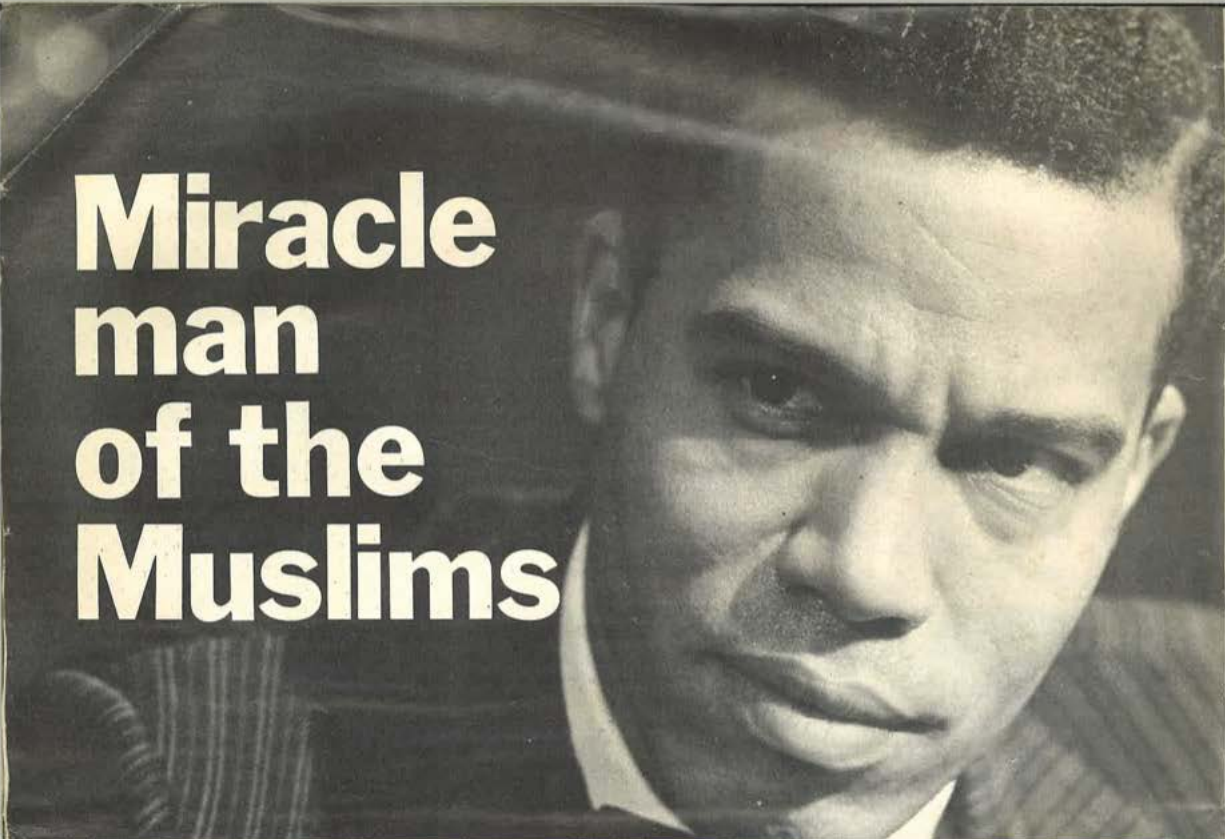


Miracle man of the Muslims



Clean-cut and impressive in appearance, Muslim leader Louis Farrakhan has widespread appeal in addresses, on TV shows and in frequent talks at black colleges.

By STERLING X HOBBS

He's a better orator than the late Dr. Martin Luther King. He sings better than Marvin Gaye. He's a better writer than Norman Mailer. He dresses better than Walt Frazier. He's more of a diplomat than Henry Kissinger. And he's prettier than Muhammad Ali.

Who can this be? Is it Superman? No, he's Minister Louis Farrakhan, the national representative of the Nation of Islam, the Black Muslim followers of the late Elijah Muhammad, and to his loyal "flock," he is all the aforesaid superlatives wrapped up in one magnificent species of manhood. Minister Farrakhan heads the powerful New York Muslim Temple No. 7 comprised of more than 5,000 active members and in his decade of its leadership has become a legend in his time, more than surpassing in dynamism and charisma all the claims for the late Malcolm X.

