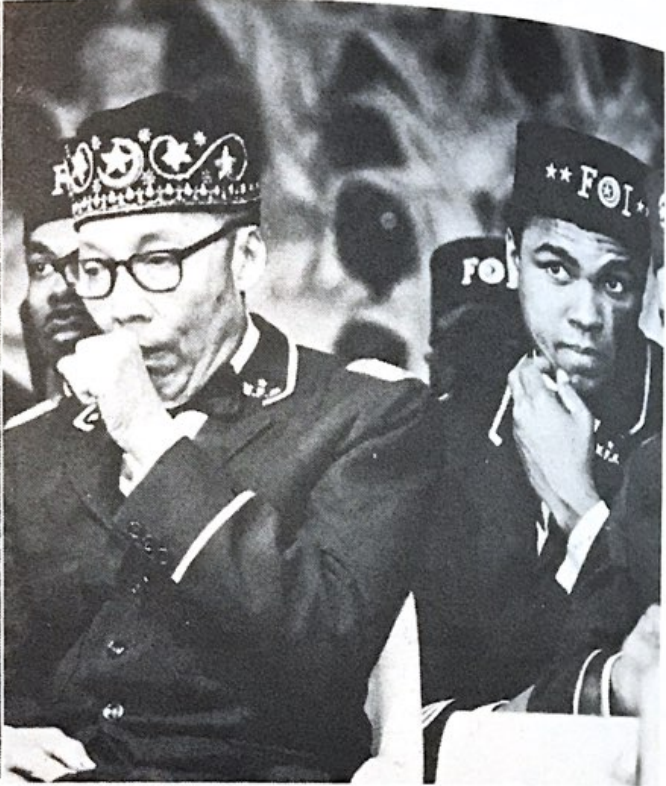
"He made me the head of the Black man in America."

As the new leader of the nation, Muhammad deified Fard, saying he was really Allah in disguise.

In 1934 he fled Detroit for Chicago because of threats on his life. He lived as a fugitive until 1942, when authorities arrested him on draft resistance and sedition charges.

Thriving businesses owned by the Nation of Islam include Chicago-based Guaranty Bank and Muhammad Speaks, their national newspaper.





Elijah Muhammad and Malcolm X greet Manhattan Borough President Hulan Jack in the late 1950s. Messenger Muhammad sits in front of young heavyweight champ Muhammad Ali, who was recruited by Malcolm X.

“That’s the excuse they used,” Muhammad said. “I was already too old. I was 45 years old at the time.”

He was released in 1946, and went about the business of building the Nation into a huge financial empire.

Elijah Muhammad greets Elder Lightfoot Michaux, a Washington D.C., evangelist (l) and on another occasion Rev. and Mrs. Martin Luther King Jr.



Nation Mourns Muslim Leader

By Gregory Simms

"Elijah Muhammad is dead. Long live Muhammad."

That was the urgent, emotional and apparently universal theme as nearly 20,000 members of the Nation of Islam, better known as the Black Muslims, gathered at Chicago's International Amphitheater to mourn the death of their leader, the Hon. Elijah Muhammad, and pledge their allegiance to his son and successor, Wallace D. Muhammad, 41.

One after another, the top ministers of the Nation praised the deceased Elijah Muhammad as the exalted Messenger of the Islamic God Allah, "who came here in the person of Master Fard Muhammad," to deliver his divine teachings. And likewise, the ministers

pledged to continue their loyalty and worship of the Messenger through his son, the Hon. Wallace D. Muhammad.

And after each declaration of continued loyalty, there rose the rhythmic chant, pushed from deep inside each of the throng of Muslims attending the annual Saviour's Day ceremony, held each Feb. 26: "Long live Muhammad. Long live Muhammad."

Elijah Muhammad, the undeniable and almost deified leader of the Muslims since March 19, 1934, had died just one day before he was scheduled to deliver his Saviour's Day message.

