

Interview: Minister Louis Farrakhan



'Seeking reconciliation through atonement'

The following excerpts are from an interview with the Hon. Minister Louis Farrakhan, leader of the Nation of Islam, conducted on May 9 by Dennis Speed. Minister Farrakhan has called for a "March for Atonement" in Washington, D.C. on Oct. 16. Subheads have been added.

EIR: I'd like to thank you for allowing us to be here today and to interview you, Mr. Farrakhan. What is your view of what has been accomplished by the reconciliation that occurred with Dr. Betty Shabazz at the Apollo Theater on Saturday, May 6?

Farrakhan: As we said at the Apollo, the loss of sacred human life can be compared in the Chinese proverb to the thousand-mile journey, and what our first meeting, and the whole Qubilah Shabazz incident produced, was a first step in the long journey toward reconciliation. But the deepest aspect of this, I would believe, is that the assassination of Malcolm X, and the split between Malcolm X and the Hon. Elijah Muhammad, have been used by the enemies of our unity to ferment and foment discord and trouble, dissension, suspicion, slander, false charges, that have kept this controversy alive for 30 years.

So, our meeting, and the promise of subsequent one-on-one meetings, God willing, may ultimately take this stick out of the hands of our enemies, and our constant move for reconciliation will begin healing not only the wounds in the Shabazz family, and in our family, and in the Nation of Islam, but this wound which the assassination of Malcolm X has created in the entire nation of Black people.

The tragedy's setting: Hoover as 'Iago'

EIR: In the comments that you made at the Apollo, you indicated that unscrupulous forces in the government had sought to manipulate members of the Nation of Islam, as well as the entire Nation of Islam, around this Qubilah Shabazz incident, to seek retributive justice, for example, against the Shabazz family. You also indicated that perhaps that had happened in the 1960s, that is, in the way in which the whole Malcolm X matter had come about. I'd like you to clarify what you said.

Farrakhan: I think it's common knowledge now that J. Edgar Hoover wanted to prevent the rise of a Black messiah who could electrify and unify the Black nationalist element in the Black community. They listed persons such as Stokely

Carmichael (now known as Kwame Touré), Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Malcolm X, Elijah Muhammad, and maybe one or two more. They sort of cancelled Elijah Muhammad out, due to age and their feeling that he might not be with us much longer, and therefore the focus narrowed to the younger men: King, Malcolm, and Kwame. And with King assassinated (shortly after a meeting with the Hon. Elijah Muhammad), and Malcolm being the real target—because Malcolm's philosophy, or the philosophy and teachings of the Hon. Elijah Muhammad, had a more nationalistic tenor to it than Dr. King's—the FBI admitted that they worked night and day to separate Malcolm from his teacher. Their aim was to create a movement around Malcolm in opposition to a movement around Elijah Muhammad, that perhaps these two could cancel each other out.

So, I said in my speech that they manipulated our love and our hatred, and they manipulated other bad organizational characteristics—enmity, strife, contentions—that are natural within an organizational framework. They sought to use these things to create an internal dynamic that might ultimately lead to the destruction of the Nation of Islam.

How did they manipulate our love? When you believe that a man is a messenger of God, and our love for God, the Sovereign of the universe, is so great that when that love is tapped, and a man, a human being, is given, or the name is given as a messenger of God, that he is from that mighty and loving Creator, and this human being is, by God's command, to correct our false reformers and put us on the road to true independence, there is a sort of love that we give this person, a trust and a devotion that we give this person that is unlike any devotion that you give to even your mother or your father, your sister or your brother. That is the kind of love we had for Elijah Muhammad.

The tragedy's dynamic

So Malcolm X, as he represented the teachings of the Hon. Elijah Muhammad, as his lead minister and spokesperson, the press, because of Elijah Muhammad's impediment of speech, exalted Malcolm *above his teacher*. And this provoked, on the inside of the movement, that positive jealousy and love for Elijah Muhammad. They would even say in the newspapers, "Malcolm X and his Muslims," or they tried to project Malcolm as *the leader, the inspiration* of the movement, while in fact we knew that Elijah Muhammad was the

real inspiration of the movement. So this excited jealousy in the love that we had for Elijah Muhammad, that they were trying to move Elijah Muhammad out and put Malcolm X in his place. That was manipulated.