Louis Farrakhan is more sought after on college campuses than both Rev. Jesse Jackson and Dick Gregory. Many times he receives as much as \$3,000 for his speeches, which he hands over to the Muslim school, the University of Islam. He addresses New York via radio six times per week and speaks regularly on the Muslim-funded national broadcast which reaches over 150 cities around the country. Regularly he receives ambassadors from foreign governments and has turned down invitations from both Idi Amin of Uganda and Fidel Castro of Cuba to visit their countries "with the full honors of a head of state." He has an open invitation to most

"With the death of Elijah Muhammad, much doubt has been expressed by close observers of the Nation of Islam on whether the inspirational appeal, financial wizardry and disciplined leadership of the "Messenger of Allah" can be continued by his heirs. Who in the Black Muslim organization has the magnetism to carry on for Elijah Muhammad?

While paying their full respects to the family of Muhammad and the newly-chosen Muslim leader, Wallace Muhammad, there are many in and outside the Muslim organization who see the future growth of the Nation revolving around the man who is considered the most dynamic personality to emerge in its history. He is Louis Farrakhan, the designated chief of the New York Muslim Temple.

The remarkable story of Farrakhan, his rise to Muslim power and his fantastic mesmerism is related by Black Muslim writer Sterling X. Hobbs in the article on these pages. Since he became a Muslim in 1970, Hobbs has edited several of its publications, including *The Viewer* and *Black Philadelphia*, a supplement to *Muhammad Speaks*. He was assistant Muslim minister in his hometown of Chester, Pa. Author of a book of poetry, "We Righteous Builders of Black Nations," he wrote the introduction of Farrakhan's book, "Seven Speeches by Minister Louis Farrakhan."



On speaker's platform Farrakhan can thunder with impressive voice (left) or use good sense of humor (right) to score heavily with audiences everywhere.

black-hosted television programs. He has been the subject of two TV specials. Last year Muslim Temple No. 7 published his first book, "Seven Speeches by Minister Louis Farrakhan" and later his first record — an album from his speech to over 70,000 blacks on Randall's Island — was cut and entitled "Black Family Day 1974."

Observing Minister Farrakhan deliver a lecture is not unlike attending an exciting drama production or jamming at a rock concert. He transforms words into music and carries his listeners through thought-provoking ideology over the course which blacks should take in economics, politics, religion and education. He acts out and illustrates his points and the screams from women are reminiscent of the old Temptations concerts.

Many observers of the racial scene, who had written off the Nation of Islam after the death of Malcolm X and the end of black militance in the late 60's, now ask: "Where did this man come from?" Black Muslims will smile and say: "One morning as the sun rose in the east, New Yorkers awoke from slumber and found that suddenly the Black Muslims, like Jesus, were resurrected from the dead and were led by a minister more fiery and articulate than ever. And the Muslims became once again a power to reckon with."

My first experience with Minister Farrakhan came five years ago at the Congress of African Peoples in Atlanta. I was seated with black poet Don L. Lee among the dashikis and

African agbadas, wearing my own of course. Suddenly following an address by the late Urban League leader, Whitney Young, a host of Black Muslim brothers walked swiftly into the arena and replaced the security guards who had been provided by Imanu Amiri Baraka, coordinator of the conference.

Each of the Muslim brothers appeared to be at least 6 foot 3 and consequently Minister Farrakhan, who stands about 5 foot 9, was dwarfed in their company. My first reaction was, "Wow, you mean this little dude is Louis Farrakhan?" I had heard so much about him that I was expecting a giant, one who would be in physical harmony with the legends.

Then Minister Farrakhan began to speak. His voice thundered throughout the auditorium and each time the audience would erupt in applause, he would say, "Shut up, and listen! You clap too much and think too little." And the audience loved each minute of it. In a manner which is completely his own, he denounced the entire Baraka-inspired Pan-African movement. He called their leaders unfit and challenged them to "ask yourself the question: 'Am I qualified to lead black people?' Come on up with the answer. And don't lie to yourself, you've been lying long enough!" The arena went wild, the audience loving it. Then he denounced them for their "immorality" and they begged for more. Needless to say I was awed.

I recall my first visit to his office back in 1972. I was

Some believe him modern-day Aaron

doing an article for a community newspaper and I was as nervous as a schoolgirl in the exclusive company of Ringo Starr. But Farrakhan's manner was pleasant and comforting. He had just finished making a two-hour speech and was preparing to do yet another. Perspiration soaked his entire body as he asked, "Do you mind if I change clothes while we talk?" The minister stripped down to his shorts as I asked questions. Lester 4X, his assistant secretary, came in with a fresh shirt from the Libas clothing store. The sleeves were a bit too long and Farrakhan, in mock anger, said, "Man you brought me this jive-time shirt, I ought to . . ." then threw his hands up as if he were about to mix it up with his secretary.

