

--America's Black Muslims: Who and Why?--

One of the most remarkable, provocative, and <sup>of interest</sup> suggestive developments that has recently been taking place in the United States is that designated as the Black Muslim Movement. The spelling is "Muslim", rather than the more familiar "Moslem", in order to distinguish the present movement from <sup>those</sup> such Moslem enclaves that have rather long existed in the United States. And the emphasis is on the word "Black", as the antithesis of white, so as to indicate that this is a black man's movement and not something, that in accordance with Muslim doctrine, might also include the white man. About the movement there has been increasing publicity given through the press and over radio and television, but by and large this has been somewhat limited <sup>in scope</sup> and has made little significant impact upon the general public. Most Americans know almost nothing about the movement, and those who do know something tend to dismiss the movement as just another in a long line of Negro cults. Like Father Divine's movement, it is generally held to be somewhat spectacular but of no over-whelming and lasting importance. However, a recent exhaustive study by C. Eric Lincoln clearly indicates that the Black Muslim movement is not only spectacular, to a degree never before realized in American Negro history, but carries implications and full throated overtones of the most serious import, and may well be on the way to being an extremely dangerous movement.

Entering into the movement are elements and remnants of earlier black national-

ist movements, all of which ~~have~~ have been characterized by "a disparagement of the white man and his culture, a repudiation of Negro identity, and an appropriation of 'Asiatic' culture symbols." Two of these earlier movements warrant ~~brief~~ mention. One, the Moorish Science Temple movement, got under way about 1913. In that year a North Carolina Negro, by the name of Timothy Drew, established a "Moorish Science Temple" in Newark, New Jersey. Soon there were temples established in such places as Detroit, Harlem, Chicago, Pittsburgh, Philadelphia and in various cities of the South, and the movement, at its peak, had a membership of some thirty thousand followers. Drew, who took unto himself the name, Noble Drew Ali, and became known as "the Prophet", was concerned with finding some means of escaping the implications of being a Negro in a white-dominated society. Having been impressed with the seeming lack of race consciousness in Oriental religious thought, Drew saw in it a possible answer to the Negro's plight in a color-conscious America. If Negroes could somehow establish an identity with the Oriental peoples, they might become less susceptible to the hazards of being "every-day Negroes" in America. So with a bland indifference to some of the inconveniences of history, he simply decreed that American Negroes were to be known as "Asiatics". Their salvation lay in discovery by them of their national origin; they must know whence they came, and refuse longer to be called Negroes, black folk, or colored people. They must henceforth call themselves Asiatics, to use the generic term, or, more specifically, Moors, or Moorish Americans. In signi-

fication of Asiatic status, each was to attach the term "el" or "bey" to his name, and in documentati n of the ethnic transformation, each was to have a "Nationality and Identification Card". The card, among ohter things, identified the carrier as " a Moslem under the Divine Laws of the Holy Koran of Mecca, Love, Truth, Peace, Freedom and Justice", and concluded with the assurance that the carrier was "A Citizen of the United States". And each card was validated by the subscripti n; "Noble Drew Ali, The Prophet".

Thus, Drew sought for the ~~M~~merican Negroes what was basically a psychic escape: by changing their names and the symbols of their culture, he hoped that his Moors would be able to change their social fortunes. Undeoubtably, the members experienced a sense of security and importance in their new "Asiatic" status. Some, made conspicuous by the red fezzes which the male members were required to wear at all times, were openly contemptuous of whites, and many rode on the apocalyptic certainty that the whites would soon be destroyed and the Asiatics would be in control. The whites, however, were in no way willing to accept this social metamorphosis, and refused to relinquish their traditi nal racial constructs. There was no basic change in the conditi ns that had made for the growth of the movement. There were clashes with the whites and with the police, which Drew sought to prevent, and there was entrance into the movement of individuals who looked upon it as an opportunity for private gain and exploitation. Drew, with much sincerity and simple idealism, sought to stem this exploitation of his credulous followers, but was shunted aside, and eventaully killed under

mysterious circumstances which still remain unexplained.

