

PRAYER TO ALLAH. Black Muslim men, trim and husky, make traditional Islam gesture of readiness to receive what Allah gives.

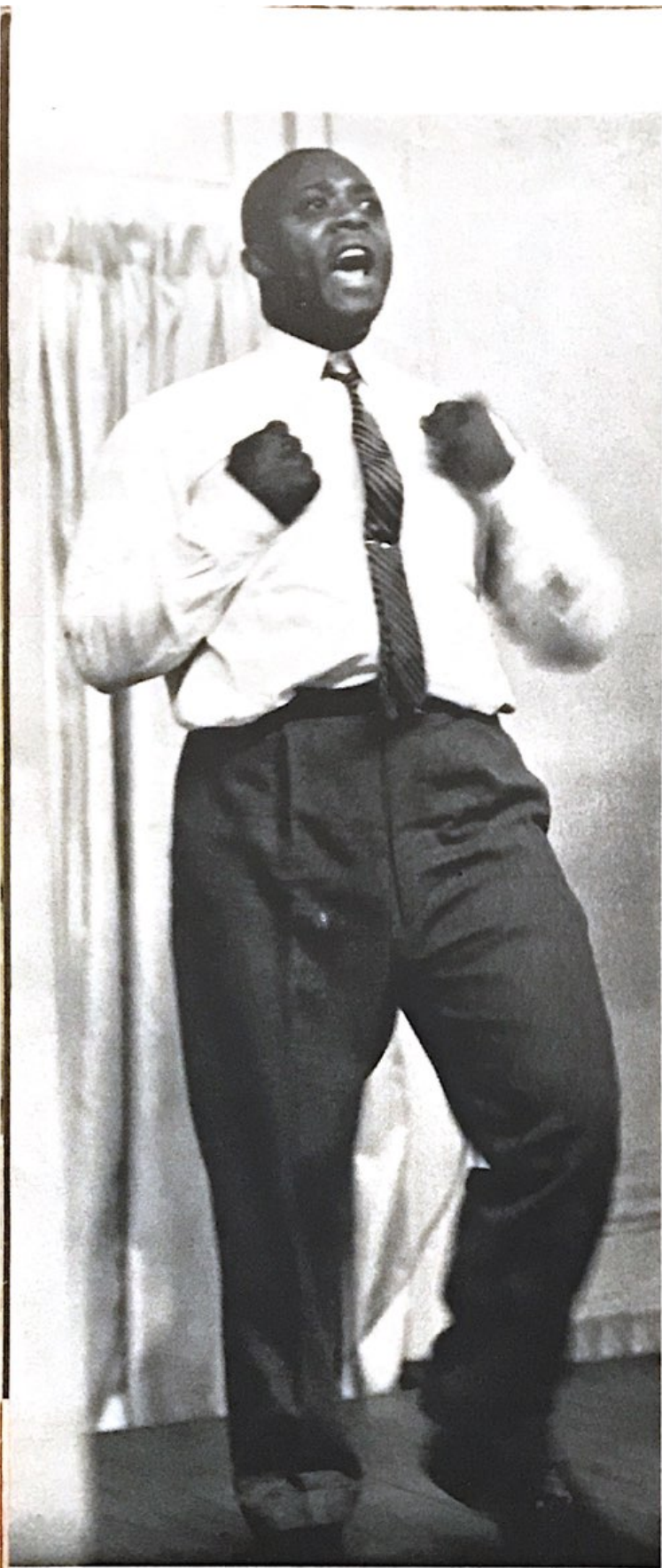
BLACK MUSLIM'S CRY GROWS LOUDER

'The white devil's day is almost over'

In these days of bloody Birmingham and of jails in the South jammed with Negro demonstrators, these words above ring ominously, heralding an explosive and disturbing force in the Negro fight for civil rights. They are the prophecy of Elijah Muhammad (*opposite*), leader of a sect called Black Muslims, who cries out nakedly of the Negroes' deep rage at whites—"white devils," he calls them. Founded in 1930, but long obscure and ignored, the Muslims have been swept to prominence and significance by the erupting impatience of Negroes willing to risk violence to get equality. In this mood, Negroes who shrugged off the movement now feel a growing response to its angry credo. Negro politicians, sniffing the winds of popularity, are busily courting the Muslims.

Elijah Muhammad, who calls himself the messenger of a black Allah, preaches a confusing religion. But there is nothing confused about his secular doctrine: it is bitter, blunt, intractable. The black man and white man, he says, can never be brothers. Instead of hoping for love and peace from whites, the Negro must expect hate and violence—and be ready to return them. Instead of joining the white man's world, the Negro must separate from it and set up an all-black nation in the U.S.

Muslims—there may be as many as 100,000—live in a closed world, barring outsiders. LIFE Photographer Gordon Parks, a Negro and given unprecedented access to this world, found himself forced into an agonizing self-study (*page 31*).



DRILL CAPTAIN. Roaring a cadence, Brother Joseph puts Fruit of Islam class through its calisthenics course.

Emphasis is on physical toughness and blind obedience. Laggards are humiliated or kicked out of the class.