"The Messenger told me to never go before the people without fresh clothes, else you'll get sick," he said.

I have accompanied Farrakhan on some of his visits to college campuses and to watch him before student audiences is fascinating. He never uses notes but prefers to fire away freely. "I was born to do this work," he once said. "This is a labor of love. I love black people and that's why I don't have to use notes. Have you ever seen a man in love refer to his notes when he's talking to the one he loves? Well, I'm in love with my black brothers and sisters and I don't need notes because what I say is from my heart, not a notebook."

Often the Minister doesn't even select his subject matter until after he is before his audience and making his opening remarks. He is astonishingly sensitive to people's thinking and ideological leaning. At Cheyney State College, for example, he was quite fiery and related much of his message in "street talk" because this is the type of campus Cheyney is. Then later that same day, at Lincoln University, he was on a higher spiritual plane because Lincoln has a strong religious element on campus knowledgeable in scriptures. But the uncanny thing is that no one has to tell him this, but he feels it when he goes out and faces his audience.

In the wake of the passing of Elijah Muhammad, there was much talk of a power struggle in the Nation of Islam and that Minister Louis Farrakhan was a prime candidate to succeed the Messenger of Allah. But he was among the first to pledge fealty to Wallace Muhammad and let all know that he has no aspirations whatsoever for Muhammad's exalted position among Muslims. In his book, "The Black Muslims in America," C. Eric Lincoln quotes him: "The Messenger has very big shoes and my feet are too small." But the distrust of him in some circles troubled Farrakhan to the point that he went to Chicago to inform Muhammad prior to his death: "Dear Apostle, I fear turning a hypocrite to the truth." And Muhammad replied, "Brother, you don't have that to worry about - not you."

Minister Farrakhan reinforces his position with statements like: "Elijah Muhammad is my master. When he found me I was just a dumb Negro slave, a dope user, a wine drinker and a disrespecter of the black woman. He is the greatest, most wise man the earth has ever produced."

He constantly reminds his audience that "without Muhammad I am nothing." He once said: "Elijah Muhammad gave Malcolm wings and after flying for so long and so high, Malcolm began to think that he was flying under his own power. I know who has given me my wings and I know who controls those wings even now. I'm sitting in the driver's seat here in New York, but Elijah Muhammad is doing the steering."

There are many Muslims who believe Farrakhan to be the modern-day equivalent of Moses' brother Aaron in the Bible and Holy Quran. The words and legacy of the Muhammad, they feel, will lead black people from a 400-year bondage in America as Moses led the children of Israel from bondage in Egypt under Pharaoh. Some see a parallel between scriptural Aaron, the chief spokesman for Moses, and Minister Farrakhan.

When he was scheduled to appear on Black Journal with Elijah Muhammad on a panel featuring Imamu Amiri Baraka, Rev. Albert Cleage, Rev. Ralph Abernathy and Vernon Jordan, Minister Farrakhan shouted: "This will be Moses and Aaron conquering Pharaoh's magicians."

Beyond his oratorical skills, Minister Farrakhan has demonstrated that he is also an accomplished business administrator, personally directing the opening of nearly a score of flourishing Muslim businesses in New York. Sales figures of the New York Temple alone were well over \$3 million last year.

The most visible Muslim section in New York is around 116th St. and Lenox Avenue in Harlem where the Arabian-designed Temple No. 7 is located. On the two streets, there are 16 Muslim-owned establishments. Muslim enterprises employ more than 500 people, not all of whom are Muslim. There are more than 50 businesses privately owned and operated by individual Muslims with portions of their profits donated to the Muslim cause.

Sales grosses of Muslim business units range from up to \$15,000 weekly for Muslim Brand Imported Fish (the profit margin in fish is quite high, states Minister Larry 4X) to \$7,000 weekly for the bean pie distribution of Shabazz Bakery in Corona. Minister Larry once said, "Without the bean pie we'd have to close down," before Farrakhan took over administration of New York Muslim businesses.

Real estate holding alone of the Muslims in New York are about \$1,730,000.