The movement, today, is no longer a force of any particular consequence in the Negro community. There are still a few Moorish temples scattered among the Negro ghettos. Their membership is limited to "Asiatics"-- that is, to non-Caucasians-- who renounce the traditional category and the implications of being "colored" or "Negro". The cult considers itself Moslem, although it retains many of the familiar markings of Christianity. Its services are subdued and quiet. Friday is considered the Sabbath day, but the faithful are required to pray daily at sunrise, noon and sunset, facing toward Mecca. Strict personal is emphasized, with most secular entertainments forbidden, along with the use of cosmetics, alcohol and tobacco. Meat and eggs are taboo, and personal cleanliness is stressed. The members look upon Morocco as the seat of their Nation, but being also native to the continent of North America, they have no choice but to submit to the harsh rule of the whites until the whites time to reign comes to an end.

Although no longer a potent force in the Negro community, the Moorish Science Temple movement has nevertheless conveyed a number of ideological elements into the Black Muslim movement, and some of its members have been among the earliest and most ready converts to the Black Muslim Movement.

The other movement of related significance was that led by Marcus Garvey, said to have been a Jamaican "without regard for veracity, a lover of pomp and tawdry

finery and garish display", <sup>5</sup> but who nevertheless fired the imagination of the overwhelming majority of the Negro people, desperate for a new hope and a new purpose. In the summer of 1914, Marcus Garvey had returned ~~home~~ to Jamaica from a visit to London, his mind seething with plans for a new Universal Negro Improvement Association. His sense of mission had been triggered by a reading of "Up From Slavery", the autobiography of Booker T. Washington, who had been despised by many Negroes for his life-pattern of compromise and accommodation. Putting aside Washington's reminiscences of restraint and gratitude for white favors, Garvey originated a far-reaching movement devoted to extreme black nationalism and self-improvement, as a result of which he was to share with Booker T. Washington the bitter contempt of Negro intellectuals---though for quite the opposite reason. "Where" he wrote "is the black man's Government? Where is his King and his kingdom? Where is his President, his country, and his ambassador, his army, his navy, his men of big affairs? I could not find them, and then I declared, 'I will help to make them'." In 1916, he came from Jamaica to New York, where at first little attention was paid to his street-corner speeches. Undaunted he spent a year touring the country, studying the conditions of Negro life. He returned to New York, contemptuous of what he termed the "so-called Negro leaders....(who) had no program, ~~xxx(!!!)xxeexkixkixgxxffxxxx~~ but were mere opportunists who were living off their so-called leadership while the poor people were groping in the dark". He was particularly contemptuous of Negro leadership that depended so heavily

upon white philanthropy. This he held to be an impossible paradox, a turning  
 clock  
 back of the ~~xxxxx~~ of progress at the whim of the white benefactors. The New  
 York division of the Universal Negro Improvement Association soon became the  
 headquarters of a world-wide organization. By midsummer of 1919, Garvey claimed  
 to have two million members in thirty branches, and his newspaper, "The Negro  
 World", with a claimed circulation of some 200,000 copies, was being printed  
 in French and Spanish, as well as in English. Devoted mainly to a recapitulation  
 and reinterpretation of the Negro's contribution to history, it also recalled  
 the stirring heroism of such leaders of American slave rebellions as Vesey,  
 Plessier, and Turner, and the struggles of other Negro leaders against European  
 rule. The rapid rise of the movement was closely related to the post-World War  
 I era, which was a crucial and difficult time for Negroes in the United States.  
 They had been in the war, a war ostensibly for the preservation and enhance-  
 ment of democracy, but they had come home only to die at the white man's hand  
 and to be all the more ruthlessly discriminated against. In the first year  
 after the war, seventy Negroes were lynched, many of them still in uniform. Four-  
 teen Negroes were burned publicly by white citizens, eleven of them being burned  
 alive. During the summer of 1919 there were no less than twenty-five riots across  
 the country, that in Chicago lasting thirteen days and ending with 38 people  
 killed and 537 injured. Beyond physical violence, there was intimidation every-  
 where. The Ku Klux Klan had been revived, not only in its traditional roster of  
 Southern states, but in numerous Northern states as well. Still more there was

an increasing competition between Negroes and whites for housing and jobs, and discrimination was always against the Negroes. For Negro veterans, who had fought to make the world safe for democracy, and for many others of like color and servitude, there were alternate moods of despair and militancy, but many settled on the mood of militancy and turned to Garvey's movement as the answer.

