

# EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

By **Lawrence Albert**

No matter what people thought of the late Elijah Muhammad, spiritual leader of the Black Muslims for over 40 years, he was a great leader.

From his humble beginning on a white man's plantation 77 years ago, he rose to give thousands of people hope and a dignity that they never dreamed possible, not only that, he built a sound financial organization, with assets in the millions.

Some people disliked him, because they did not agree with his sect, that however, is not reason enough to strip a man of his due.

Elijah Muhammad hit the American scene like a whirlwind, sucking up the downtrodden and the hopeless, breathing into them a purpose in life.

People across the United States, see the results of his teachings daily, as little boys and young men, well-dressed and well-groomed and belief in themselves, hawk the Muslim's paper throughout every big city in the nation. Without the Black Muslims, these young people would probably be fighting in the streets or participating in some criminal acts.

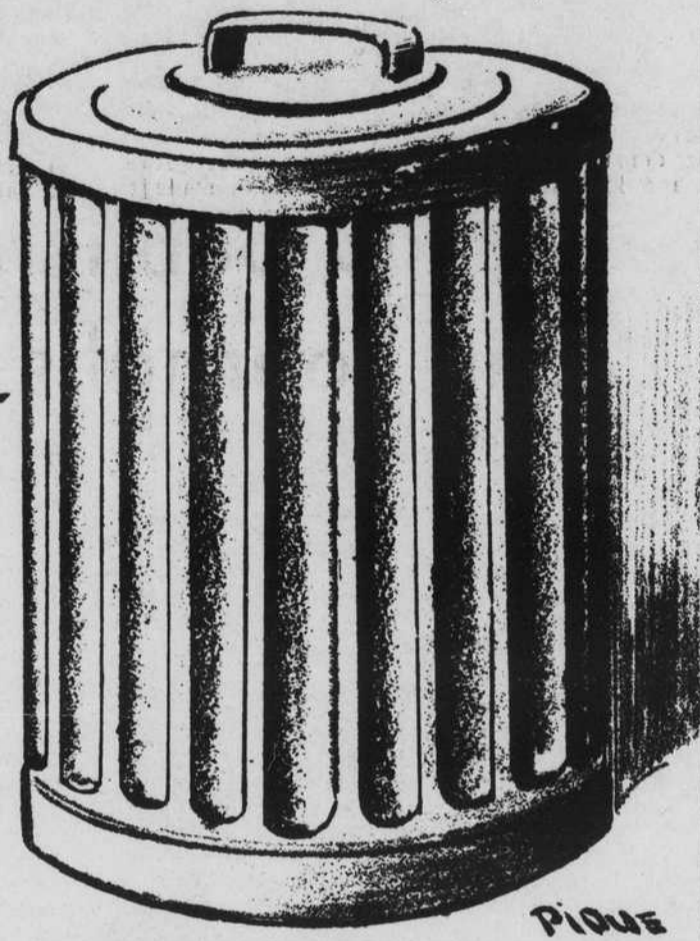
This is not written in defense of the Muslim's crede, but to give honor to whom honor is due.

Indeed Elijah Muhammad, has earned his place among the great in American history, His name can be placed on the same ledger with, Martin Luther King, Jr., W.E. DuBoise, Booker T. Washington and George Washington Carver.

The Guest Editorial next week will be by Municipal Judge Robert "Moon" Mullen, enlightening the people on "what's happening in the City Courts."

# RESOLVED IN 1975-

**TO HELP  
STARVE  
A RAT  
EVERY DAY-  
NOT TO  
LITTER  
THE  
STREETS**



## THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF BLACK LEADERSHIP



BAYARD RUSTIN

Not too many years have elapsed since America experienced the phenomenon known popularly as Black Power. The specifics of Black Power's philosophy and program were never particularly clear; in fact, it can be safely said that the vehemence and shrillness of Black Power's most prominent advocates was equaled only by the emptiness of their ideas.

There was, however, one important theme that emerged from the rantings of the so-called militants: American society and culture, they seemed to be saying, was beyond redemption, sick, not worth the efforts at reform or change. Black people particularly young blacks, should devote their energies to the development of an alternate, separatists culture, one defined by race consciousness and should avoid at all costs any contact with or participation in the larger white world.

