



Muhammad ponders question (l) before responding to newsmen (r).

Elijah Muhammad Denies Baton Rouge Muslims In Rare Press Conference

Elijah Muhammad, leader of the Nation of Islam, recently held a rare press conference in which he denied any link between his organization and Blacks involved in a confrontation with police in Baton Rouge, La. (JER, Jan. 27).

Muhammad, called the Messenger of Allah, also spoke about alleged plots to take his life, about his health and the possibility of whites being spiritually saved. The press conference—which the Messenger said was his first “in many years”—lasted 70 minutes and was held in the parlor of his stately mansion on Chicago’s South Side.

Muhammad, 73, said the 10 Black men accused of instigating the Baton Rouge incident were not Muslims, as the town’s author-

ities said. Two Blacks were killed in the violence along with two white sheriff’s deputies.

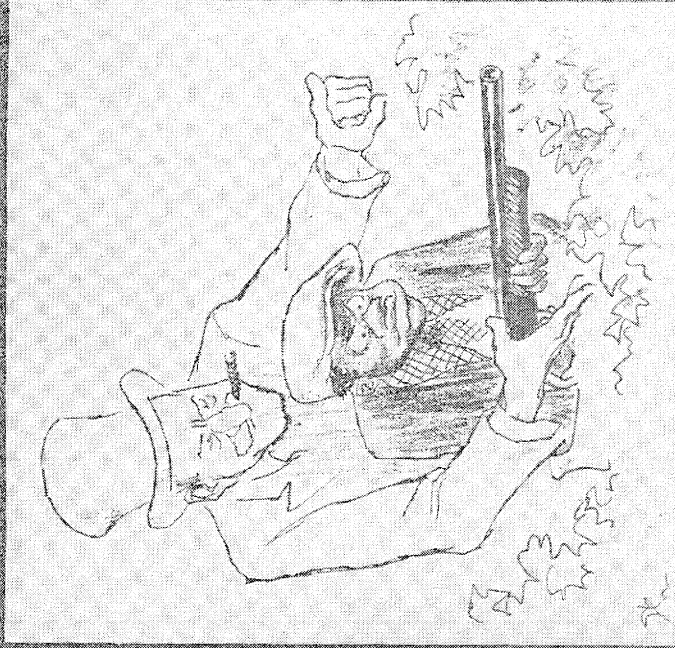
“So far, we have not found that these people were on our registry,” said Muhammad in reference to the 10 men. However, he added that members of his staff “are still searching” the Muslim registry to determine if the men ever belonged to the organization.

Asked if he thought there was a plot by dissident Muslims to assassinate him, Muhammad said: “For 40 years, I have been a target of assassination. But I don’t fear that. . . . That doesn’t bother me. God is on my side,” added the slightly built man who was flanked by a host of bodyguards.

Muhammad said he “heard” that some of the violence experienced by the Muslims in the past months was “caused by police brutality.” He added: “Many of our people have been mistreated—jailed, sent to prison to serve time. I have served time myself that they (authorities) have put on me. But, the trial of the Black Muslims in America must come to pass.” Muhammad did not elaborate on why he thought police pressure was being directed against his group.

The Messenger refused to say how many Muslims have been killed in recent months—either by police or dissident members. But he did say that the Muslims “have this (information) on records.”

Asked about his health, Muhammad said: “I do very well. All of the afflictions of the other fellow—I have tasted some of them.”



THERE IS NO WAY OF US SETTING UP UNITY BETWEEN EACH BLACK BROTHER AS LONG AS ONE WILL ACCEPT DEADLY WEAPONS FROM THE DEVIL TO KILL OFF EACH OTHER, SUCH AS HAS BEEN USED ON US, THE MUSLIMS HERE THE PAST WEEK OR SO.

Reproduction from Muhammad Speaks shows Muslim concern that whites may have had hand in recent violence.