At the First International Convention of the UNIA, held in New York in August 1920, no fewer than twenty five countries were represented, and following upon a mammoth parade, Garvey spoke to some 25,000 Negroes gathered in Madison Square Garden, saying:

"We are the descendants of a suffering people; we are the descendants of a people determined to suffer no longer... We shall now organize the 400,000,000 Negroes of the world into a vast organization to plant the banner of freedom on the great continent of Africa.... If Europe is for the Europeans, then Africa shall be for the black peoples of the world. We say it; we mean it...."

Among many other things there was established a Black Star Steamship Line, organized to link the black peoples of the world in commerce and trade, and to transport America's black millions back to their African home. Garvey's beach-head on the African continent was to be Liberia, the little country on the west coast founded by American slaves in 1847. The Liberian government had promised to "afford the association every facility legally possible in effectuating in Liberia its industrial, agricultural, and business projects."

Garvey's intentions, however, were never wholly clear. The Ku Klux Klan and various Anglo-Saxon Clubs of the time assumed that he intended to lead all the Negroes in America to Africa and were quite ready to give him full support. Garvey, himself, had declared "We do not want all the Negroes to settle in Africa. Some are no good here, and naturally will be no good there." Garvey's real intent was not unlike that of modern Zionism. He wanted to build a state, somewhere in Africa, which would gain such prestige and power that it would be recognized as a symbol of accomplishment and protection for Negroes all over the world. Unlike the Zionists, he looked to the new state as being the powerhouse for a revolution that would free all Africa. On a somewhat prophetic note, he warned: "We shall not ask England or France or Italy or Belgium, 'Why are you here?'. We shall only command them, 'Get out of here'."

Garvey's vast movement, however, plunged into ~~an~~ almost total collapse. The governments of Great Britain and France put pressure upon Liberia and blocked settlement not only there but elsewhere in Africa. At home Garvey came under increasing attack from within the Negro community. Numerous Negro leaders looked upon the movement with alarm, charging it with arousing ill-feeling between the races. Garvey in turn denounced such leaders as "weak-kneed and cringing Uncle Toms". The final downfall came with Garvey being indicted for using the mails to defraud in the promotion of stock in the Black Star Steamship Line. In 1925 he was sentenced to the federal penitentiary at Atlanta, Georgia. His sentence



9

was commuted by President Coolidge in 1927, but never having become an American citizen, Garvey was promptly deported. He tried to keep the movement alive from abroad, but it quickly faded, and when Garvey died in London in 1940, the event was scarcely mentioned in the American press.

Nevertheless, Garveyism lived on as a symbol of militant Negro nationalism. The failure of the Moorish and Garveyite movements left among <sup>many</sup> Negroes a constrained silence, a vacuum of protest against racial indignities. It was a vacuum that would ~~either~~ be filled either by America living up to its democratic ideals, or else by some new black nationalist movement. It is the latter that has occurred in the form of the Black Muslim movement.

In the deep depression year of 1930, a somewhat mysterious peddler appeared in the Negro community of Detroit. Mysterious because there is still no clear evidence of who he was or where he came from. He went by various names- W.D. Fard, Wali Farrad, Professor Ford, F. Mohammed Ali. He was thought to be an Arab, but speculation about his origin ranged all the way from the view that he was a Jamaican Negro, through the notion that he was of the tribe of Mohammed and had been educated at London university, to the charge later made by a Chicago newspaper that he was "a Turkish-born Nazi agent". He, himself, was almost completely cryptic about the matter. The most he is reported to have said on this point was:

"My name is W.D. Fard, and I come from the Holy City of Mecca. Mor about

myself I will not tell you yet, for the time has not yet come.

I am your brother. You have not yet seen me in my royal robes."