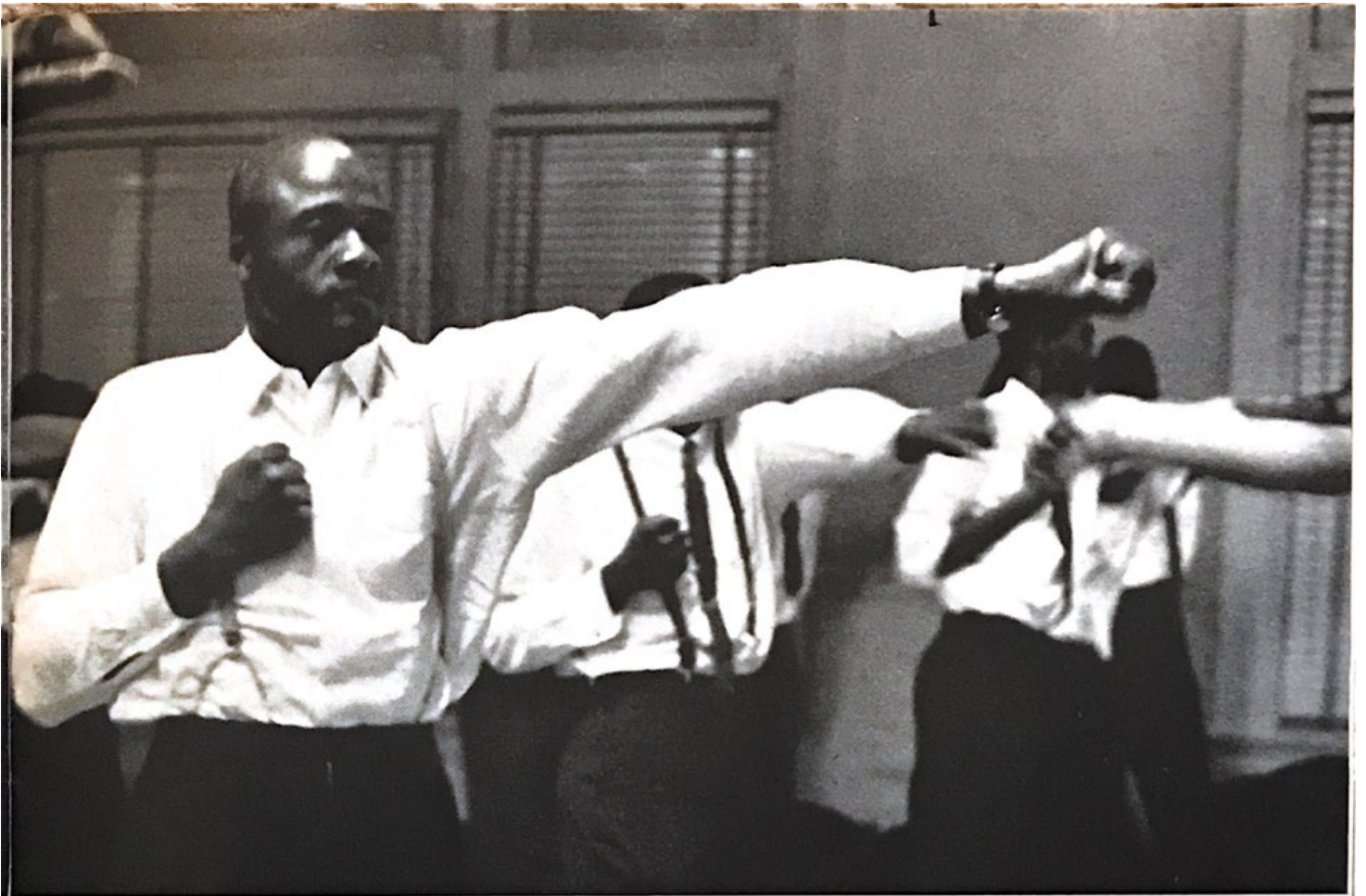


THE TOUGH CORPS TRAINS FOR ACTION

In 30 Black Muslim mosques across the country, drill masters and judo experts train an elite guard called the Fruit of Islam. Many Negroes and whites, alarmed by overtones of hate and violence in Muslim doctrine, see the F.O.I. as a threatening instrument of racial rage. But the group has no weapons and Muslims insist it is only for defense against unprovoked white attacks, especially by police. "If anybody attacks us," says one leader, "may Allah have mercy on his soul." There have been many incidents between Muslims and police, and two F.O.I. men have been killed. Since they want nothing at all to do with whites, Muslims declare they are not likely to precipitate racial incidents. Any Muslim—some are reformed criminals and dope addicts—who breaks a U.S. law is suspended from the sect.

Discipline permeates the Muslim sect and all reins of power are pulled by Elijah Muhammad, now 66. His enforcer is his son-in-law, who bosses the F.O.I. Elijah himself manages the sect's multimillion dollar finances and two sons run businesses which include stores, laundries and restaurants where Black Muslims are encouraged to trade. Most Muslims pay staggering dues of \$8 a week, plus extra assessments.

Elijah Muhammad himself did not found the cult. His career began in 1930 as disciple of an "Arab Savior" named D. W. Fard. Muhammad draws followers not with fiery oratory but by relentlessly repeating his simple solution for the Negro's complex problem. As Muslims, members find joy and security in a life of order, discipline, uniforms and tough mutual support.



DEFENSE DRILL. Snapping fists out in unison, F.O.I. members learn basic fighting skills. Ready to counter

any aggressive action, the men guard leaders, Muslim schools and temples, and women when en masse in public.

DEFENSE AGAINST DOGS. F.O.I. instructor shows how to deal with a live police dog like those used against

demonstrating Negroes in Birmingham: grasp its leash, whirl it around in air, and the dog will surely strangle.



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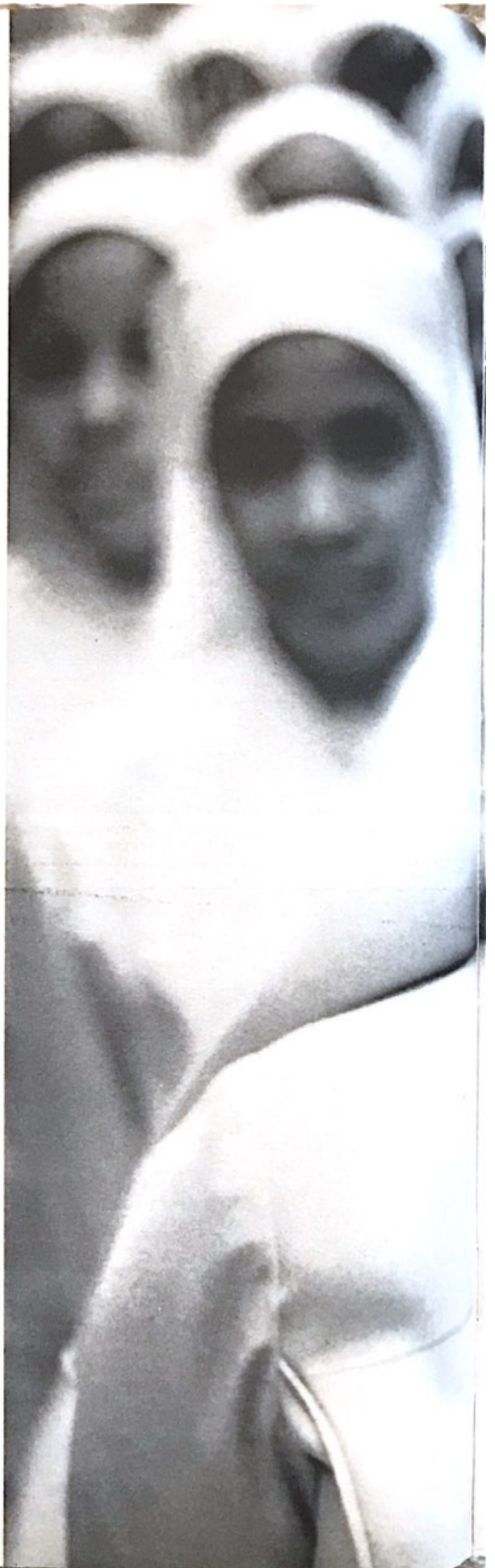
ADULTS' TRAINING. Wearing \$150 uniforms, Muslim wives get instruction in sewing from women's leader