The 77-year-old diminutive leader, considered by many inside and outside the Nation of Islam to be the most important and powerful Black man in America, had entered Chicago's Mercy Hospital on Jan. 29, for a routine medical

RELIGION

As Elijah Jr. (l) listens, National Secretary Rassoull informs the faithful at Saviour's Day activities that Wallace Muhammad (r) is new leader.





Fruit of Islam men of Nation shout approval of Minister Wallace as successor to his father who built the impressive Muslim empire throughout U. S. examination.

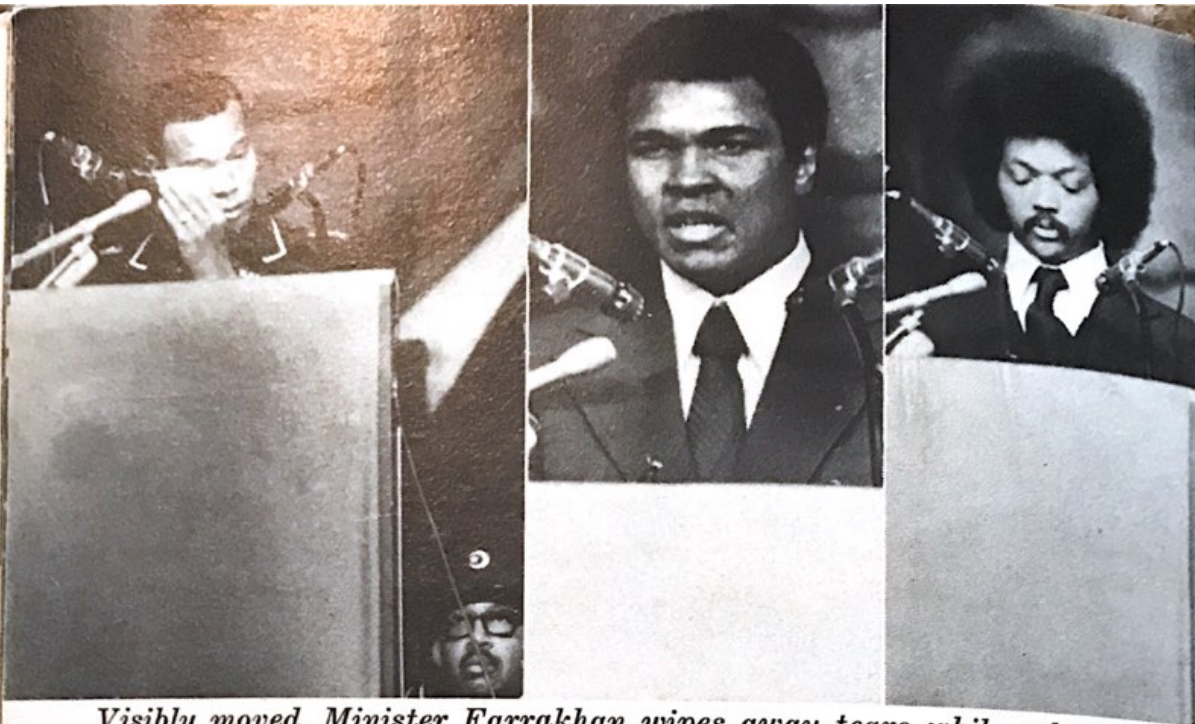
But on Feb. 8, he was rushed to intensive care after being stricken with congestive heart failure. His condition was listed as critical. By Feb. 17, his condition had

worsened to very critical, and at 8:10 a.m. on Feb. 25, Elijah Muhammad was pronounced dead by his personal physician, Dr. Charles Williams.

So on the morning of Feb. 26,

Dressed in white clothing, women members of National Islam listen as speakers mourn passing of Elijah Muhammad and praise group's new leader.





Visibly moved, Minister Farrakhan wipes away tears while eulogizing Mr. Muhammad. Ali (c) and Rev. Jackson also spoke of Messenger's passing.

Wallace Named Undisputed Leader Of Muslims

thousands of Muslims, already greeted with the shock of the Messenger's death, were also greeted with speculation that the Nation would feel the rumblings of a power struggle over who would lead the \$80-million, 100,000-member Muslim empire.