Beyond peddling raincoats and silks, Fard did a lot of talking, reciting claimed experiences in foreign lands and giving much advice on food and health. He was soon meeting with groups in homes and when these became inadequate to accommodate all who wished to hear the prophet, as he came to be known, a hall was hired and to it was given the name, The Temple of Islam. Fard now began building a tightly knit organization. Within three years, he had a hard-core following of several thousands. In addition to setting up the temple, he had also founded a University of Islam (actually a combined elementary and secondary school), had created the Muslim Girls Training Class, which teaches young Muslim women the principles of home economics and how to be a proper wife and mother, and had founded the Fruit of Islam, a military organization which drills and trains its members in the use of firearms.

Then sometime in the summer of 1934, Fard disappeared. He vanished completely and no one yet knows where he went, if he went, or what happened to him. There are various rumors-- that he left the country, that he met with foul play at the hands of the Detroit police, that he was murdered by fascist agents who sought to exploit the movement, that he was done in by some of his own dissident followers. However, there has been no confirmation of any of these rumors.

The mantle of leadership fell to Elijah Muhammad, born Elijah Poole, who had been one of the earliest officers in the Movement under Fard. Muhammad shifted

the center of activity from Detroit to Temple Number 2 in Chicago. There he set up new headquarters and began to reshape the Movement under his own highly militant leadership. Fard became identified with the god Allah, and Muhammad who had served under Fard assumed the mantle of Prophet and the commonly used designation the Messenger of Allah.

Under Muhammad the movement has come far. It has an increasing number of temples in major cities; it has schools, apartment houses and grocery stores, restaurants and farms; its real estate holdings in Chicago alone have increased in six years time from 150,000 dollars to 500,000 dollars. Its membership is at least 100,000 and rapidly rising. It is a tightly disciplined organization <sup>which</sup> ~~that~~ under Muhammad's leadership gives no indication of falling apart.

Basic to the growth of the movement has been of course deep resentment and bitter frustration on the part of most American negroes against being treated as second-class citizens. In the words of one Muslim minister: "We've just had a walk-on part. We've been nothing but background scenery for everybody else. Now we've got something to say, and we're going to say it loud enough for the whole world to hear." They look upon various recent attempts to end segregation <sup>being</sup> as all too little and ineffectual. According to Malcolm X, minister of the New York Temple and Muhammad's chief spokesman:

"Roosevelt promised, Truman promised, Eisenhower promised. Negroes are still knocking on the door begging for civil rights....Do you mean to tell me that in a powerful country like this, a so-called

Christian country, that a handful of men from the South can prevent the North, the West, the Central States and the East from giving Negroes the rights the Constitution says they already have? No! I don't believe that and neither do you. No white man really wants the Black Man to have his rights, or he'd have them. The United States does everything else it wants to do."

In addition to this basic, long existent resentment factor, there is a relatively new factor that has greatly sharpened the aggressive impatience of the American Negro, and caused many of them to join the Black Muslim movement. And that is the fact of independence having come to non-white peoples in such countries as India and Indonesia, and even more the emergence of new independent states in Africa. They are encouraged by the emergence of black national states in Africa. At the same time they are concerned lest ~~xxxx~~ the Africans forge ahead and leave them as the major remaining symbol of racial inferiority. "There is a feeling among American Negroes" says C. Eric Lincoln "that the non-white world is waiting -- waiting to see if they are fit to be counted as men. There is a new determination in the Negro community to go first class, whatever the cost. For most, first class means an unqualified enjoyment of all the rights and duties of citizenship. For others--for the Black Muslims-- first class means political and social autonomy-- a national state for the Black Man in America."

In the teachings of the Black Muslim movement there is a considerable amount of

myth mixed in with hard realism. The myth aspect, however, is not to be discounted for as often happens in both secular and religious mass movements, it is the myth that furnishes the organizing principle. The Muslims, first of all, do not consider themselves "Negroes". They resent and reject the word as no more than a label the white man has placed on them to make his discrimination more convenient. America's so-called Negroes, say the Muslims, have been kept in mental slavery by the white man. They have been educated in ignorance, kept from any knowledge of their origin, history, true names, or religion. They have been shackled with the names of the Slavemasters, they have been duped by the Slave masters religion; they have been divided and have had no language, flag or country of their own. Thus, the Muslims do not use the word Negro, except with the qualifier, "so-called", and refer to themselves as "black". Says Malcolm X:

"No matter how light or dark a white man is, he's white. Same way with us. No matter how light or how dark we are, we call ourselves black.....and we don't feel we have to make apologies about it."