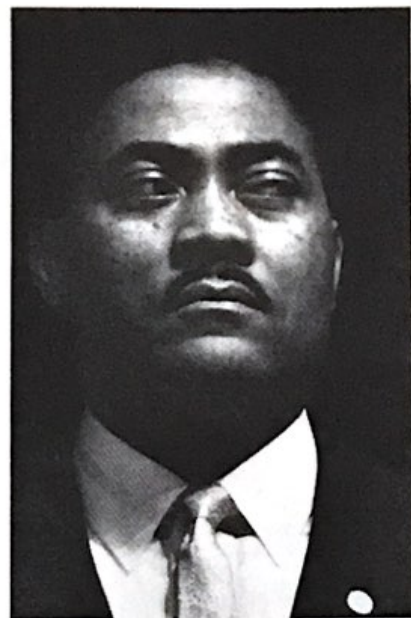
Ethel Sharrieff (right). At public affairs women must wear ankle-length white dresses, keep heads covered.



CHILDRENS' SCHOOLING. Christine Johnson quit public school job to run Muslim grade school in Chicago.

TOP WOMAN. Leader of women's corps, Ethel Sharrieff, Elijah's daughter, runs charges with unyielding hand.





STRONG MAN. Raymond Sharrieff, chief of the F.O.I. and Ethel's husband, handles all disciplinary jobs.

'WAKE UP, CLEAN UP, STAND UP'

Before the black man can become independent of whites, says Elijah Muhammad, he must "wake up, clean up, stand up." So the membership, many of whom never got through elementary school, attend weekly classes at the mosque. The women learn homemaking—sewing, cooking, how to set a table and serve dinner in a middle-class manner. The women's organization, the Muslim Girl Training and General Civilization Class, parallels the men's F.O.I. and the women's leader, Elijah's daughter, is married to its chief. Though both men and women study reading and mathematics, there is no coeducation. No men are allowed among the women at classes—or at religious services, where they sit on opposite sides of the hall.

In Chicago the Muslims also run a school for children, the Islam University Number 2, accredited by the state. Attendance is mandatory for the city's Muslim children. The school goes up through 9th grade, but 12 college scholarships are available. But so far there have been only two takers.

STRICT PRAYERFUL WAYS GOVERN A MUSLIM HOME



MUSLIM COUPLE. On Brooklyn home's porch, Jacob X and wife, Sister Dorothy X, are by Islamic symbol.

Muslimism lays a sternly puritanical hand on the Brooklyn home of Jacob X. He was once Jacob Gladden, but Muslims cast off their last names because they were originally given by slave owners. All Muslim last names now are simply X. On a door a sign reads, "No Smoking—Thank You." Liquor and profanity are forbidden, and sexual infidelity would bring banishment from the movement for up to five years. Because the white image of Negroes emphasizes music, singing and dancing, these are forbidden.

Equally stern on self-improvement, Muslimism has been a helpful household force. Dorothy X had little interest in cooking till taught it in classes at the mosque. In F.O.I. classes Jacob X has been drilled that Muslim holiness includes be-

ing a good husband and provider.

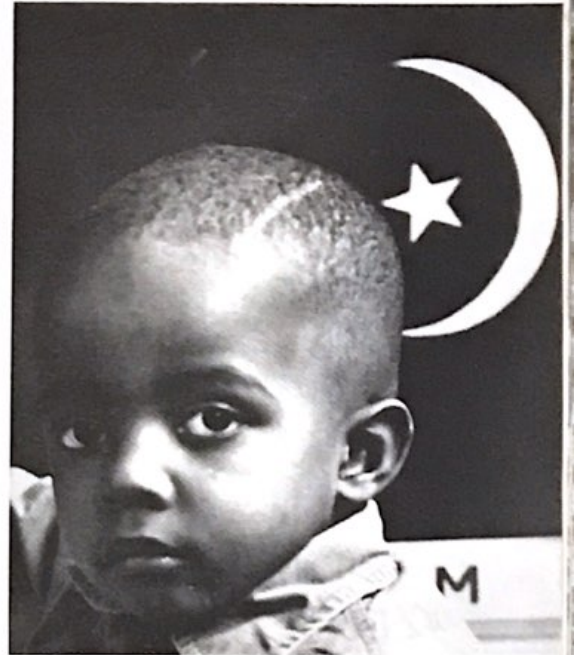
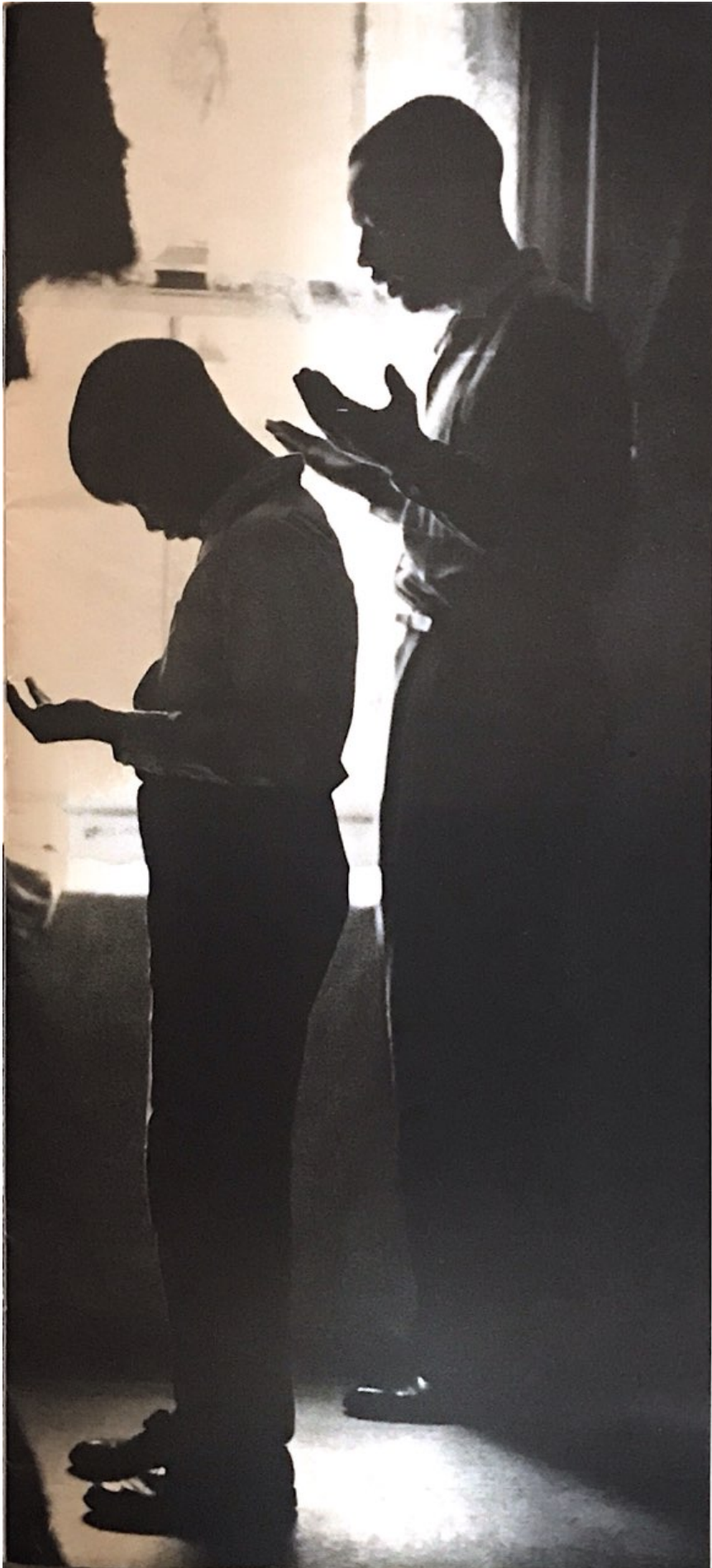
Foreman in an auto body repair shop, Jacob X works for a white boss without rancor. Though white-damning sermons are the core of Muslim services, their main effect is to reassure Jacob that he is superior to whites. Discarding all promises of happiness in heaven, the Muslims' creed guarantees rewards in this world. Its version of Islam, however, has strong, if twisted, Christian roots. It equates Jesus with Elijah Muhammad and turns the Bible into a book of prophecies describing his imminent creation of a black world. But Jacob X feels he is already rewarded for his piety. "You get the feeling," he says, "that if something happens you'll have somebody beside you—that you have a lot of big brothers."