But if it bothered the Muslim sisters, called Muslim Girl Trainees, and the Muslim men, called the Fruit of Islam, it did not show.

In businesslike and strict military fashion, they eagerly entered the rear of the massive arena, divided themselves by sex to search one another for weapons and quietly took their seats in the hall, which was decorated with four huge pictures of Elijah Muhammad.

Any doubts concerning the unity of the Muslim leadership that followers might have had before the ceremony were dispelled just five minutes after the program's

speeches began—such was the enthusiasm for the support of Wallace Muhammad.

Abass Rassoull, national secretary of the Nation of Islam, delivered the first speech after a one-hour-and-50-minute closed-circuit film account of the life of Elijah Muhammad.

"Today we would like to inform the world," boomed Rassoull, "that there is no leadership crisis in the Nation of Islam. Almighty Allah, in the person of Master Fard Muhammad, the Hon. Elijah Muhammad and the royal (Muhammad) family have chosen Wallace D. Muhammad to lead the Nation of Islam."

"Long live Muhammad, Long live Muhammad," the 20,000 faithful followers chanted.

"We pledge to our royal family that we love you and we offer to you our very lives," said Rassoull.

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Honorable Elijah Muhammad Built A Kingdom Here On Earth

The Honorable Elijah Muhammad built a kingdom on earth among people who knew little about faith and hope.

His converts comprised a class few other religions sought and few could transform into beautiful human beings. His converts were the down and out Blacks, the poor, the welfare recipients and the dope addicts, all who saw life as a prison of despair.

But the Honorable Elijah Muhammad, himself a man who had perspired in the cotton fields of the South, and who had toiled in Detroit's auto plants, shaped his Nation of Islam into a working religion.

For his multitude, who believed in him and his word, he promised results, not only a salvation of the mind and body, but also a kingdom of thriving businesses. And there grew a nationwide string of restaurants, supermarkets, banks, a national newspaper and schools for the children whom many in this country had believed were unable to learn.

The Honorable Elijah Muhammad did not dine with Presidents or governors. For much of his life, he and his religion were ignored as just another cult. The Messenger of Allah's world concerned his own Black people and their destiny. He started from storefronts and built a kingdom of service worth more than \$80 million. But this accomplishment was only a part of his message that oppressed people in America can multiply in riches and spiritual goodness if only they believe in themselves.

The Honorable Elijah Muhammad is gone but the many symbols of hope in our slums remain as his legacy.

—SIMEON BOOKER



A wise man and master teacher, Muhammad's main message pointed out how Blacks can survive in U. S. through self-love and self-help.

Leaders Praise Legacy

Black people in the United States lost one of the most uplifting leaders they have ever known when the Honorable Elijah Muhammad died of congestive heart failure at the age of 77. That was the consensus opinion of prominent Black civil rights leaders, politicians and clergymen reacting to the death of the leader of the Nation of Islam.



Jesse Jackson



Julian Bond



Vernon Jordan



J. H. Jackson

In the 40 years Muhammad led the Muslims as their nearly deified leader, the Messenger of Allah introduced and popularized the notion of Black pride through self-help and self-love, built an awesome economic empire and gave many lost Blacks a path to hope, Muhammad's prominent admirers commemorated.

His death, they said, leaves a vacuum in the spectrum of Black leadership in America.

"The Honorable Elijah Muhammad is dead. The single most powerful Black man in this country died today," said Rev. Jesse L. Jackson, national president of Operation PUSH.

"A prophet," he intoned, "has passed from our midst, but his

prophecy lives on. The Messenger made the message very clear. He turned alienation into emancipation. He concentrated on taking the slums out of the people and then the people out of the slums.

"He took dope out of veins and put hope in our brains.

"He was the father of Black consciousness. His leadership exceed-

ed far beyond the membership of the Black Muslims. For more than three decades, the Honorable Elijah Muhammad has been the spiritual leader of the Black Muslims and a progressive force for Black identity and consciousness, self-determination and economic development."