To administer the New York temple and its business ventures, Farrakhan arrives at his office within the Islamic Complex at 7:30 a.m. He usually is driven in his Mercedes 600 or on days when he feels daring, he drives himself to work in either his Eldorado or Mercedes sports car. He's normally greeted by five or six brothers who act as a security force which he does not necessarily desire. Out of respect a brother will usually open Farrakhan's door or attempt to carry his briefcase and Farrakhan will plead, "Please, brother, I'm not an invalid . . . allow me to carry my own bag."

Minister Farrakhan was born Louis Gene Walcott in the Bronx in New York City of Jamaican parents who later moved to Boston's Roxbury section. His mother sought to give him a musical background and he became regarded as a boy-genius at playing the violin. In school he was particularly interested in English and he searched for a more complete knowledge of the black man's history. He was a star athlete at English High, winning track honors in the 100-yard dash.

When he was a child, his mother taught him about lynchings of blacks in the South and she would give him books on slavery. So moved was young Louis over black suffering of slaves that tears would stream down his cheeks. Later Louis attended Winston-Salem Teachers College in North Carolina, and experienced the Dixie discrimination that he had read about.

Of his childhood, Minister Farrakhan remembers: "Once my



Always wearing a bow tie as did his inspirational leader, Elijah Muhammad, national Muslim spokesman Louis Farrakhan has changed much since days as an entertainer, when, he admits, he occasionally used marijuana. "Khan" in his name means "ruler" in Arabic, but he renounces any aspirations to top role.

"Preaching" the Muslim gospel, Farrakhan always stresses self-reliance for blacks and says: "The strict moral discipline of the Muslim religion enables us to save the money we used to throw away on cigarets, alcohol, dope, gambling and on strange women." Most of Muslim businesses in New York have opened since Farrakhan assumed leadership of the New York Temple No. 7.

Switching from song and dance man to Muslim minister, Farrakhan rose swiftly to top



uncle showed me a picture on his wall of a man whom he said was the greatest leader our people had ever had. I stood on a chair and looked into this man's face for many long minutes. Then I asked my uncle, "Where is this man, that I might meet him and help him?" My uncle answered, "That man is dead." I was so hurt that after hoping, all my young years, to meet the right man for our people; that when I found him, he was already dead. Tears rolled down my cheeks and I cried and cried because Marcus Garvey was dead."

Louis Walcott became a professional singer and actor, struggling to make it big with calypso and country songs. He still plays whenever the mood hits him or when he requires a break from the constant pressure he's under. Diners at the Salaam No. 7 Restaurant were shocked one Saturday evening to find the live entertainment supplied by Minister Farrakhan himself who, with a quartet of Muslim brothers, played the violin and sang a number of songs.

While working in a Boston night club when he was 20, a Muslim brother came up to him and announced, "Brother, God has chosen a Messenger to lead the black man to freedom, justice and equality." Quite emotional, Louis Walcott left the night club, walked slowly down Massachusetts Avenue, crying and talking to God: "Oh, God, You know I have always loved my people. Why did not You choose me?" Later he had the thought: "When God chose His Messenger I was not even born. And if God had chosen a Messenger, that choice is all right with me. Let me find the Messenger then and serve him as I would serve God."

While in Chicago in 1955 at a Muslim Saviour's Day Convention, he heard Elijah Muhammad speak for the first time and thought to himself that he didn't particularly like the Messenger's style of speech. Then something very eerie took place. Out of the thousands of people in attendance, Mr. Muhammad looked up into the row of seats where Louis was sitting and said, "Brother, don't pay attention to how I speak,

pay attention to what I'm saying. Brother, I didn't get the chance to go to the white man's fine schools because when I tried to go, the doors were closed. But if you take what I say and place it into the beautiful way of speaking you know, you can help me save our people."