DAILY PRAYER. Jacob X and family pray before evening meal—the only meal of the day that adult Black

Muslims eat. They pray five other times each day—at sunrise (right) when they face east, at midmorning,

noon, sunset and before retiring. Besides banning alcohol and tobacco, rules forbid all Muslims to eat pork.



THE YOUNGEST. Sixth of Jacob's children got his idea of African name: Montanya. Others, born before Jacob was Muslim, have American names.



WORKING FOR ISLAM. Neatly dressed, sons Orlando, 12 (*front*), Arnold, 14, sell Muslim bi-weekly newspaper *Muhammad Speaks* on streets.

ANGRY SPOKESMAN MALCOLM X TELLS OFF WHITES

The front man and trouble shooter for the Black Muslims is 38-year-old Malcolm X, a spellbinding orator of bitter wit, power and impressive intellect. Minister of the big mosques in both New York and Washington, Malcolm is the man assigned to defend and explain Muslimism at television debates, rallies, press interviews and whenever Muslims are on trial. To prove the power of the faith, he freely admits he was an armed robber called "Big Red," converted in prison. Below are samples of Malcolm X's eloquence, delivered to Muslim cries of "Yes, that's right," and "You tell 'em like it is, Mr. Minister."

The white man doesn't want you to be good citizens. He wants you to get drunk so he'll have an excuse to put his club upside your head.

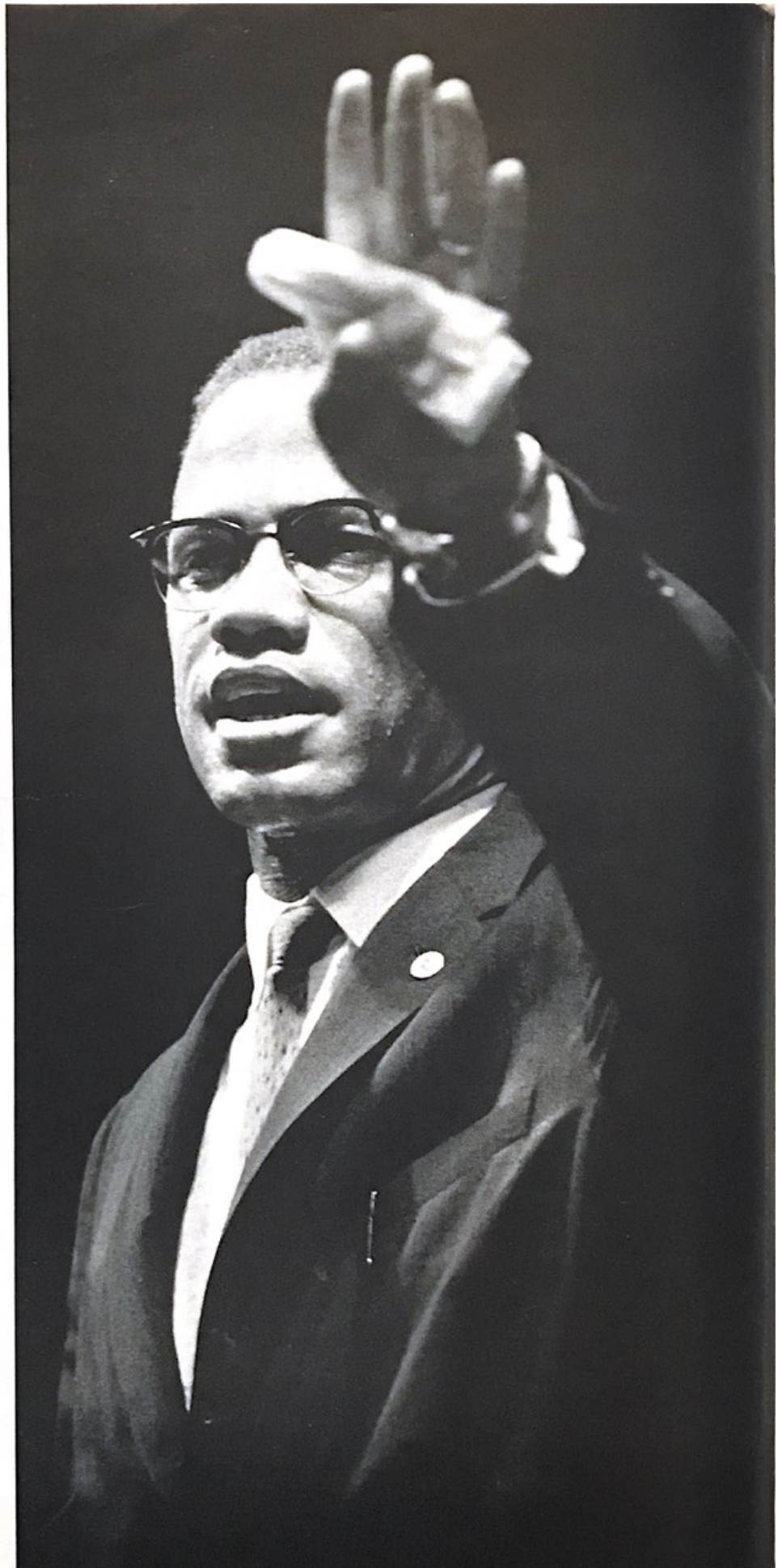
It's the white man that teaches hate. He taught you to hate yourself. Some of you hate your hair so much you put lye on it to get it straight.