Georgia State Sen. Julian Bond agreed: "Elijah Muhammad has presented to Black people in this country a model of thrift, of hard work, of devotion to self, and of cleanliness of mind and body that we don't get in many other places."

Vernon E. Jordan, executive director of the National Urban League, said Muhammad was a man "of unquestioned talents and leadership ability who has left an

Of Elijah Muhammad

indelible mark on his times.

"Under his guidance, the Nation of Islam developed into a vital and positive force within many communities and has provided answers and services for thousands and thousands of people. His passing is to be sincerely regretted but his legacy of achievement remains as his eternal monument."



John Lewis



Roy Wilkins



Leon Sullivan



Richard Daley

Rev. Dr. J. H. Jackson, president of the National Baptist Convention U.S.A., which boasts 6.5 million members, said the importance Muhammad placed on self-help made him a leader Blacks should emulate.

"He emphasized the elements of self-help, self-respect, and economic independence," said Rev. Jackson.

"He made a distinct contribution, not only to his own organization but to the people of this country in that he showed what can be done with a little sacrifice and a little effort. In these particulars, we would do well to emulate his philosophies and his positions."

While touring the Virgin Islands, Rev. Leon Sullivan, upon

hearing of Muhammad's death, said Black America has suffered a great loss. The founder of the Opportunities Industrialization Centers of America, Rev. Sullivan said:

"This man and his work were part of a new frontier for Blacks in the United States and for Black people throughout the world. I ad-

mired him and I still admire his effort. God bless his spirit."

John Lewis, executive director of the Atlanta-based Voter Education Project and former head of the Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee, said the death of Muslim messenger Muhammad created "a leadership vacuum. Without question, he aided many young Black Americans to gain dignity and hope and a will to survive. I have a great deal of admiration for the sense of discipline he provided for many young Black men and women."

NAACP executive director Roy Wilkins said Muhammad "was a leader of the Black Muslims and will be missed by them and all those with whom the Muslims had



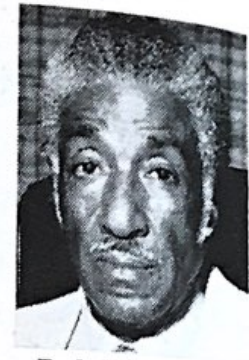
C. E. Lincoln



C. V. Hamilton



George Clements



Ralph Metcalfe

'Muhammad Gave Blacks New Confidence'

business or social relations."

Chicago Mayor Richard Daley said, "The death of the Honorable Elijah Muhammad is a great loss to the city of Chicago and to the entire country. He was an outstanding citizen who was always interested in helping young people and especially the poor. He always exalted the basic family unit, which is something we should all admire, and he developed an educational system which preaches dignity, self-respect and accomplishment."

Dr. C. Eric Lincoln, chairman of Fisk University's Dept. of Religious and Philosophical Studies and author of *The Black Muslims In America*, appraised the impact Muhammad had upon Blacks thusly:

"Elijah Muhammad gave Blacks new confidence in their potential to become creative and self-sufficient people. In addition, he taught his followers the efficacy and rewards of hard work, fair play, and abstinence. It has been shown beyond a shadow of a doubt that the Muslims who have followed his economic teachings have been comparatively prosperous and have in many cases moved substantially

ahead in their economic pursuits.

"He gave also his people a success formula for home and family life. The rate of delinquency among Muslim children is extremely low. The rate of divorce is quite low. The stability of the Muslim home is an ideal for which the rest of America might strive."

Dr. Charles V. Hamilton, a Columbia University political scientist, said: "Elijah Muhammad was one of the few who has been able to combine religion and race with a rather continuing economic influence."

Fr. George Clements, pastor of Chicago's Holy Angels Roman Catholic Church, whose congregation offered a memorial mass to the Black Muslims messenger, commented: "His teachings of dignity, self-respect, discipline and a sense of responsibility are the great works he leaves behind. And this we admire no matter what our religion."

Chicago Congressman Ralph Metcalfe said succinctly: "Mr. Muhammad's life was one of peace, harmony, and great integrity. He made the Nation of Islam a pillar of strength in Black communities throughout the country."