Then you have the tensions inside the movement created by a man who was so dynamic as Malcolm, so progressive as Malcolm, so profound as Malcolm, so charismatic as Malcolm. You have his peers now envious—not even jealous. (Jealousy is a little different from envy.) So there are those who say, “Well, Malcolm is not our leader, Elijah Muhammad is our leader.” So they manipulated that dynamic.

Then you have those who said, “He’s getting all the press and he’s taking the limelight from the leader.” So that *envy*, which is a vicious, ugly, demonic characteristic, existed in the higher echelons of leadership. Now you manipulate that.

And then there was another dynamic that I came to discover, that is not readily seen. That is the dynamic of Elijah Muhammad himself, who recognizes age, and time, and that somebody is going to have to accept the seat of leadership, and they have to be trained and qualified to accept that seat. We thought, in our ignorance (I’m speaking personally now), that training meant that you study your Bible, you study your Koran, you study administration, etc., so that you can be progressive and successful.

But there was a deeper dynamic, because if you’re going to sit in the seat of leadership, you’re going to be evilly spoken of, you’re going to have envy, enmity, strife, people shooting at you. So you have to have the strength of character to be long-suffering. So on the *inside*, the Hon. Elijah Muhammad, like a *sensei*, had to take those persons who were slated to sit in that seat to the threshold of pain. And then take them beyond. And then keep increasing their threshold of pain. So sometimes it would look like he was persecuting, when in fact, he was training.

And so Malcolm, who was the lead minister and the one that we would look to if anything happened to the Hon. Elijah Muhammad, was in that awful position to be envied on the inside, envied by people right around Elijah Muhammad, envied because he had the love and the attention of Elijah Muhammad, the positive love of the believer for the Hon. Elijah Muhammad, manipulated by the press, creating a jealousy over the position of Elijah Muhammad. Then the dynamic of bringing Malcolm to the threshold of pain, to prepare him for the possibility of sitting in the seat of Elijah Muhammad after he was no longer here.

Malcolm didn’t see that dynamic, I don’t believe, nor did I see it, but I came to experience it. That’s why I said, after walking a ways in Malcolm’s shoes, I understood what was happening to Malcolm.

Now, I’m saying that, to say that the FBI understood these dynamics. When they questioned Malcolm, they listened to his voice, they took the recordings, they put a voice stress analyzer on it. They had psychologists reading Malcolm to determine weaknesses and strengths, in terms of character, to see how he could be turned away from the Hon.

Elijah Muhammad.

About six or seven weeks ago, a letter came into my hands, a letter written by Malcolm X to the Hon. Elijah Muhammad. I believe it was in the year 1959. When I read this letter, it was one of the most touching things I have ever read, of a man’s love, devotion, commitment, trust, loyalty, and *faith* in a human being. I’ve never received a letter like that from anyone who follows me, nor have I ever read a letter like that. That’s how touching the letter was. And then I asked myself: What turned this beautiful demonstration of *exquisite* faith, loyalty, love, commitment, in a three-year span, that he would then attack his teacher in public?

So on Saturday, I mentioned betrayal, as that turns love to hate. Malcolm felt betrayed by the movement that he helped to build. Malcolm felt betrayed by the leader that he had so much confidence in, and since I was a student of Malcolm and was so very, very, very close to Malcolm, when I opted to stand with Elijah Muhammad, and defend Elijah Muhammad against the charges of Malcolm, then he felt betrayed by me. On the other side of that, we felt betrayed by Malcolm. So this betrayal turned the fervor of love into the fervor of hate, and turned the creative motion into a destructive motion *on both sides*.

Then you had agents on both sides manipulating these dynamics, which led, of course, to the assassination of Malcolm X [in 1965], and the subtle and then overt charge that Elijah Muhammad had ordered Malcolm X to be assassinated. And now we bring that dynamic to recent years.

If you notice, in the last 10 or 12 years, with the breakup of the Nation after Elijah Muhammad’s departure from us and his son’s assumption of his mantle, there was no more Nation of Islam. And all of the things that Elijah Muhammad had built, and that Malcolm had helped him to build, were wiped out, gone. So not only was the legacy of Malcolm trashed, the legacy of Elijah Muhammad was trashed. The government had done its job.

Now, we had gone toward orthodox Islam, we no longer had a desire to build an independent nation. Our focus was on self-improvement without a nationalistic tenor to the philosophy. And so the government, if you study its files, had accomplished its aim. For all intents and purposes, the Nation was done for; “we don’t have to worry about these people or persons anymore.”