The white man's afraid of truth. Truth takes off all his breath. Truth makes him lose all his strength. Just tell him a little truth—his face gets all red. Watch him, yes, yes, yes.

Hell is when you're dumb. Hell is when you're a slave. Hell is when you don't have freedom and when you don't have justice. And when you don't have equality, that's hell. . . . And the devil is the one who deprives you of justice . . . equality . . . civil rights. The devil is the one who robs you of your right to be a human being. I don't have to tell you who the devil is. You know who the devil is.

America wants the whole world to bow down to her. But the majority of people on this earth are dark people . . . and the yardstick by which they measure this white man is in his treatment and attitude toward the 20 million so-called Negroes in this country.

All that Muhammad is trying to do is clean up the mess the white man has made, and the white man should give him credit. He shouldn't run around here calling [Muhammad] a racist and hate-teacher. White man, call yourself a hate-teacher because you invented hate. Call yourself a racist because you invented the race problem.



'WHAT THEIR CRY MEANS TO ME' —A NEGRO'S OWN EVALUATION

Word and Picture Report by **GORDON PARKS**

As I flew back from Phoenix, across this white Christian nation, I tried to summarize my impressions of Elijah Muhammad, whom I had just met for the first time—and to guess what he thought of me. He had made his mission and prophecy clear: as "spiritual head of the Muslims in the Western world," he would lead the black man out of his hell on earth. Both his manner and speech were subdued but his condemnation of the "enemy" was ardent and incessant.

"The white devil's day is over," he said. "There is none a black man can trust. He was given 6,000 years to rule. His time was up in 1914. These are his years of grace—70 of them. He's already used up most of those years trapping and murdering the black nations by the hundreds of thousands. Now he's worried, worried about the black man getting his revenge."

Although I was a Black Man in White Man's clothing, sent by the very "devils" he criticized so much, he made no attempts to convert me. Once he warned, "Don't forget, young man. You've been living in the white Christians' world for a long time. Don't let them blind you. You don't need them."

But he seemed to regard me with neither favor nor scorn. He said neither yes nor no to my request for permission to do a report on the internal workings of the Movement. (In New York, Malcolm X had told me that only Elijah Muhammad could give me the necessary clearance—and that he sternly shunned publicity.) Muhammad had consented to see me and expose me to his doctrine; then, in a matter-of-fact way, he had let me know exactly where he stood. Now, as I flew back to New York to await his decision, somehow I felt scorched from the heat of his inner burning.

The pilot announced our position over Chicago and I looked down, thinking of the three years I had lived in the infamous Black Belt of that city. I remembered the filth, fear, poverty, evictions and bloodshed; the rackets, police brutality, store-front churches—voices within praying, singing, shouting for mercy. I remembered the rat-infested tenements, the cold nights of winter when the Hawk of misery

spread his wings over the shivering black ghetto—and then the robberies and murders that followed, sometimes for food alone. Mostly I remembered the hopelessness that seeped into the black souls of that jungle. Now, from this height, Chicago shone clean in the afternoonsunlight. But I knew that, within the brightness below, torment and suffering filled the lives of thousands.

With my emotions oddly mixed of tenderness, pain and resentment, I wondered what Elijah Muhammad's words meant to those who had great reason to suffer. The soft-spoken, angry words kept coming back again and again. I wondered whether or not my achievements in the white world had cost me a certain objectivity. I could not deny that I had stepped a great distance from the mainstream of Negro life, not by intention but by circumstance. In fulfilling my artistic and professional ambitions in the White Man's world, I had had to become completely involved in it.

At the beginning of my career I missed the soft, easy laughter of Harlem and the security of black friends about me. Although en route to my home in Westchester I occasionally drove through Harlem in those days, there was hardly ever enough time to become a physical part of it again. Eventually I found myself on a plateau of loneliness, not knowing really where I belonged. In one world I was a social oddity. In the other I was almost a stranger.

Many times I wondered whether my achievement was worth the loneliness I experienced, but now I realize the price was small. This same experience has taught me that there is nothing ignoble about a black man climbing from the troubled darkness on a white man's ladder, providing he doesn't forsake the others who, subsequently, must escape that same darkness.

In time the word came from Phoenix: Elijah Muhammad had found me worthy of his confidence. I could start my report. For the next few months I was to melt into the Muslim organization and examine its aims, its laws and the legends surrounding it. I was to eat in its restaurants, attend its rallies and most secret ceremonies. I came to know entire families who were devout members. And all the while

I attempted to assess its meaning to America and to the American Negro—and to myself.

What was Elijah Muhammad's real purpose? Was his movement indeed gaining countless unshakable adherents? And why was his voice, barely audible in person, screaming loudest in the wilderness, often drowning out the more conservative voices of the N.A.A.C.P., the Urban League and other highly respected Negro organizations?

