

THE PIONEERS

Brother Ahmad Muhammad's History In His Own Words

Part One

"How Many Times Can A Man Save Your Life"

By Brother Ahmad Muhammad

CHICAGO, Illinois--In The Most Holy Name of Allah, The Beneficent, The Merciful, who came in The Person of Master Fard Muhammad, we can never thank Him enough for raising from among us, our Leader, our Teacher and our Guide, The Messenger of Allah, The Most Honorable Elijah Muhammad.(May the peace and blessing of Allah be upon Him forever)

As Salaam Alaikum Dear Followers of Allah's Messenger!

It has been requested of me, as a long time observer and Follower of Allah's Messenger, by the hard working Followers of The Messenger of Allah, Sister Zakiyah and Brother Minister Levi Karim, publishers of the Muhammad Speaks Newspaper, to send them memoirs of some of my experiences as a Muslim Follower of The Honorable Elijah Muhammad.(peace be upon him).



It took me a while to settle in to compose a narrative even remotely justified to express this wondrous journey from childhood to the present. There is not paper enough to relate the long list of favors Allah bestowed upon us, the Lost Found so-called Negroes in the United States of America, when He raised from our very midst, One who was made of the correct material to communicate to us the desire of Allah.

Oh... IF we all had just TAKEN the time... to LISTEN... and EXAMINE the message... Most did not ... Much like today! How many times can a Man save your life? If you are The Messenger of Allah, you can save one or millions of lives, as often as necessary... until Allah says...Enough!

So...I will began in the late1930's, a time of extreme strife for the Black man and Woman in The U.S.A. 'The NOW called " African-Americans, " (False name) talked in a disparaging manner about The Honorable Elijah Muhammad (peace be upon him) and His Followers!

As a child, I heard and didn't hear the passing remarks about The Messenger, that blended in with other

remarks about things I knew or cared nothing about. In those days, "Colored People" (another false name given to us by slave masters) would make open mean-hearted 'fun' of the Muslim Sisters wearing the civilized long dresses of the Nation of Islam, under Allah's Messenger, The Most Honorable Elijah Muhammad! (peace be upon him).

Some Colored folks, to their detriment, would throw rocks at the Sisters! Mean or low lifed responses to the presence of Muslim garb, was encouraged by the white slave masters descendants! Our poor, ignorant people would respond gleefully, constantly trying to curry favor from their open oppressors! Much like today!

When you think of ALL the respected throughout the world, you also must reflect upon HOW EASY it is to REMOVE that civilized dress! Without decent women, you have no decent men...or children!

The United States was still reeling from a depression and who is depressed most with no money or places to live. It was thus in the city where I lived, Chicago, Illinois on the South Side, where along with the West Side, Black People were concentrated. Here, as in other cities, I was later to learn, came a man of small stature, The Honorable Elijah Muhammad.(peace be upon him) .

Sometimes He could be seen and heard on street corners, in parks or anywhere one or more might gather. He was courageous, fearless and kind.

I lived near a city-owned park called Washington Park, located in Chicago on the South Side. The so-called Negroes would gather at all hours in Washington Park, often spending the night, even in the winter! Many had no homes or kitchenettes (partitioned off apartments) where many families lived, squeezed in with other families, 4 or more people to a single room! A single bathroom serviced all! The kitchenettes were so stifling in the summer, the park was a welcome place to sleep and enjoy a meal for individuals and families!

Children suffered the most! Adequate food and clothing were luxuries! It is hard to imagine that people in this state of despair, would be hostile to One bringing a message, guaranteed to put them in a favorable position! They just didn't want to hear it! Much like today!

Along came this Man, at random. You never knew when He was to pop up, giving a message never heard before by the masses of Black People. Messages about a God named Allah! How to pool what little money we had to better our lives! What to eat!

"Who is HE to tell us to get off of pork?" "Who is HE to tell us how to dress?" "Who gave HIM authority over us?" All translated into... We won't listen until our white slave masters give this man permission to talk with us and gives the OK to listen!...