Words of the Week

On Blacks in America: *"Every Black man in America will eventually be a Muslim. He's already a Muslim; he just doesn't know it yet."*

On the Muslim philosophy of racial separation: *"I am teaching separation of the races because God has chosen us, he's asking us to leave the white man. There is no hope for us with the children of our slave-masters."*

On integration: *"The white man thinks we are fools because we want to lose our identity. You want to be his son-in-law, to study beside him, ride beside him, eat in his house. This is what you're asking for . . . instead, you should be asking for separate land where you can do something for yourself."*

On his personal fortune: *"Man, if I had a million dollars you wouldn't have time to talk with me. I'd be too busy trying to find out where I'm going to put this million dollars and where is the best place to spend it."*

On Black health care: *"I thank the whites for nursing us back to health, but I do think we should do something for self. We have some of the finest trained doctors and nurses, and so why not take this training for ourselves."*

On building the Nation of Islam: *"If we can't be sent back where we came from, why not do this: Let the government set up some territory, or a state, for ourselves. Help us to produce the necessities that we are not able to produce for ourselves. Give us 20 or 25 years [to become self-sufficient]. If we don't it's not the master's fault. Then you can come in with your guns and kill us all."*

On his successor: *"God chose me and if he wants a successor to me He will choose one. The work that I'm doing I don't think God needs one. What would another one do? There will be no successor. It will be altogether a new religion."*



E. Muhammad

On Christianity and why Black Americans should turn away from it: *"Christianity is the religion organized by the enemies of the Black Nation to enslave us to the white race's rule. . . ."*

On the use of firearms and why Muslims are forbidden from using them: *"A gun takes a man's mind off God's protection and puts it on the gun. This is not the way men should think because a gun's protection is only temporary."*



Disciplined members of Fruit of Islam guard force sit solemnly as speakers complete statements at Saviour's Day ceremony attended by nearly 20,000.

(Continued from page 18)

The most stirring and touching declaration of faith came from the man who is the Nation's articulate national spokesman, Louis Farrakhan of New York.

After declaring that the day was not one of sadness and that Elijah's life "was the will of God, his passing was the will of God and his son was the will of God," Farrakhan broke down and cried.

In tears, he declared: "I upheld his name. I defended him. I will not be unfaithful to the only man that I ever knew that was worthy of being faithful to.

"He said his son would help him." Farrakhan continued. "That day has arrived. And I, like all the rest, submit and yield to see that the work of Elijah Muhammad is carried on by his son, Wallace D. Muhammad."

Before Farrakhan's speech, heavyweight boxing champion Muhammad Ali, a Muslim, praised Elijah Muhammad as a wise teach-

er and cited his boxing manager, Herbert Muhammad, as a wise man. Herbert is also the Messenger's eldest son.

Ali said Herbert "told me that from now on Wallace D. Muhammad will be the head of the nation. We should obey and receive advice from him. And when we look at him, you are looking at the Hon. Elijah Muhammad."

Ali then said he had an announcement to make. "Allah himself will visit Brother Wallace Muhammad. It was prophesied that Muhammad would visit Wallace Muhammad while he is in his 40s. He is 41 today."

In the midst of the mourning for Elijah Muhammad by his followers and their pledges of loyalty, Rev. Jesse Jackson, national president of Operation PUSH, paid his respects.

The only non-Muslim to speak at the gathering, Rev. Jackson said the fallen leader "turned alienation into emancipation. He

Committee Will Help To Run The Nation

concentrated on taking the slum out of the people and then the people out of the slums.

"His life and deeds will serve as an inspiration and a testimony on the pages of history to the strength, vitality, toughness and determination of the oppressed to be free."

After Rev. Jackson, the ministers continued their praise for the Messenger and continued to give thanks that he will "live on" in his son, Wallace.

Nathaniel Muhammad, another of Elijah's sons, in a rousing sermon, declared that "the Jesus that died for us died yesterday."

Los Angeles Minister Abdul Kareem said that even at the young age of 24, Wallace had no equal in his knowledge of Islam and the Arabic language.