I asked Malcolm X, who served as my guide through the intricacies of Islam, some of these same questions late one night as we drove along the noisy streets of Harlem. He replied, "The thinking American Negro realizes that only Elijah Muhammad offers him a solid, united front. He is tired of the unfulfilled promises of the lethargic, so-called Negro leaders who have been so thoroughly brainwashed by the American whites. 'Have patience,' they say, 'everything is going to be all right.'

"The black man in this country has been sitting on the hot stove for nearly 400 years. And no matter how fast the brainwashers and the brainwashed think they are helping him advance, it's still too slow for the man whose behind is burning on that hot stove!"

Malcolm's caustic reply was to take on more meaning, more truth, as I read the daily newspaper accounts of the black man's interminable suffering in the South. The "white devil" seemed determined to live up to Malcolm's predictions. I thought of my youngest son, who had just received a notice from the draft board, and I thought of the words of Malcolm X:

"The black man has died under the flag. His women have been raped under it. He has been oppressed, starved and beaten under it—and still after what happened in Mississippi they'll ask him to fight their enemies under it. I'll do my fighting right here at home, where the enemy looks me in the eye every day of my life. I'm not talking against the flag. I'm talking about it!"

Abruptly I checked the flow of corrosive thoughts. Was I becoming too receptive to the Muslim doctrine? I began prodding myself into a more argumentative mood,



IN ANGER. With picture of Muslim killed by Los Angeles cop, Malcolm X tells story to foreign newsmen.



IN GRIEF. Wearing Muslim white, widow of Ronald Stokes—man killed by police—looks down at his coffin.

CONTINUED

'The white man won't ever let you forget it'

BLACK MUSLIMS CONTINUED

re-examining my feelings so that I might honestly assess the moral convictions I had developed so painfully through the years. When I was young—penniless and obsessed with the ambition to become a photographer—Harvey Goldstein, a white man, gave me my first decent camera, along with invaluable guidance in using it. Later, William G. Haygood, a white Southerner, encouraged me and helped me win the first Julius Rosenwald Fellowship in photography. Julio de Diego, the Spanish painter, offered inspiration and advice. Jack Delano, a Jew, guided me toward the Farm Security Administration, where I fell under the influence of Roy Stryker, a

self aloof from the day-to-day aspects of "the problem." It came as a shock, one afternoon at a chic outdoor party, to hear well-to-do Negro women extolling black nationalism. One matron threatened to join the New York mosque of the Muslims. I heard another berate a blond woman for the Caucasians' treatment of "her people." "You mean, *our* people," retorted the fair-skinned lady. "I happen to be Negro too."

The hostess laughed and nudged me. "Neither she nor anyone in her family would have admitted that 10 years ago!"

The Muslims, with their sharp and unrelenting attack, their aggressive racial pride, have awakened Negroes long insulated by their middle-class possessions and

is finally ready to give it to us!"

Although Malcolm X is the most articulate spokesman in the movement, there are some areas of Muslim philosophy into which he does not venture. One day en route to the Temple No. 7 Restaurant in Harlem I asked him, "Exactly what are Mr. Muhammad's ultimate aims?"

He paused for a moment. "It's best that you ask him on your next visit," he replied. "He loves to explain this himself. But I will tell you that he intends to unite every American black man, whether he be a Muslim, a Methodist or a Catholic. Mr. Muhammad teaches that we cannot afford the luxury of economic, religious or political difference. We must sit in counsel if we are to attain our freedom."

"Remember," Malcolm X cautioned as I left the restaurant. "To try to go it alone is to doom yourself to failure. The black attorneys, students, writers, clergy, teachers and all the rest must unite as one and take the Muslim leadership for their own salvation. If I have a bowl of soup, then you have a bowl of soup. If you die fighting for what is right, then I must die beside you—for I am your brother. You are a black man. The white man won't let you forget it. So know yourself and be yourself. We are of the black nation and we must recapture our rightful heritage and culture and live accordingly."



POLITICAL SUPPORT. Negro politicians, including Congressman Adam Clayton Powell (second from left), pay court to Malcolm X at Harlem street rally.

Dutchman from Colorado, who taught me more about democracy and its almost infinite potential than any person I've met since.

In the course of a career that has thrust me into contact with virtually every kind of person and has taken me several times around the world, I have come to realize the universality of man.

No, I could no more dismiss the events that molded me than I could cast off the cloak of my skin—no matter how appealing Malcolm X was as an individual or as a minister of Muhammad.

Yet there must be, I concluded, some reason why the Muslims struck a responsive chord, not only in me but in so many Negroes moving in sophisticated circles who previously had held them-

aspirations. Behind the Islamic chanting and the semimilitary ritual there lies a cause—one which calls to Negro slum dwellers and suburbanites alike.

Particularly strong is the attraction for the Negro "lowest down on the totem pole," as labor leader A. Philip Randolph has described them. By their very nature the N.A.A.C.P. and the Urban League cannot match the impact of the Black Muslims. Their leaders do not have the hour-by-hour contact with people who, like the Muslims, suffer the problems each and every day of their lives. While Roy Wilkins of the N.A.A.C.P. is attending an integrated social gathering, or is conferring with constitutional lawyers on vital civil rights issues, Malcolm X of the Muslims is visiting prisoners in jail or a destitute family or addressing a crowd of Negroes on a street corner:

"Justice now! Freedom now! Not when the white man feels he

I started to hail a cab but Gladstone X, a Muslim who is close to Malcolm X, was already in the street, his arm raised and signaling. A taxi screeched to a stop and Gladstone opened the door for me. "Good night, brother," he called as the car pulled off.

I had just settled back when the driver, a big, broad-shouldered Negro, turned and spoke. "That was Malcolm X, wasn't it?"

"Yes, it was," I said. "Do you know him?"

"Oh, not personal like, but I hear him speakin' sometimes on the corner with the rest of those nationalist people."

"What do you think of him?"
"Me? Oh, I dig him the most. He's got somethin' goin' for you

and me. He's the only one that makes any sense for my money."

"Are you a Muslim?"

"Who, me? Naw. I'm too busy makin' a buck to join anything. But those Muslims or Moslems, 'ever what you call 'em, make more sense to me than the N.A.A.C.P. and Urban League and all the rest of 'em put together. They're down on the good earth with the brother. They're for their own people and that Malcolm ain't afraid to tell Mr. Charlie, the FBI or the cops or nobody where to get off. You don't see him pussyfootin' round the whites like he's scared of 'em."

"Have they got many followers here in Harlem?"

"I don't know how many followers he's got, but he's sure got a hell of a lot of well-wishers."