The Messenger showed Black People how to join their money, labor and resources to achieve desired goals! He gave the REASONS to abstain from "chittlins" and all "fat back." The Messenger gave the open and hidden names and nick names of pork so that Black People could readily identify the hog! He taught the so-called Negro/colored people to read labels on cans and all packaged foods. "You mus tNOT eat the hog!" He would shout! He taught them to ask the grocer,"What is IN this lunchmeat?"

He taught that the reason for not eating pork was not ONLY that their BIBLE preached AGAINST the eating of swine but that it was KILLING them!

To raise a nation, defend and protect self and family, one had to be in a HEALTHY CONDITION!

"DO NOT EAT ANY PORK!"

The Messenger of Allah taught those who would listen, how to love and respect one another AND

importantly, how to unite!

"Who IS this strange man?" "Who sent him?" "How DARE he come among us with pronouncements from somebody named Allah!" "What is that strange book he carries around, he calls The Holy Qur-an?" " Who gave him the right to speak this strange message?" "Let's beat him up!" "Let's KILL him!"

And so... into this savage, barbaric arena of ignorance, stepped the Messenger of Allah, The Most Honorable Elijah Muhammad (peace be upon him)!

How many times can a Man save your life...? It was a warm, late spring day with signs of rain. The mild overcast sky right before the rain, gave the trees, shrubs and grass a deeper green. As a child and now I loved that look. I treasured the rain and the sun. Standing in front of the apartment building in which I lived, leaning against the single wire fence that protected the green grass from feet of the neighborhood residents, was my usual station. The wire would make a line on my legs as I learned against it. Drops of rain began to fall. I was aware of two things. The soft rain against my face as I turned my head up to the sky and the awareness that someone was coming toward me from my right side. I was having fun standing in the rain, so I ignored who ever was coming closer to me. A voice spoke in friendly but firm tones. "Greetings little Ahmad Muhammad, it's starting to rain, you had best go inside."

Not one to obey readily, I responded with a curt, "My name's NOT that!" I continued to enjoy the rain in my face. "Little one... lightning may strike the wire you're leaning on and hurt you! You had best get off the wire!" I had not heard a voice like that before. A voice that was kind, but authoritative at the same time.

Turning slowly, I looked up and saw two men, one with a smiling face and the other, very tall with what seemed to me was a mean face. The smaller of the two men took my arm in a gentle manner, to lead me away from the single wire fence, I jerked my arm away and continued leaning on the fence. The rain came down harder! My grandmother, watching from the third floor window, raised the window and called out for me to come in! The smaller man who had called me the funny name, smiled up at my grandmother and greeted her. She did not smile back. Her order for me to come in got louder! I ignored my grandmother. "You best go in! Be a good boy now and go in." said the man with the kind face. I backed away from the fence at His command. The rain didn't seem to bother Him or His companion and for some reason I liked them for that.

I started to walk toward my stairs as the kind faced man and his friend walked away. He called to me, "We'll see you again little Ahmad!" He said something else I could not understand. "My name's NOT that! I said again! Up the stairs I went. As I reached the top landing and started to open the door, the LOUDEST sound I ever heard.... KABOOM! Filled the air... lightning had struck the wire fence!

Every day, my grandmother took me for strolls and stops in Washington Park. We would sometimes view the Messenger on His way to the "Washington Park Forum," or the "Negro Bug House Square."

The "Forum", so named by Blacks, was said to be a replica of the white, North Side "Bug House Square!" It was so named because mental institutions in those days were known as 'crazy houses' or 'bug houses.' Communists, Christians, Atheists, Muslims, Uncle Toms and what-not gathered at the "Forum". Views from all sorts of people were argued and pondered over.

Years later, I was to discover that The Messenger lived but three blocks from me and close to Washington Park! From the day Allah spared my life through His Messenger, I never forgot that man with the kind face. On occasion while in Washington Park, hurrying along with one, sometimes more companions, He would call out to me and my grandmother. She would pull me closer to her side and never once did she return His greeting. I would smile and wave.

The Washington Park "Forum" was unique and was not visited by the faint of heart. I was about 8 years old when I felt brave enough to go by myself and hear all the arguments, some vicious, that always seemed to

center around "The Negro Question!" You could get hurt in that crowd! The Messenger was one of the favorites among the regulars. There was always speculation if He would be coming, as He was in and out of the city. If rumor had it, that He was to be on the scene, the crowd would triple. I had never seen so many people in one place as when The Messenger Of Allah would speak!