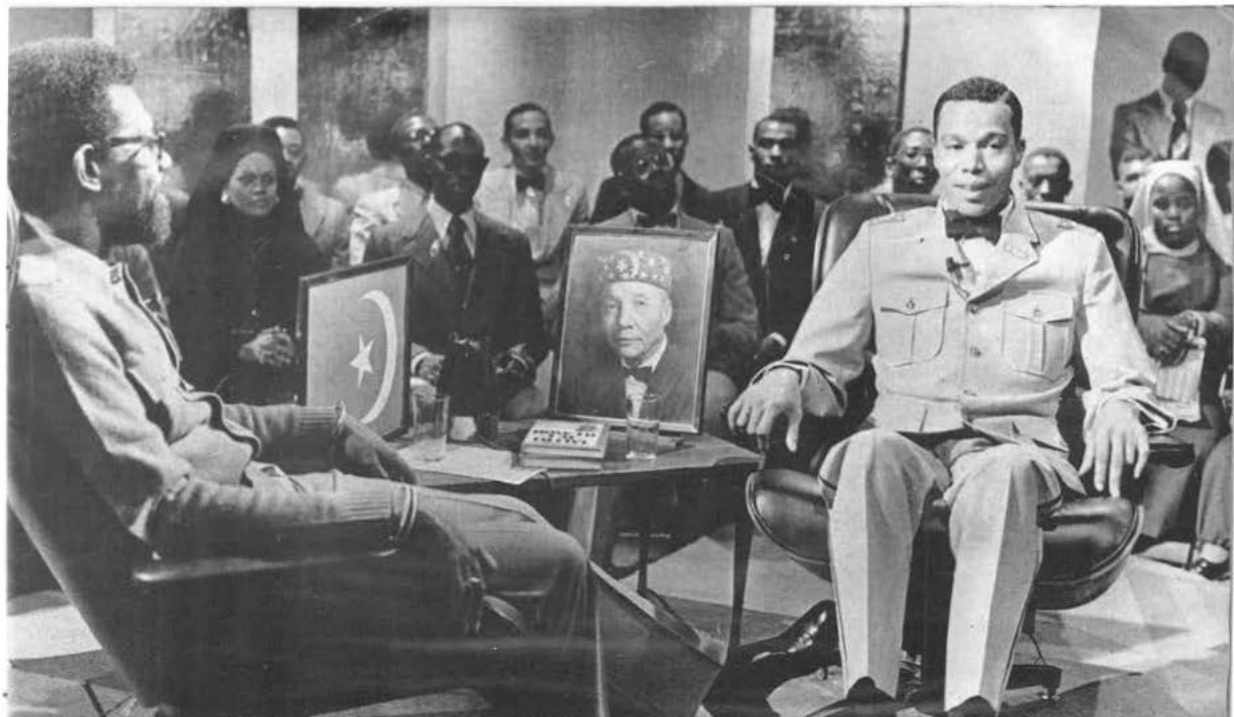
Louis was stunned. "Man, that scared me to death," Farrakhan relates. "I thought the Messenger had read my mind." But what Louis didn't know was that a Muslim captain had told Mr. Muhammad where Louis would be seated and informed the Messenger that Louis "was a college man who could help us if we get him." But how the Messenger knew what Louis was thinking remains a mystery.

Following this experience, Gene Walcott registered with the Nation of Islam's New York Temple. Louis X soon rose to become a lieutenant in the Fruit of Islam, the name given to the military training of men who belong to Islam. Every male Muslim is considered an F.O.I. after he undergoes his processing period.

Though the martial arts are taught, the greater portion of the F.O.I. classes are spent discussing proper marital relationships, proper grooming, techniques in salesmanship, and the spiritual meanings of the Bible and Holy Quran.

The only cases where the F.O.I. is used for physical punishment is in rare cases of the abuse of a fellow Muslim, especially a Muslim sister. In this case the offender, if found guilty, is penalized according to his offense. Once a Muslim sister's pocket book was snatched and the thief was apprehended. The beating he received left few unbroken bones in his body. I am told that an offense such as rape of a sister could possibly result in the death of the offender.

But the F.O.I. classes stress a peaceful relationship with the community at large. However, the Muslims realize that a degree of respect must be maintained and they fear if they allow transgressors to go unpunished then "Laz" — the nickname from the Biblical Lazarus used to describe non-Muslims —



Appearing on TV show, "Soul," Farrakhan has photo of Elijah and star and crescent Muslim symbol next to him as he speaks to Ellis Haizlip on program.

would declare open season on Muslims. But Farrakhan reminds some overzealous members of his congregation that "Allah gives you no credit for beating up your mentally-dead black brother."

When he was known as Louis X, Farrakhan rapidly grew in stature, received a promotion and was transferred to the Boston Temple to become F.O.I. Captain. When something happened to the temple minister, "I received word that I was to minister to the people," Minister Farrakhan recalls. Ministering, at first, did not come easily to a young and inexperienced Louis X. "I was not able to relate to many of the educated persons who joined the Boston Temple as they were much more intelligent than I. And because I couldn't understand their ideas, I thought they were enemies of Islam and I drove them all out of the Temple," he relates.