Tall and muscular Abdul Rahman of the Atlanta Temple and head of the southern region of the Nation pledged, "the southern region is behind the leadership of the Hon. Wallace D. Muhammad." The statement was greeted by a rousing ovation.

And finally, Wallace D. Muhammad himself, who all afternoon had sat directly behind the podium, and who was hugged by each speaker as he finished his address, stepped up to the podium.

The chant again rose, this time exploding. "Long live Muhammad. Long live Muhammad."

The new Muslim leader, about 5 feet, 10 inches tall, and about 175 pounds, bowed from the waist, accepting the cheers.

He then delivered his first speech as head of the sprawling and powerful Nation which boasts 75 temples throughout the U. S.

In it he stressed the wisdom and blessedness of Elijah Muhammad, the accuracy of the interpretation of history by the Holy Quran, and the strength of the Nation of Islam.

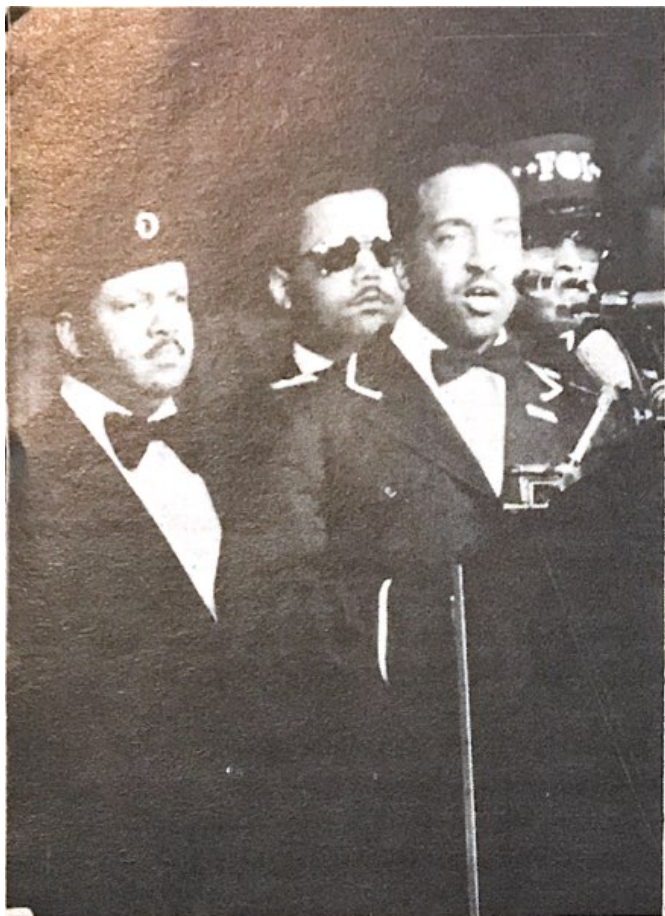
He said the "winds of emotion" had no chance of harming the "house"—that is the nation of Islam. "No matter how hard that wind blows," he continued, "the shades will not even quiver. The house will not be moved by the winds of emotion."

Muhammad told his eager audience to "never let anyone come among us and speak a word of discord. No one can speak a word of cowardliness and we not hear it. No one can speak a word of division and we not hear it. (If we do hear it) it will be driven out with the force of God. And nothing can withstand the force of God."

When Muhammad finished, admiring ministers hugged him and lifted him upon their shoulders as the hero of the day.

In his new role, Wallace D. Muhammad will have a five-member committee to aid in the administration of the vast Nation of Islam.

President of the committee is Muhammad Ali. Other members are Herbert Muhammad, Louis Farrakhan, Fruit of Islam Supreme Captain Raymond Sharrieff and Elijah Muhammad Jr.



Minister Wallace Muhammad makes maiden speech as Herbert (l) and Wali Muhammad stand behind him with a Fruit Of Islam security guard.