Imagine... out in the open, among trees, grass and shrubbery. A clearing... dirt packed down and stubbles of grass, where years of stomping and shifting black feet, had given approval or disdain, to hundred of speakers over many years. The speaking system was simple! Two moderators, usually the same two men, would hold up a stick, a two foot long twig, about an inch in diameter, taken from a nearby tree. The stick would be given to the speaker, allowing him (I never saw a woman speak) to talk without major interruption, for so many minutes. When it was time to challenge the speaker, the "stick" was passed to the new speaker. The crowd would cheer, boo, hiss or fight depending upon their mood!

The Messenger of Allah presented a peculiar dilemma to the fickle crowd. They had NEVER in their lives heard such a message! They didn't know HOW to receive this Man, who only had a third grade elementary education, in a little school house in Georgia.

I understand they booed and threatened Him when He first came to speak, but when I started to attend, The Messenger was quite a favorite! The crowd rejoiced when The Messenger bested Christian preachers in theological arguments! They cheered Him as He corrected so-called scholars holding doctorates and masters degrees! He caused the 'expects' to admit the soundness of Allah's wishes for the Black Man and Woman! The Messenger could not talk as fast or as proper as His adversaries but He spoke a truth that ALL could understand!

I loved watching and listening to Him. Years passed, my family moved into a housing project on Chicago's South Side where we befriended a family who were members of the U.N.I.A. (The United Negro Improvement Association) headed by the Hon. Marcus Garvey, who had since passed in 1940. My new friend, a boy my age, was a member of this family. His grandmother, who was a staunch member of the UNIA, would, at every opportunity, encourage us to read the words of the Hon. Marcus Garvey and of The Honorable Elijah Muhammad. (peace be upon him). She told us the differences between The Honorable Elijah Muhammad (peace be upon him) and the Hon. Marcus Garvey. She stated that The Messenger was the most powerful individual she had ever seen or heard and that Mr.Garvey and Mrs.Garvey admired The Messenger and gave instructions to members to assist The Messenger and His Followers when ever they could.

The grandmother invited me to go to a UNIA meeting along with her grandson, hoping that I would become a junior member. This kind of talk went in one ear and out the other. I agreed to go only to accompany my buddy. There, that evening at the UNIA meeting... I saw the tall man with the mean face! "That's the guy that hangs around with Mussel Man", said my friend, referring to one of the names The Messenger was called. "He's watchin' us! Don't let um see your eyes. If dey see you eyes, you gonna think like um!"

Our people in many cases were very superstitious and the Caucasian had planted so many LIES about The Messenger, most of our people didn't know WHAT to believe on their own! Whatever negatives were spoken regarding The Messenger Of Allah, they would readily take in and repeat! Much like today.

We didn't pay too much attention to what was said at the meeting! We kept watching the tall man. His features were strong! His complexion was a smooth deep black. His eyes were piercing. Anyone could see, that here, was a serious man!

The meeting adjourned and the small crowd spilled out upon the street. "He's comin' our way!"said my friend,"Don't look at um!" I didn't believe the eye thing."Ahmad! Ahmad Muhammad!" said the tall man, "Wait!" We stopped. My buddy looked away. "Why he call you that?" said my friend. I looked up at The Messenger's Companion. "Why DO you call me that?" I said. "The Messenger calls you that! He wants to

see you!", He said "The Messenger wants to see you! Come to the Temple tomorrow, over on Forty Third Street and bring your friends! Your buddy knows where it is! Don't forget, tomorrow night!"

My friend pulled me away and started walking fast...."Have you been there?" I asked. "A coupla' times with my father," he replied....I didn't show up at the temple the next night.

Being able to swim at an early age helped me to obtain employment as a Lifeguard at the local Wabash YMCA, (Young Men's Christian Association) 3763 South Wabash Avenue. It was the only YMCA in Chicago at that time that allowed Black's to join and be welcome.