During the height of the Black Power debate, A. Philip Randolph--who was lumped, along with Roy Wilkins and Martin Luther King, as chief among the sell-outs and Uncle Toms of the traditional civil rights leadership--responded quite eloquently to the issues raised by the young militants. His words bear repeating since they suggest something quite important about the current situation.

"The forces of advanced technology are not limited by national boundaries and they are sweeping the world. Somehow we must find a way to

become a part of this phenomenon that is sweeping the world and changing the world. The youngsters of today must direct their attention not only to the matter of racial identity and racial realization through black studies, but they must make certain that they are not left behind in the scientific and technological revolution, because if they are, they will be in a helpless state. There will be absolutely no way in the world whereby they can become an effective force. If the young Negro cannot become a part of this advancing technology his whole revolution will have been in vain."

One need not hate American society to recognize that it is in deep, deep trouble. Its basic institutions are crumbling: millions are out of work, the schools face economic crisis, housing is not being built for anyone, much less the poor, the fabric of urban life is being torn apart by violent crimes and fear it generates. And no one, much less the present national leadership, seems to have the will to even begin to resolve these problems.

In the past, there was certain amount of truth to the proposition that the troubles of American society only marginally affected blacks. During the Great Depression of the 1930s black people lived on the margins of society, poverty-stricken and with little hope of rising above the ghetto or rural squalor.

But this is no longer the case. The majority of black people do not exist as a massive underclass, living at society's edges. They are part of America; they have a stake in the strength of American society and in the democratization of its institutions. When the failures of national leadership create a massive army of unemployed black workers, it does not signify merely the further impoverishment of an already impoverished people; it is a major catastrophe for those who have most recently won the opportunity to enjoy the fruits modern civilization can bestow.

What A. Philip Randolph was saying is that black people are of society, not apart from it. We face a stern choice: to mobilize our unique skills and energies to the reshaping and humanizing of that society, or to ignore this challenge. In which case society, with its advancing technology, its increasingly complex international complex order, and constantly shifting political systems, smother us as it proceeds inexorably on its way.

The challenge if for black people to speak out, loudly and firmly, in the great debates which will shape our destiny. These issues may not, prob-

ably will not, be identifiably "black" issues: the formulation of a long term energy policy, the role of America in encouraging internal freedom for oppressed people around the world, the role of government in ensuring a permanent policy of full employment, to name just a few. But they are the issues which will ultimately determine the fate of black people, here and abroad.

In the 1960s black people were the vanguard of a massive movement to shake America out of its passivity and move it towards the ideal of an equal society. Today American society is in a far deeper crisis, and black people have much more to lose. The issue is no longer whether to reject American society--that is an option only the affluent and their children can choose. It falls to blacks to take up the challenge posed by America's failures and shortcomings, to participate in the crucial debates, and to help remake all of society. To deliberately refuse this challenge signifies, not a revulsion at the diseased state of society, but an outrageous and irresponsible attitude towards the mass of black Americans.



### SUPPORT OPPORTUNITY VILLAGE

## LAS VEGAS VOICE

NEVADA'S BLACK COMMUNITY WEEKLY  
"An Uninterrupted Publication Since 1963"

A WEEKLY NEWSPAPER (Published every Thursday) DEDICATED to the INTEREST and ASPIRATIONS for a BETTER LIFE for BLACK CITIZENS of the STATE of NEVADA

Lawrence Albert.....Publisher  
Sandra McIlveen.....Treasurer  
Clinton Wright.....Photographer  
Luke Plewe.....Layout Artist

EDITORIAL, ADVERTISING & CIRCULATION OFFICES  
900 West Bonanza Road, Lobby Suite (Moulin Rouge Hotel) Las Vegas, Nevada 89106 Telephone 648-2615

ADVERTISING RATES FURNISHED UPON REQUEST

Price per copy - 15¢ • One year \$7.50

(Application for 2nd Class Mailing Permit pending at Las Vegas, Nevada).