They press the matter still further. America's so-called Negroes, they say, are the Lost Nation of Islam in North America. They have now been found, through Fard who was a prophet and messenger from Allah. They have always been sacred to Allah, who has promised to rescue them from their oppressors "America" says "Muhammad" is the place where Allah will make himself felt." His coming demands that "we must give up our slave names...give up all evil doings and practices and do only righteousness or we shall be destroyed from the face of the earth".

At the same time Allah's coming is judgement upon the behavior of those in power. He has already declared the doom of white men for their ~~xxxxxx~~ evils to Black men. That doom is already past due. Muhammad, the present messenger of Allah, has said in one of his newspaper columns:

"You continue like sheep among wolves to go on suffering... the government makes it clear to you that it is no defense for us against injustice...The only alternative left is to unite as one on the side of Allah...."Fight with those who fight against you".

"An eye for an eye"...fight every injustice against us with every drop of blood that is in us."

Allah is a black man, the Supreme Black man, the Supreme being among a nation of divine black men, and all black men represent Allah, or at least participate in him. Thus all so-called Negroes are Muslims, whether they know it or not. And by declaration of Allah himself, the original man, the primogenitor of all other races was Black Man. Black man's history is coextensive with the creation of the earth. White man's history is only six thousand years long. White man is a washed-out, physically weakened, morally evil departure from the original black. He is by nature a liar and a murderer, an enemy of truth and righteousness, and an enemy of those who seek the truth. Islam sent several prophets, including Moses and Jesus, to offer Islam to the white man as a religion of brotherhood. But the white man could not accept it, for the white race is evil by nature and cannot love anyone who is not white. They are deceivers by

nature, fooling the black people by pretending to be their friends. And it is the black Christian preacher, say the Muslims, who is the white man's most effective tool for keeping the so-called Negroes pacified and controlled. He teaches his people to stand still and to turn the other cheek. The so-called Negro clergy, say the Muslims, prostitute themselves to the whites in return for whatever person recognition they can get above their followers. North or South it's the same. If a white preacher exchanges pulpits with a so-called Negro minister once a year on Brotherhood Sunday, the black preacher tells his people the millennium is here." The black preacher is so busy trying to gain the white man's approval by doing what the white man himself has never done, and has no intention of doing, that he has no time to concern himself with the real issues, such as economic justice and the freedom to walk the streets as a man.

All this is laced with potentially violent racial and religious hatred. Yet paradoxical as it may appear to be, the Black Muslims have a rigorously high moral standard of personal and group behavior. Their ritual requirements, mixed with moral injunctions, are demanding. The Muslim must pray five times a day-- at sunrise, noon, mid-afternoon, sundown and before retiring-- and a sixth time if he rises during the night. All prayers are to be made facing east, toward the holy city of Mecca. And before each prayer there must be the proper ablutions, rinsing of the mouth, washing of the hands, feet, forearms, and so on. Cleanliness of the body, inside and outside, is held to be essential. Certain

foods, such as pork and corn bread, are forbidden, and an overweight Muslim is subject to fine until he reduces. One meal a day is considered sufficient, for such restraint eliminates physical and mental sluggishness and leaves more time for industry. Tobacco and alcohol are forbidden, and sexual morality is defined in ultra-puritanical terms. A prime concern of the Black Muslims has been the regeneration of criminals and alcoholics and drug addicts, and in this they have had an enviable record of success. Muhammad claims that his movement has done more to clean up the so-called Negroes than all the churches and social agencies combined. He may exaggerate, but he is not off the line of truth. The rank and file Muslim is expected to evince general character traits that can only benefit society as a whole. They are expected to live soberly and with dignity, to work hard, to devote themselves to their families welfare, and to deal honestly with all men. Above all, self reliance and a sense of mutual responsibility are the hallmarks of Muslim morality. Muhammad urges ~~his~~ :

"Put your brains to thinking for self; your feet to walking in the direction of self; your hands to working for self and your children... Stop begging for what others have and help yourself to some of this good earth... We must go for ourselves... This calls for the unity of us all to accomplish it."