I was now 15 years old and was assisting in instructing various swimming classes until old enough to be an instructor. I didn't think about The Messenger often as I went about my life until I was assigned to teach an unusual group of elderly men. These men ranged in age from 65 to 94. There were 12 of them. They would work out in the weight room, play basketball, run around the track and end their day by doing laps (swimming lengths of the pool).

Every employee at the 'Y' marveled at men their ages being in such good condition. On one occasion while instructing underwater techniques, I complemented one of the men on being able to stay underwater for over two minutes at 94 years old! "You know, you guys are lucky to be in the shape you're in, at ANY age. How did you get together?" I asked. "Luck NOR coincidence had nothing to do with it!" said the man known as Brother William 'D' X, a barber by trade. "We happen to be followers of The Honorable Elijah Muhammad!" He got out of the water, went to a pool chair, picked up his towel and while drying off, he continued."If you follow the path The Honorable Elijah Muhammad has laid out, everything you do, with right intentions, will be successful!"

These good Brothers would always take time to explain The Messenger's program to all who would listen! Then came the invitation to see and hear The Messenger!

Attending services at the Temple on East 43rd. Street gave me mixed feelings. I was embarrassed to let my friends know I was going. The Temple was a storefront.

In those days, Black People talked about you like a DOG if you attended any gathering at a storefront! Most of them did however!

The Believers had many problems to solve. Heat in the winter! Sweltering conditions in summer! Getting enough chairs to accommodate the growing crowds anxious to hear The Honorable Elijah Muhammad (peace be upon him)! Finances!

We know how difficult it is to PULL donations from the so-called Negro! That is a TOUGH job!

The Brothers and Sisters had many tough jobs! I notice that the Believers never complained! Each challenge was tackled with joy and enthusiasm! There were always improvements at the Temple each time I came. The Believers kept up the storefront Temple in an immaculate fashion! The Messenger would not refer to the storefront Temple as a Mosque. He said to the crowds that a Mosque was a very special place and until a new location was secured, the storefront should be call a "Meeting place".

It was not long before a new location had been found. It was in the mid 1950's. The Messenger said that the site was occupied by a religious group and consisted of a place to worship and a building right next to it for a school. The real estate people were over-charging Him but He was confident that Allah would make a way for the Nation Of Islam to obtain the property. The property was located at 5335 South Greenwood Avenue, in Chicago, Illinois. I was curious to see this property that excited The Messenger's Followers. I was also curious as to where all the money was coming from that would pay for the new location.

After leaving the YMCA one evening, I went by the location talked about by The Messenger. It was a marvelous spot but I wondered how the Followers would ever get enough money to pay for both a Temple AND a school. Sunday, 2:00 P.M. came and I was in attendance, sitting in the rear, feeling guilty because I had not joined yet. I didn't want to make eye contact with The Messenger, He might ask me why I wouldn't raise my hand when he would ask the audience, "Do you believe that everything I have said to you is the truth? If you do, raise you hand!"

Many would raise their hands. The Messenger, not one to leave anything undone, would then say, "Now, Brothers and Sisters, I want want those to stand who raised their hands." Well...here is where all the serious ones would jump up! The undecided ones like me, would half stand or not stand.

"If what you heard you agree with and you want to join on to your own kind to help me in this work, come on up here and shake my hand!" As the prospective members came up to shake The Messenger's hand, He would direct them to the rear to give their names to the Secretary for registration and to start the Process to become members of The Nation of Islam!

This particular Sunday, after the invitation for new members, The Messenger said, "Some of you young ones are ashamed of our little meeting place and you don't want to tell anyone you come here." I could have sunk into the floor. I just knew He was talking about me.

It was later, after other meetings that I found out that The Messenger had the ability, given to Him by Allah, to give that exclusive feeling to all that it applied to. There were many in that room that felt as I did. We loved the Teaching but fear or other reasons kept us from making the commitment. "Well", said The Messenger, "Allah will make it possible for us to get the property over in Hyde park (an area of Chicago on the South East Side). We will have to work hard, pool our little money and Allah will see to it that we will move into there before you know it. I want to see you bring in all the people you think will come if we have a nicer place. I think you gonna' be surprised. I had the Secretary and The Captain put a deposit on the property, now it's up to us to get the rest of the down payment!"