Minister Wallace Is Prepared To Carry On Father's Work

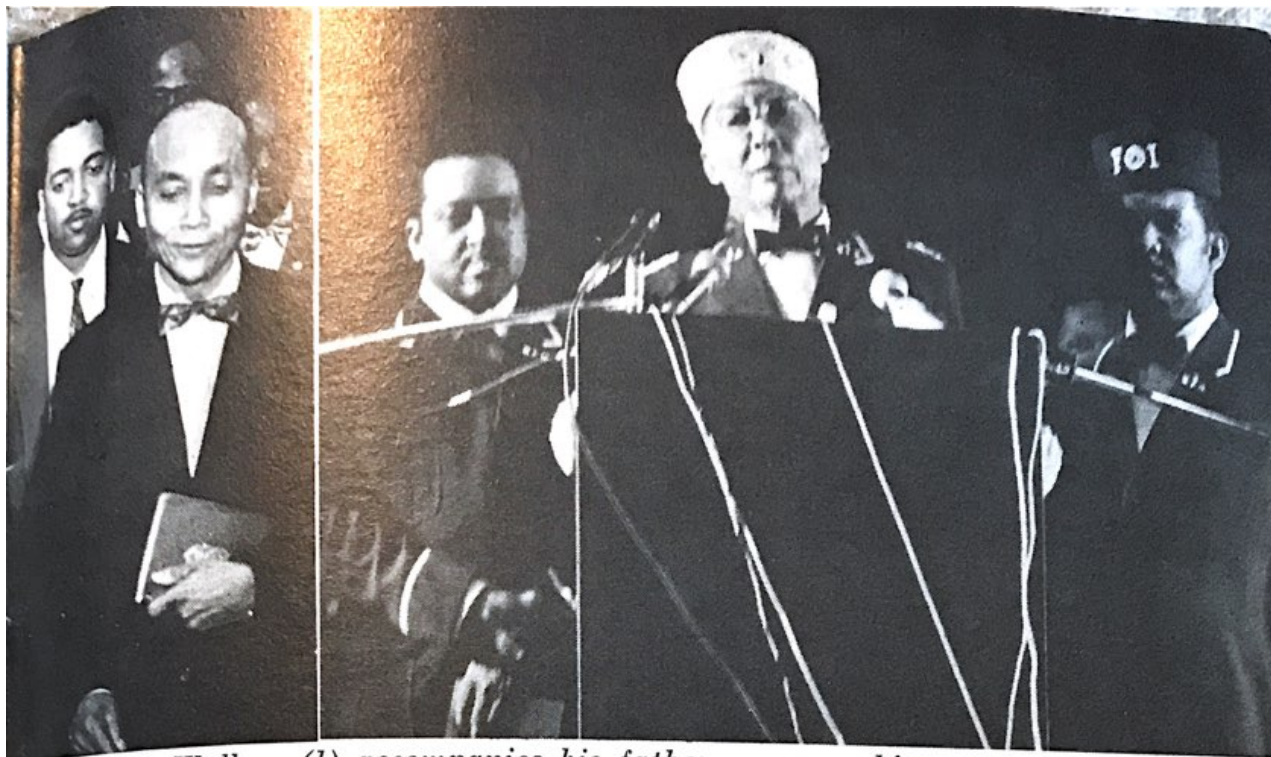
Until his recent elevation to the leadership of the Nation of Islam, Minister Wallace D. Muhammad, 41, was unknown to most of America's Blacks.

The seventh of eight children of the late Hon. Elijah Muhammad, the minister—in the minds of many—did not seem to be the most likely heir to his father's position.

Herbert Muhammad is the oldest son of the Messenger's six sons and two daughters. Some thought that he would be the successor by virtue of chronology. Raymond Sharrieff, Elijah Muhammad's son-in-law and Supreme Captain of Nation's Fruit of Islam



At left, Minister Wallace greets his youngest brother, Akbar Muhammad, upon Akbar's completion of an Egyptian tour. Minister Wallace presents a \$50 check (r) to Eustace Gay, editor of The Philadelphia Tribune, to help kick off the newspaper's "NAACP-Daisy Bates Fund" drive in Dec. 1959.