Learning tragedy’s lessons

So Elijah Muhammad died in the minds of the public, and Malcolm died, except for those persons like Haki Madhubuti and the nationalist community, who held Malcolm up as their patron saint. But this community has no tie into the *Washington Post*, the *New York Times*, the *Atlanta Journal*, the *Chicago Tribune*, or the *Los Angeles Times*. So after my rise, which startled the law-enforcement community, they said, “Now the Nation is back, and what we thought we had killed, doggone it, it’s alive! And this guy, Farrakhan, whom we didn’t think too much of, is now electrifying the masses

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Now, if you notice, *then* the mass media began to start writing about Malcolm. Several books came out after Malcolm's assassination, but then that quieted. Now, you have the establishment media beginning to write articles on the life and legacy of Malcolm X, which then led to Warner Brothers giving \$30 million to Spike Lee to make the movie on Malcolm. And you must remember that 30 years ago, Malcolm was, according to the ADL [Anti-Defamation League], the leading black anti-Semite of that day, as I am considered that today. So I question: Why would Warner Brothers, who I believe are Jewish, expend \$30 million on a movie that lionizes Malcolm, when Malcolm never recanted or repented for his statements that exposed the Jewish liberals and their machinations to guide and control the civil rights movement?

And so we have believed all along, that the resurrection of Malcolm X, not from the standpoint of the nationalists and other Black intellectuals who love him, but from the establishment side, was for a sinister purpose. And so when the movie came out, their hope was that I would attack the movie as I had attacked the man.

Then I told all in our movement to just be quiet for three months. We made no public appearances, and none of us answered any questions, spoke to the press, or did anything that would show us as opposite. Since they couldn't raise a *living* person, they raised Malcolm.

And now, instead of Elijah Muhammad being charged with calling the shots on the hit on Malcolm, they just moved it to Louis Farrakhan. They really know better. But if they could paint me with a brush as having something to do with the assassination of Malcolm, with betraying Malcolm, in an opportunistic way to feather my own nest and cause my own rise within the movement, having guns in the community among the young; then making sure that our young people visited the theater to see the movie "Malcolm X"; and then playing it over and over again; then sending agents in among the gangs to focus their energy and dislike toward the Nation and toward this guy Farrakhan, who now is really the one who opportunistically betrayed Malcolm and has now stepped into the shoes that only belong to our beloved Black shining prince; and we should assassinate Louis Farrakhan.

And since the movie did not produce [that result], then Michael Summers Fitzpatrick was paid \$45,000, which is

an awful lot of money, to entrap Qubilah. The government waited until the very morning that the indictment was coming down, to inform us of her so-called murder-for-hire plot. They expected from me an emotional response to Qubilah. So they camped around my home, and I sent Leonard out to say to them that our sympathies are with Sister Betty Shabazz, Qubilah, and the family. We believe that there's some entrapment here.

Then I made a press statement, which I believe you attended. The effect of this—what they hoped to achieve, was that if I attacked Qubilah, then the nationalist community would have to coalesce around Betty to protect Betty and her children, allegedly from some hit coming from the Muslims.

So the press zeroed in on where Qubilah lived and her apartment and all of that. If we had lambasted Qubilah, we would have, in effect, created the same atmosphere that was created 30 years ago, and then somebody else could have shot Qubilah and blamed it on the Nation of Islam.

When the opposite took place, and we closed ranks around Qubilah, and then we met with Sister Shabazz, this had a tendency not only to heal our wounds, but—we don't know how much money has been already placed in the Muslim community and in the nationalist community to take care of Farrakhan and our sitting together, and our possibility of reconciliation—it may have stayed the ugly hand of death.

The only reason that I can say what I know now from this angle, is because after Malcolm's untimely death, I was promoted from the mosque in Boston to be the minister in New York. And you know, the New York mosque was bombed and destroyed. Since Malcolm was so loved in Harlem and in New York, we had a very difficult row to hoe in order to bring the Nation again to a level of respect and honor in our own Black community. God blessed me, not only to rebuild, but in New York City I was the minister over four universities of Islam, 21 businesses, 18 mosques within the New York City area, and the Muslims were raised to a level of great honor and respect.

Reflections on tragedy

But then that caused me to suffer the same things within the movement that Malcolm suffered. In truth, Brother Dennis, it was a pain that I have not fully recovered from, to see your own brothers turn on you because you seem to be favored by the leader. In my last conversation with Malcolm,

in 1964, he said, "Brother, my enemies are going to be yours." And he named them. Then he said, "I wish it were you being an example for me, rather than me being an example for you."