How BOLD The Messenger is I thought! What faith! Here is a man, going against the grain of society, telling Black Folks to get off of pork, cigarettes, cigar, chewing tobacco, whiskey, narcotics and all other vices! Here is a man, CHANGING the dress code of Black Women and Men! Here is a man that DOES NOT preach moderation in pursuit of vice, but COMPLETE abstinence!

The Messenger teaches us a NEW way to eat! He teaches what holidays to observe and how to live in peace with one another! He tops it off by giving us the knowledge of our true God Allah and the truth of the identity of the devil!.....WHEW!.....As a belligerent teenager, this Man was my kinda' guy...so far...I said so far because I was arrogant enough to have a 'test' for any religious leader I came in contact with!

Any teacher or preacher that tried to tell me ANYTHING, I would give him or her "The Test!"

At the age of 8 years, I was tossed out of a Christian Sunday school for questioning the Assistant Superintendent. He was teaching a Sunday school class in which I was a member. I was never comfortable with the story that God let his son die for the sins of sinners. When I questioned the teacher and showed frustration as to why God would do such a thing, he accused me of questioning God! I told him in a not so child like way, that I was questioning HIM, not God! Out of the class I went!

Years later, I was relieved to learn that The Messenger taught that Allah (God) would never have done such a foolish thing as to sacrifice one of His righteous prophets for sinners!

"The Test" consisted of asking the preacher or teacher this question, "If you woke up tomorrow and found that what you had been teaching for years was false and what I teach is true, what would you do?" Well, I had the opportunity to pose the question to The Messenger of Allah, The Most Honorable Elijah Muhammad,

(peace be upon him) when The Nation Of Islam moved into the new headquarters at 5335 South Greenwood Avenue in Chicago, Illinois.

The new location was a great place to go I felt. Now, I could ask all my friends to come to such a beautiful place. The Messenger was correct however, those of us who felt that once we moved to a fine location, the public, including our friends would flock in, were in error and disappointed...None of our 'friends' came!

"Are you saved?" On occasion, while in the streets or in church, preachers would ask me this question. In those days, it was common for a religious person to walk up to strangers and inquire, "Are you saved?" and wait for an answer. "What do you mean by saved?"... "Saved from who?" or some other smart answer guaranteed to annoy the cleric and bring laughter from our group. We did not respect any!

When the 'saved' question would arise, I would step forward and present 'The Test.' "If you woke up tomorrow and found out what you had been teaching all these years was false and what I was teaching was the truth, what would you do?" I would ask in an arrogant manner, knowing I would hear the same or a like answer from the preacher or teacher. "Well, first of all, what you are saying is not possible. I AM preaching the truth. I am teaching from the bible. You don't HAVE the truth, therefore I would not expect you to lead ME!. That question is not a correct one. "I would always get these kinds of answers. I would laugh and move on.

The new Mosque had a balcony overlooking the main floor. What a comforting and beautiful sight, to look down and see the Brothers on one side and the Sisters on the other! The crowds were getting larger! I was comfortable in the balcony. I constantly realized that the Mosque, under The Most Honorable Elijah Muhammad, (peace be upon him) was one of the few places of worship where any person could ask a question and receive an answer!

In churches I had attended amidst all the singing, shouting, pomp and order of service, you had better NOT stand up to pose a question! Guests at the Temple loved to hear The Messenger's answers to questions they were curious about. It was a wonderful learning experience! I looked forward to and respected this uniqueness in The Nation Of Islam.!

Like many mentally dead so-called Negroes, I felt that due to our "education", (I was only a junior in high school) exceeding The Messenger's third grade elementary school learning, we knew more than He did! Interestingly, I would admit to myself and others, that I was learning MORE from The Messenger's Teaching than I had EVER learned from anyone or anywhere!

It was with this false sense, this feeling of being more educated, that I prepared myself to give The Messenger "The Test!"

The Messenger was teaching on His many subjects having to do with our salvation. He had told the audience, repeatedly, that one of His greatest jobs was to teach us to be self sufficient! "Do for self and kind!" The Messenger would pause and look out over the packed Mosque and would determine if the message was getting through. Many times He would stop His lecture and say, "I can feel and see that some of you have questions about what I am teaching. Stand up! Let me see who you are! Ask your questions! I will answer you, if I can!"