What we have here is a striking case of in-group morality. The Muslims see nothing paradoxical ~~between~~ <sup>about</sup> their high moral standards and their strong antipathy toward the whites. They can require the highest kind of morality among



their own members and urge peace among brothers, but assert at the same time that the whites, having scorned brotherhood with non-whites, are not included. From their point of view it is the religion of the Negro Christian that appears as a paradox, if not hypocrisy or madness. For "it is not possible" says Malcolm X "for you to love a man whose chief purpose in life is to humiliate you and still be what is considered a normal human being." The Muslims, rather conscientiously find no mandate, except that of temporary expediency, for peace and submission between whites and blacks.

When it comes to the goals of the movement, there is an impression that these are nebulous, vague, and mystically eschatological. It may well be, however, that such seeming haziness, is nothing more than shrewd diplomacy. There is no question for instance that Muhammad wants to see every Black man in America reunited with his own, wants to see a united front of Black men. The Muslim ideal, he has said, is "a united front of Black men who will take the offensive and carry the fight for justice and freedom to the enemy". "You are about to become the Head" he tells his followers, "and this should be good news....

25,000,000 people should not be satisfied with anything short of a country for themselves.... The time has come for me to do something for my beautiful nation!

His own commitment is only a cryptic promise to do something. Walking skillfully the precipice between sedition and religious license, he speaks knowingly of an impending Battle of Armageddon, and promises that Negroes will soon gain control of New York City, and that white rule in the United States will be

over<sup>h</sup>own by 1970. But he is careful to explain that this means that the white  
nations will destroy each other, and that the Blacks will inherit the spoils.

Thus, he stays clear of possible indictment for sediti on .

Again, the Black muslims demand absolute se<sup>l</sup>paration of the black and the  
white races. This is not a particulr ~~ground~~ for charges of sedition. Neve<sup>r</sup>the-  
less it is a somewht messy <sup>y</sup> ground insofar as it brings the black muslims  
into the same camp with those, who from quite a different vantage point, likewise  
believe that there should be no mixing of the races. whereas the whites  
long  
have argued about their <sup>R</sup>superior racial heritage and have fought about admixture  
of blood. Now it is the Muslims who argue their superior racial heritage and  
hold that an admixture of white blood will only weaken the Black nation .  
There is no proof on either side that this is <sup>the</sup> <sup>a</sup> case, and whatever the proof, <sup>con</sup>,  
intermixture has and will still continue to take place.

Still more, the call for a Black Front has important economic overtones,  
for the Muslim's economic policies are a fundamental aspect of the total move-  
ment. Their basic premise is that the white man's economic dominance gives  
him the power of life and death over the blacks. From its very beginning, the  
movement <sup>has</sup> stressed industriusness and thrifit . "Stop wast<sup>ing</sup> your money" writes  
Muhammad. "How can we begin? Stop spending money for tobacco, dope, cigarettes,  
whiskey, fine clothes, fine automobiles, expensive rugs and carpets, idleness,  
sport and gambling. Stop living on credit loans, seeking the highest priced  
If you must have a car, buy the low-priced car. We must make a better  
merchandise."

future for ourselves and our children."