Minister Wallace (l) accompanies his father on a speaking engagement in New York City. The minister and his brother, Herbert, are shown with their father at The Messenger's last Saviour's Day appearance in 1974.

guard force; and Minister Louis Farrakhan, the Black Muslims' national representative, were widely known and respected. And for that reason, they, too, were considered possible successors.

But Minister Wallace? "He was the will of Allah," Farrakhan told nearly 20,000 followers at the recent Saviour's Day celebration in Chicago. "And whatever Allah wills, we will submit to and obey."

Farrakhan and other Muslim leaders also said that Minister Wallace, who speaks fluent Arabic and is said to have an intimate knowledge of Islamic religions, was personally chosen by his father.

Of himself, Minister Wallace said that he is "too small . . . for all of the honor" attached to his new, official title, "Minister and Leader of the Nation of Islam." (Muslim officials said that the title, "The Messenger of Allah,"

exclusively belonged to Elijah Muhammad and will not be conferred upon his successors.)

But those who know Minister Wallace say that his public humility belies his innate ability.

They point out that his command of the Arabic language and his knowledge of Islam has endeared him to many in the Caribbean Islands and Egypt, where he has traveled and lectured extensively.

His administrative abilities were tested for three years (1959-1962) in Philadelphia, where he served as minister of Muhammad's Temple No. 12; and in Chicago, where he also served as a minister.

Like his father and many others in the Nation, Minister Wallace knows the frustrations of imprisonment. He spent 15 months behind bars in the early 1960s on charges of draft evasion.

Wallace Was 'Behind-The-Scenes Man'

Minister Wallace is regarded as a "behind-the-scenes man." He traveled extensively in the interest of the Muslim Movement, acting as a troubleshooter for his father in helping to establish new temples and in soothing tensions between factious Muslims. In time, according to Black historian, C. Eric Lincoln, Wallace earned a reputation as "one of the Messenger's ablest sons."

Minister Wallace received his entire formal education in the Nation's University of Islam, a point which was emphasized by Saviour's Day speakers.

But, indeed, there were those who said that Minister Wallace's elevation was mandated by divine intervention.

There were reasons for this. First, Wallace D. Fard, the founding Prophet of the Nation, is said to have told Elijah Muhammad that his seventh child would be a son, and his successor. The seventh child was a son, and the Messenger promptly named him Wallace in honor of Fard. Also, like his father, Minister Wallace was born in October—a fact regarded by Elijah Muhammad as being more than coincidence.

Presumably, there are other reasons behind Minister Wallace's succession to the leadership. But, if they exist, they are known only to members of the Black Muslim's inner circle.

However, a view of Wallace D. Muhammad's life as a young man and a review of some of the observations he made in his first ad-

dress as the new leader of the Nation show him to be at once a kind man who is also strong and dedicated to Muslim philosophies.

When he was 26 years old and minister of the Philadelphia Temple in 1960, Wallace helped to begin a fund drive on behalf of Mrs. Daisy Bates, NAACP regional executive, who along with her husband, L. C. Bates, lost their newspaper and personal fortune because of their activities in trying to integrate Little Rock, Ark., high schools.

In Wallace's first speech as the leader of the Nation of Islam, he, like his father, described Christianity and the "white man" as the enemies of the Black man.

"Elijah Muhammad said your graveyard is the Christian reading of the Bible," he said. "When he preached those words in the 1930s, 40s, and 50s, most of them (Black people) laughed at him. They referred to the followers of Elijah Muhammad as 'those old Muslims.'"

He said that in the 1930s, the Black man's dilemma in America was so pronounced that "the solution to the problem was to bring something very strange. Allah himself had to come."

He said "Elijah Muhammad unlocked the Bible," by teaching the true translation of it—the Muslim translation.

Muhammad received sustained applause when he told the throng of followers that the Muslims had lived "to see integration come apart at the seams. . . ."



Smiling happily, new Muslim leader Wallace Muhammad is hoisted above crowd by family members (l-r) Elijah Jr., John and Mourad. "This is a time for joy, not sadness," the Saviour's Day delegates shouted.

Photo by Roy Lewis