"Do you go for all their teachings—like not smoking or drinking or eating pork or fornicating?"

"Well, I don't smoke or drink much, but I like my barbecue and I do like my women. That's about the only place the Muslims and I part company. As far as the white man is concerned, if I could get along without his dollar, I could get along without him."

"Some people say the Muslims hate all white people."

"Well, I don't know about that. But if they don't, they should, 'cause they sure don't waste no love on us. That's for sure!"

"But the Negro is making progress in this country," I reminded him. "And there are some good whites."

"Aw, yeah. And there's some good dogs, too, but all of 'em'll bite you if you don't watch 'em."

"What about that new Negro Astronaut they have just selected for training?"

"Well, that's good . . . very good. But I wouldn't be surprised if they didn't put him and a Jew in one of those capsules together and blow it to hell and gone up to the moon—just to prove a white man's the only one can really make it!"

We were at my hotel now. I paid my fare and said, "How do you think we can solve the racial question?"

"Well, I'll tell you," the cabbie replied. "I used to live in Mobile and I lived in Memphis and I've lived in New York for 15 years. I've come to one conclusion. No matter where the white man is, he's the same—the only thing he respects is force. And the only thing's gonna change him is some lead in his belly."

He lifted a cigar box from the seat beside him and opened it. "I

TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 78

MUSLIM MARTYR. William Rogers, paralyzed by police bullets in Los Angeles, and Malcolm X hawk Muslim papers featuring picture of the man police shot to death.



'Hoses, guns or mobs won't put down this rebellion'

BLACK MUSLIMS CONTINUED FROM PAGE 32

don't like to come downtown," he said. "See this? [A black revolver glistened in the street light]. I'm always afraid I'll use it. That's why I'm headin' back uptown 'fore I get in trouble."

As I left, two white men hailed the cab. The driver slammed the door, locked it and gunned the motor. "Goin' home!" he shouted back at them.

"The dirty black bastard!" one of the men mumbled as the cab roared off toward Central Park.

Recently I sat in a Los Angeles courtroom at the trial of 14 Muslims charged with assault and interfering with an officer. They had been involved in an altercation with the police, during which one young Muslim, Ronald Stokes, was shot to death. (I had read the detailed account of the tragedy in the Muslims' newspaper, *Muhammad Speaks*. SEVEN UNARMED NEGROES SHOT IN COLD BLOOD BY LOS ANGELES POLICE! the red headline blared. The story charged that the

police had entered the Muslims' temple during the fighting.) The courtroom was crowded to capacity with Negroes, not all of them Muslims.

I watched Malcolm X seated in the front row, directly across from the all-white jury. His face was sphinxlike and his eyes never left Officer Donald Weese, the killer of Stokes, from the moment the policeman took the stand until he got off. During the preliminary hearings it had been established that Weese, though he knew the Muslims were unarmed, shot at least four other men besides Stokes and beat another one down with the butt of his gun. The following questions by Attorney Earl Broady and answers from Officer Weese are from the court records of the trial:

Question—Mr. Weese, when you fired at Stokes, did you intend to hit him?

Answer—Yes, I did.

Q—Did you intend to hit him and kill him?

A—Yes. The fact that I shot to stop and the fact that I shot to kill is one and the same, sir. I am not Hopalong Cassidy. I cannot distinguish between hitting an arm and so forth, sir. I aimed dead center and I hoped I hit.

Q—You are saying, sir, to shoot to stop and to shoot to kill is one

and the same thing in your mind?

A—That is correct.

Q—Did you feel to protect yourself and your partner it was necessary to kill these men?

A—That is correct, sir.

Leaving the courthouse that evening, I recognized a white reporter who was covering the trial for one of the Los Angeles dailies.

"The Muslims are going to be convicted," he said. I asked him if he thought they were guilty as charged.

"The State has no case, none whatsoever, but they can't afford to lose this one. They've got to get those cops off or the Muslims can sue them for millions," he replied.

That evening I relayed the reporter's beliefs to Malcolm X, who said, "Oh, he told you the truth, brother. He was an honest devil, because that's what will happen—but things won't end there. Believe me."

A few days later I accompanied Malcolm X to Phoenix where Elijah Muhammad discussed the trial with more emotional intensity than I had seen him show before. "Every one of the Muslims," he said, "should have died before they allowed an aggressor to come into their mosque. That's the last retreat they have. They were fearless, but they didn't trust Allah completely. If they had, it would have been a different story. A true Muslim must trust completely in Allah."

Mr. Muhammad was weak from one of his periodic fasts, which had gone on for three days, and every so often spasmodic coughing forced him to leave the room. After each attack he returned to deride the "white devil." Although fatigue slowed his voice, he talked on, about the turmoil in Birmingham and other parts of the South. "There is one thing good about what is happening down there," he said. "The black man at last can see what the white man is really like, what he really feels about him. Birmingham bears witness to the fact that a white man is a devil and can't do right, what with water hoses stripping dresses from our women and our youth being chased and bitten by vicious dogs. At last the black man realizes he must fight for his rights if he is to attain them. The white man is more vicious than the dogs he sets upon us. He is never satisfied with a black man no matter what his position. You can lie down and let your back be his doormat, but

soon he'll get tired of that and start kicking you. 'Turn over, nigger! You're layin' on the same side too long,' he'll say."

Before leaving Mr. Muhammad, I asked two questions I had been saving: First, what is salvation for the black man?

"We must accept Islam," he said crisply. "We are the initial people."

"Why?" I asked.

"Because it is something universal, wherein man submits himself completely to God—a black God."

What is your over-all purpose—your goal?

"Universal peace and brotherly love—two things the white man will never be able to accept."

It was nearing plane time. A white-suited chauffeur ushered us out toward Muhammad's limousine. I got in, and through the rear window I could see him and Malcolm X warmly embracing, their cheeks touching as they bade farewell.

Not all of Elijah Muhammad's aims and motives are clear to me. Much of his religious philosophy appears naive and thoroughly confusing. It is obvious from which stratum of Negro society he hopes to draw support for his program: the indigent, unprivileged blacks, those still seeking a messiah to lead them into a promised land of "freedom, justice and equality."

The Muslims insist that only within a separate state can their ultimate goal be achieved. They deride the "passive resistance" preached by Martin Luther King. Malcolm X once said of King's attitude, "There is no philosophy more befitting the white man's tactics for keeping his foot on the black man's neck. If you tell someone he resembles Hannibal or Gandhi long enough, he starts believing it—even begins to act like it. But there is a big difference in the passiveness of King and the passiveness of Gandhi. Gandhi was a big dark elephant sitting on a little white mouse. King is a little black mouse sitting on top of a big white elephant."