Realizing his mistake, Louis X wrote to the Messenger in Chicago and asked to be relieved of his position and charged with "any sins they commit while expelled from the Temple." This display of compassion pleased the Messenger and, instead of dismissing Minister Louis, he permitted the suspended brothers to return to the Temple and Louis X to remain minister. Coupled with his administrative problems, Louis X had financial difficulties to add to his woes: "I was so poor in Boston that once, when I spoke in Philadelphia, the holes in my shoes were so large that the brothers had to drive me right up to the door of the Temple to keep the rain from soaking."

Finally, around 1960, Minister Louis, having more experience and maturity, saw his problems begin to ease. During that period Louis X recorded a song, "A White Man's Heaven Is A Black Man's Hell." He also authored two plays: "Orgena" (A Negro spelled backwards) and "The Trial." Among Muslims these were quite popular and Louis X was beginning to make a name for himself traveling throughout the

country performing his two plays for community audiences.

But one evening the Honorable Elijah Muhammad asked him, "Brother, do you want to be a song and dance man or do you want to be my minister?" There was no question in his mind about his reply: "I want to be your minister, Dear Holy Apostle."

Minister Louis was moved to New York after the defection of Malcolm X, a somewhat ironic move because prior to this they had been close friends. Malcolm admitted Louis was closer to him than his own blood brothers. But Malcolm's crusade the last year of his life to undermine the work of the Nation destroyed this closeness and Minister Louis openly attacked Malcolm in Muhammad Speaks as a hypocrite and "deadly enemy of the black man."

Soon after his move to New York, Elijah Muhammad gave him the name "Farrakhan." The Messenger never revealed the exact meaning of Minister Farrakhan's name and to this day he is unaware of what his name means.

Minister Farrakhan is a personable man who generally likes people and enjoys sharing ideas with most anyone. This has enabled him to establish warm relationships with most community leaders in New York. Though he chooses to shy away from the word "diplomat," Farrakhan is just that. But his style of diplomacy is rarely based upon shrewd deception, but rather upon honest appreciation for opinions of others. And while he may disagree with their ideologies, his love for them as brothers is felt in his voice and seen in his eyes during meetings with them. He says, "We can disagree without becoming disagreeable."

Minister Farrakhan's power internally is growing daily. Thousands of young blacks have joined the Black Muslims after hearing one of Farrakhan's fiery lectures delivered in person or over radio or television. And while he was only 22 when he became a Minister, he is now revered as a "big brother" to many of the younger Black Muslims.

VALMOR® HIGH FASHION WIGS

FINEST WIGS AT LOWEST PRICES

SKINATURAL™

STRETCH WIG
With Built in SCALP
That Looks Like SKIN
So Natural - LOOKS LIKE
HAIR GROWING OUT OF HEAD.
LOOKS LIKE
YOU GROW IT YOURSELF!

PERMA-STYLED
Wash and Wear
Miracle Fibre
NEVER NEEDS SETTING
Style No. SK-129

Regular \$22.95
SALE PRICE \$12.99

One Wig - 6 Styles All Different
Just Brush the STYLE You Want



YOU
GET BEST VALUE
when YOU
BUY from VALMOR
**LOW PRICE
SALE**

CASUAL Tapered Back Wash and Wear
Stretch Wig, Perma-set, Day-
ma-styled, Fresh new sexy
look, high susceptible price...
No. TST-69 - LOW PRICE... **\$6.99**



NEW LOVELY YOU Stretch Wig. Have
instant allure. Perma-set -
Ready for instant Wear.
Washes and holds style. All
ways get best value from Val-
mor. No. TS-69 - LOW PRICE **\$6.99**



HONEY BEE AFRO SHAG - Thrill him
as he was never thrilled be-
fore. Gorgeous you in the very
latest Afro Shag Perma-styled
Stretch Wig. No. AF3-99 **\$9.99**

Curly Top - Tapered Back Washable
Synthetic Stretch Wig, Perma-
Styled - Never needs setting.
Lovely and glamorous.
No. C1-69 Only **\$6.99**



FREEDOM WIG - Look Sexy, Beautiful,
Lovable. Perma-styled, Wash-
able. Now Beautiful You. No. FW-69 **\$6.99**



CAPLESS JOY - Cool
Air, Conditioned - Perma-
Styled. Look lovable. No. NC-69 - Price Only **\$8.99**