The ascetic manner of life of the Muslims has undoubtedly contributed to their economic improvement. And the fact that they do not live in the residential sections generally preferred by the Negro business and professional classes, and do not sport the flashy automobiles usually associated with Negro revivalistic cults, but live in the ghettos on terms of equality ~~and~~ in housing and goods with their brothers, affirms a strong identity with the working class and gives them a tremendous psychological lever in working with and recruiting new members. Such rigorous self-discipline is not only a virtue in itself but also a step toward the establishment of the Black Nation. As an ideal, the Muslims advocate a complete economic withdrawal from the white community. They are urged to buy black whenever possible, and they are urged to pool their resources and techniques in merchandising, manufacturing, building, and anywhere open to them. They look upon the total annual income of the American Negro, some 20 billion dollars, as a major weapon in the struggle for independence. If such were ~~present~~ <sup>spent</sup> among Negro business men and invested in Negro enterprises, it would greatly lessen the power of the white man over them, and greatly advance their own freedom and dignity. It is questionable how far the Muslims, in an inter-related economy, can go in this regard. But they are on the way, with farms, bakeries, department stores, barber shops, and restaurants, and at their annual convention in 1960, held at the giant Coliseum in Chicago, they featured

an exhibition of so-called Negro businesses, as a move toward strengthening the Lost Nation.

When it comes to the ultimate goal, that of full separation and political independence, the Muslims tend to couch their remarks in cryptic allusions. According to Malcolm X, "Those who say don't know, and those who know aren't saying". That the Muslims have a sense of manifest destiny, a feeling of some kind of impending social cataclysm in which they will figure prominently, is, however, quite obvious. At ~~the 1960 Convention~~ <sup>a Washington, D.C. meeting</sup> Muhammad said "...let us carry in our hearts the doctrine of separation from our oppressors; let us demand a home we can call our own..." And at the 1960 Convention, he said: "The best thing the white man can do is give us justice and stop giving us hell. I'm asking for justice. If they won't give us justice, then let us separate ourselves from them and live in four or five states in America, or leave the country altogether." The Garveyite proposal of leaving the country and going elsewhere, would, of course, again please the American segregationists, and if this were so the segregationist bodies would very likely lend support to the Black Muslims even as the Ku Klux Klan was ready to support the Garveyites. There is no indication, however, that the Muslims are set on this path. Malcolm X, speaking to a white audience, set forth a different demand, a demand not only for territory in the United States but also for a subsidy from the United States government. Millions of black men, he said worked 300 years

without a pay day. We feel that we've got something due us, and I don't mean this phony integration stuff." The United States, he declared, must "compensate us for the labor stolen from us." "Why can't the Black Man in America have a piece of land with technical help and money to get his own nation established? What's so fantastic about that? We fought, died and helped to build this country, and since we can't be citizens here, then help us to build a nation of our own. We don't have to go to Africa. We can do it right here."

Muhammad, however, does not view the physical separation of the races in this country as being a likely possibility. "The white race" he has said "will never agree to divide America with us," Then somewhat cryptically, he says that the white man's rule is at an end, that a Superior Power will now create a New World, a New People, a New Order, and a New Government. And beyond that he suggests the drastic alternative to the white man not being willing to share the land with the black man. "The wicked must be punished for their wickedness poured out upon us... This country is large enough to separate the two, and they both could live here, but that would not be successful. The best solution is for everyone to go to his own country... The native home of the white race is in Europe."

In numerous ways the Black Muslim movement is ridiculous. It is loaded with a mythology as crude and nonsensical as anything ever devised by white segregationists, and its ultimate goal of complete separation is quite unreal-

istic. In no way, however, can it be dismissed ~~withxxx~~ as ridiculous, anymore than the Nazi movement ~~xxxxxxxsegregationistsxxxxxxx~~ could be so dismissed or the <sup>white councils</sup> ~~segregationists~~ of our time. It exists as the most scathing indictment of the white man that has even come upon the American scene. It is lopsidedly wrong in looking at everything in polar extremes of black and white, and it is as potentially dangerous to the whole area of race relations as are the white segregationists. But it has real elements of truth in it, elements of truth that sear and sting. It is a formidable expression of the American so-called Negro's rising dissatisfaction with the way things are, and his deepening conviction that this is not the way things have to be. It exists as a challenge, a demanding challenge that cannot be ignored. There is only one adequate answer that can be given the Black Muslims and that is a full and determined assault upon the whole issue of racism and discrimination. Unless and until that is done the Black Muslims movement, or other movements with less restraint, will fill the vacuum of bitterness and frustration. The Black Muslim movement is a warning, even a dire warning. It is a warning that all of us in America, both black and white, need to heed.