He knew what I didn't know, that I was going to assume the mantle that he held within the movement. He knew that the same forces that operated against him, when I assumed that position, would also operate against me. I lived to see every word that he spoke come true.

The thing that I *didn't* see, was the role of Elijah Muhammad. Because, at a certain point, I began to suspect that Elijah Muhammad was behind some of the *feeding* of the fire of envy and enmity that was in my peers. So one day, I decided I was going to Chicago and throw the gauntlet down, right at the table with the Hon. Elijah Muhammad sitting there. And when I threw it down, and challenged everybody who were national ministers and laborers at the table, and was ready to fight, Elijah Muhammad hit the table and said, "Brother, seek refuge in Allah from the envier when he envies," and he got up and walked out. I felt that my willingness to argue my case was seriously dampened.

Then he came back in the room and he said these words. He said, "Brother, when you're going to take a piece of board and put it in the corner of the building to uphold the weight of the building, you have to put a lot of stress on that board. And if that board breaks, then you know that's not the board you were looking for. You throw it away and get you another one."

I did not fully understand that parable. I understood it to the degree that I understood it at that moment. But long after Elijah Muhammad was gone, and I was attempting to rebuild his work, and I had to suffer the slings and the arrows of my own brothers, then the government, then the ADL, and then others, then I understood why I had to go through that kind of rigorous training on the *inside* of the movement.

If I had become vindictive, angry with him, angry with my brothers, and sought retributive action, then that would have shown that I was not qualified then to sit in his seat, to bring about redemption, restoration, reformation, reconciliation. And so, by weathering those storms, here I am. I have weathered 11 years of a withering attack in the media, and for nearly 40 years I have wrestled with internal dynamics, and now external in other groups and organizations and their leadership.

If Allah blesses me to draw a huge crowd, and this one is not able to do that, that envy comes up and then the arrows and the slings and the things that are said. But, watch me, you never have heard me publicly beat down on those who beat down on me. Because that's not my role. I am to take that, and that's why Paul said love is long-suffering.

And so I thank Allah for the Hon. Elijah Muhammad and for the training that he gave me, by focusing the envy of my brothers against me to see if I could take the heat within, that I might be qualified to take heat from within and without. And, so far, God has blessed me to survive.

ADL's Murray Janus and partner indicted

by EIR Staff

Anti-Defamation League National Commissioner Murray Janus was indicted on May 8 by a Richmond, Virginia grand jury on felony bribery charges. His law partner, James A. Baber III, was also indicted, on attempted sodomy charges. According to press accounts and to independent sources with knowledge of the case, the charges were brought when Janus paid a woman \$10,000, allegedly to keep her from pressing criminal sexual assault charges against Baber.

Janus had gained notoriety in 1990 for his role in the "railroad" prosecution of associates of Lyndon LaRouche in Virginia, on trumped-up charges of securities violations (see below).

The recent incident occurred on Feb. 27, 1995, when the woman tried to hire Baber to represent her in a domestic dispute, and reportedly offered to pay his fee in monthly installments. The woman later told police that as she left the office, Baber asked her to perform a sexual act as a sign of good faith in paying the fee.

After being exposed to Baber's alleged sexual advances, the woman reported the incident to police, who in turn reported it to the office of Richmond Commonwealth Attorney David Hicks. Since Hicks had previously worked for Janus, he disqualified himself, but not after first speaking with Janus on the phone to inquire as to which prosecutors Janus thought might be out to get him.

The matter was then referred to Hanover Commonwealth Attorney Eddie Vaughn, Jr.

The woman hired another attorney to pursue a civil complaint against Baber, while still pressing criminal charges. Janus offered her \$10,000 to settle the civil complaint. When Vaughn learned of Janus's offer, he warned Janus not to cross the line between making a civil settlement and offering to pay the woman not to press the criminal charges—which is bribery.

The woman had two conversations with Janus, both of which were taped. Janus paid the woman the money in a check drawn on the law firm's trust account.

Vaughn and Hicks have disqualified themselves as prosecutors, and the case is being prosecuted by Virginia Beach Commonwealth Attorney Robert J. Humphreys. One Richmond Circuit Court judge has already recused himself, and all others in that Circuit are expected to do likewise.