CAPLESS SHAG - Real thirty-looking.
Looks most attractive. Air con-
ditioned, Perma-styled, Wash-
able. A great cool fit. No. NC-69 - LOW PRICE **\$8.99**



SWEPT BACK WIG - 100%
Human Hair, shoulder
length. Highest Quality. No. SW-199 - Only **\$19.99**



CAPLESS GYPSY - Perma-styled
Fred cut Wash and Wear **\$10.99**



CAPLESS CURLY Soul Wig. Cool and
Light. Perma-styled, Wash-
able, Beautiful Sexy You. No. NCY-69 **\$8.99**



AFRO PUFFS - High Fashion
Wear on sides or on top or
in back. The latest Rage. No. AP-99 - PER PAIR **\$5.99**



MAIL THIS COUPON NOW

MAIL COUPON TODAY

VALMOR HAIR STYLES DEPT. 5373
2411 PRAIRIE AVE., CHICAGO, ILL. 60616

PLEASE SEND ME THE FOLLOWING STYLES:

Style Number	Description	Price

Check Color: Black Off Black Dark Brown
 Medium Brown Light Brown Dark Auburn
 Light Auburn Blond Platinum
 Light Frosted Dark Frosted Mixed Gray
 Send C.O.D. (I'll pay postman amount plus postage.)
 I enclose full amount - Company pays postage.

Name _____ Box _____
 Address _____ RFD _____
 City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Order C.O.D. Pay postman on delivery amount plus postage.
 If you send money order company pays postage.

BEST VALUE FROM VALMOR
 VALMOR HAIR STYLES DEPT. 5373
 2411 PRAIRIE AVE., CHICAGO, ILL. 60616

Farrakhan talks of taking over Harlem

Farrakhan's popularity caused both elation and reservation among the Black Muslims. Enthusiasts felt Farrakhan's personality would supply the Nation of Islam with the necessary lift it needed when the Black Muslims suffered a decline in public acceptance. They felt that Mr. Muhammad had, since Malcolm's defection, lacked a forceful spokesman who would command national attention, sway public sentiment and restore Islam as a national force. Therefore among some Muslim circles it was hoped that Farrakhan's dynamic oratorical skill and his almost theatrical showmanship would serve in lifting Mr. Muhammad's voice above the cries of the countless black leaders who surfaced in the late '60s.

On the other hand, however, there were a number of Muslims who survived the turmoil of the era of Malcolm's separation and were suspicious of Minister Farrakhan's swift rise to national prominence.

Many Muslim observers believe that Malcolm's defection set back the progress of Islam about ten years. Not only did he pull with him much of the New York Temple's congregation, but he led a crusade against the Black Muslims which opened the gateway for a barrage of anti-Islam propaganda. Muslims also believe that had Malcolm not split, thousands of blacks, fed up with Dr. King's efforts at civil rights, would have supported Islam. But Malcolm's death gave birth to organizations like the Republic of New Africa, the Black Panther Party and the Malcolmites along with a score of others and to Muslims all other organizations are opposing forces for the hearts and minds of blacks.

Today also Elijah Muhammad's promise to his followers of "money, good homes and friendship in all walks of life" appears to have been fulfilled with Farrakhan as the minister lives with his wife, Sister Betsy Jean, and seven of his children in a nine-room house in East Elmhurst. Recently two of his daughters married the grandson and nephew of Elijah Muhammad.

Minister Farrakhan is beginning to talk - as a long range objective - of taking over Harlem: "If we can get just 66 per cent of the people to support us - not join us but just support us - we will no longer have to ask for reform, we can enforce reform." Farrakhan then asks: "Can you imagine a drug-free Harlem? Can you see a Harlem that is free of prostitution, free of alcoholism, free of homosexuality, free of crime ... can you see it?"

Minister Farrakhan has clearly become the most influential black man in New York. With his voice thundering regularly over the radio and TV, he is gaining wide public support and even many whites are voicing admiration of his style and openly admitting agreement with many of the Muslim aims. At 41, Minister Farrakhan is young enough to be around for quite some time and with the Muslims increasing their numbers rapidly, he is certainly a man who has to be considered in New York's future and indeed the future of the country.

Since Marcus Garvey's crusade in the 1920's, blacks in New York have been hoping for a dynamic leader to emerge with a program which will succeed where Garvey's failed. Minister Louis Farrakhan could be that man. +++