But with the passiveness of King and the extremism of Muhammad, the Negro rebellion has come alive. Fire hoses, police dogs, mobs or guns can't put it down. The Muslims, the N.A.A.C.P., the Urban League, Black Nationalist groups, the sit-inners, sit-downers, Freedom Riders and what-have-you are all compelled into a vortex of common protest. Black people who only a few months ago spoke with polite moderation are suddenly clamoring for freedom.

The leaders have lost control; instead of leading the black people they are being pulled along after them, like leaves caught up in the wake of a speeding car. Even Mar-



MUHAMMAD'S FAMILY. Elijah Muhammad is still the focus of power, though asthma compels him to live in Arizona. With him here are aides: his wife Clara, sons Elijah Jr. (far

left) and Herbert (far right), his son-in-law Raymond Sharrieff (second from left). Grandson Hasan Sharrieff, 20 (second from right), is already being given administrative assignments.

'They are not my keeper— but I am their brother'

BLACK MUSLIMS CONTINUED

tin Luther King is seeing his nonviolence movement hopelessly swept into a long-fomenting universal revolt. As the Negro pushes on, the resistance of the Deep South will surely stiffen. Violence and chaos are inevitable. Anyone who can't sense it is either naive or afraid to face the uncomfortable fact. Racial strife is possible all over this land. Have we so very quickly forgotten the Harlem, Chicago, Tulsa and Detroit riots in the earlier days of our troubled generation?

"Even here in the North the 'enemy' is plentiful!" screams Malcolm X.

He is right. Because for all the civil rights laws and the absence of Jim Crow signs in the North, the black man is still living the last-hired, first-fired, ghetto existence of a second-class citizen. His children are idling into delinquency and crime; in too many places they attend schools as inferior and as neatly segregated as any in the deepest South. The revolt in Englewood, N.J. against segregated schools there is just as important to the cause as the revolt in Birmingham or Nashville. Truly, there has been no time like this in the U.S. since the Civil War.

Most of us are wondering about the "new" Negro—and how he got this way. But he isn't new, and he didn't get this way overnight. He has been stirring for a long time, while his country tucked the Emancipation Proclamation under her head for a pillow and went to sleep. The historic Supreme Court decision of 1954 disturbed her repose, but that was all. Now she has been jolted awake by a black militancy that will surely test her democratic conscience.

I remember once standing in a Paris bar with Todd Webb, a white man, trying to convince a Russian student that Todd and I were truly friends, that we had been so even in America. The Russian only laughed at both of us. "Ha! I read about America, you know. You are together here, but in America you stand far apart. Don't think you fool me."

And how pathetically torn I was trying to defend America against the criticisms of Europeans when papers all over the world carried the story of the lynching of the Negro boy, Emmett Till!

I also recall the time in Washington, D.C. when John Vachon,

another white friend, and I walked into a Negro restaurant late one cold night. We were famished, but the owner became abusive and ordered us both out. I tried to get him to sell my friend some ribs. "Not even to take out," he said bitterly. "I'll go *his* people one better."

The times cry out for bold, principled leadership of a kind that has never really been attempted in this country before. After Attorney General Robert Kennedy ran head-on into the fanatical opposition of Alabama's Governor George Wallace on the desegregation issue, the President's brother was quoted as saying, "It's like a foreign country. There's no communication. What do you do?"

You keep trying, Mr. Kennedy. You keep going back for more, again and again, until you begin to realize what it is like for a black man to "go slow," to "take it easy" while under the bootheel of a racist like "Bull" Connor. Go down there sometime when the fire hoses are on full blast, when the dogs are snarling and tearing black flesh, when women, men and children are on their knees singing, crying and praying for deliverance from the agony of this brutal land. Then go back and tell the President that if it is greatness he seeks, this indeed is his chance for it.

I have had faith in America for as long as I can remember. But I have also been angry—even bitter. It is now time for America to justify this belief I have in her, to show me I have not believed in vain. I want my children and their children to keep this faith flowing through their veins. But in all honesty I cannot ask of them love for a country incapable of returning their love.

As for the Muslims, I dislike the fact that they exist, but I also feel this way about the N.A.A.C.P., CORE, the Urban League, B'nai B'rith, the Sons and Daughters of Erin or any such group. I deplore the conditions that necessitate their existence. If and when all such organizations feel they can safely fold their tents, I believe the Muslims will begin folding theirs.

Nobody can speed this day any quicker than the White American. He should remember that the main

reason for the racial strife throughout the South and parts of the North is the Negro's black skin. The Negro can't change his color; the white man must change his attitude toward that black skin. And the Negro can't go around believing that every white man who does not invite him home to dinner is his enemy.

And I, for one, don't intend to join the Muslims. I sympathize with much of what they say, but I also disagree with much of what they say.

I wouldn't follow Elijah Muhammad or Malcolm X into a Black State—even if they achieve such a complete separation. I've worked too hard for a place in this present society. Furthermore, such a hostile frontier would only bristle even more with hatred and potential violence. Nor will I condemn all whites for the violent acts of their brothers against the Negro people. Not just yet, anyway.

Nevertheless, to the Muslims I

acknowledge that the circumstance of common struggle has willed us brothers. I know that if unholy violence should erupt—and I pray it won't—this same circumstance will place me, reluctantly, beside them. Although I won't allow them to be my keeper, I am, inherently, their brother.

Late one evening not long ago Malcolm X and I were driving into New York City from Brooklyn. We were talked out, and I drowsed as he fought the headlight glare of oncoming traffic. Unexpectedly he said, "We sent a little white college girl out of the restaurant in tears today." I listened uneasily, bracing myself for another diatribe against a presumptuous, if well-meaning, "devil."

But Malcolm, speaking with a gentleness he rarely exhibits when discussing whites, hastened to assure me that it was nothing any Muslim had said against her. "She had come in to see if there wasn't something she and her college friends could do to help Muslims and the whites get together," he explained.

"That's nice," I said, pushing up in my seat. "What did you say?"

I am positive he was unaware of the trace of melancholy in his voice as he answered, "I told her that there was no chance—not the ghost of a chance. She started crying, then she turned and went out."



DISTRUST. A Muslim guard frisks a white reporter before letting him into a convention. At religious services F.O.I. searches everybody entering, Muslims and non-Muslims alike.