I had NEVER seen nor heard ANY leader open themselves up so, to be questioned by ANYONE who wanted to ask a question or even debate!

My respect for The Messenger grew! I was still ignorant enough however to administer "The Test" to The Messenger Of Allah.

About 10 or 12 people in the audience stood up! I was one of them! Three or four had asked their questions

and sat down. The Messenger looked up at me. My heart sank! I could hear it pounding ! My arrogance made me to feel that He could acknowledge me. He did NO such thing! "You have a question Brother? He said..."Uh, Yes Sir!" I replied, "Uh, Yes Sir!".

Some Brothers I knew gave me the LOOK! The look that says you had better NOT say anything that causes pain! OR ELSE!....

I took a deep breath. The wording of "The Test" came rolling out of my mouth. It was like someone else was talking!...Without hesitation, The Messenger stated in a firm voice, "Why Brother, If I woke up tomorrow or ANY day and found out that what I been teaching was false and what you were teaching was truth, I would take all my Followers and we would follow you!" My knees literally buckled! I plopped back down in my seat, my mouth hanging open! It was like being HIT between the eyes with a SLEDGE HAMMER! The Brothers watching me, broke out with big smiles of I TOLD you so! I had NEVER received such an answer! The Messenger moved on to the next person. A week passed....a long week. I wanted to join officially! I put on my best suit and bow tie and went to the Mosque. I was nervous but it was a good nervous! I could hardly wait for The Messenger to say."All those who believe what you have heard here today is the truth,stand up! Now.. if you believe it to be true, come on down here and shake my hand and join on to your own kind!" I had been around the Temple so much, most of the Brothers and Sisters assumed I was registered. Some looked puzzled as I stepped up in the long line to join The Nation Of Islam and serve Allah through His Messenger,The Most Honorable Elijah Muhammad (peace be upon him) As my turn to shake The Messenger's hand loomed closer, a sense of 'coming home' was upon me! Anyone that has stood in that line, waiting for The Messenger Of Allah to rasp their hands firmly with BOTH of His hands, as He would do and be welcomed into The Nation Of Islam, can bear witness that the feeling is like NO OTHER! After such an experience, how can one turn BACK on their heels? We gave each other a firm hand shake and big smiles! "As Salaam Alaikum!" said The Messenger, "Welcome to your own kind!" Wa Alaikum Salaam Dear Holy Apostle and thank you!" I replied.

Brother Ahmad Muhammad

[aka Rudy X (Harlow)]



Brother Ahmad Muhammad (aka Rudy Harlow), President of 5R Films, pictured in 1971
The Following Article is Reprinted from the July 30, 1971 edition of Muhammad Speaks Newspaper, page 3

Note: Images added by muhammadspeaks.com (compliments of Brother Ahmad Muhammad)

5R film producer's cinema-survey finds:

YOUR Super-Mart at the apex of 'excellence'

After completing an exhaustive examination of the relationship between the purchasing habits of the Black consumer and the food market 'industry' - in the country's second largest city - a highly 'together' group of your Black film makers have found that the Nation of Islam's YOUR Supermart, offers the shopper more quality for his purchasing dollar than any grocer in the city, and this research especially includes the major food chains - gushing with green dollars from Black hands.

In chain store outlets, billeted in the ghettos, where you might expect, as many Blacks do, at least the apparition of price sanity, item excellence and top service, the film researchers found the most flagrant price abuse-manipulation of the Black community, which is perhaps compounded by age old tendencies to connote

white magnet power with authority, and excellence, or 'white is right' - no matter how much bad meat whites palm off on ghetto dwellers.



The Black image makers, 5 R Films have produced a film which takes on this syndrome of Black identification with the very enemies of our survival, and it comes full circle with an in-depth assault upon the profiteers in the ghetto, in a most stirring piece of cinema entitled: Why We Lose, but which might also be subtitled - How We Can Win.

Why We Lose is a revolutionary film, although no guns are fired, yet this 35-40 minute movie brings down the kind of systematic indictment upon 'this white man's economic foundation,' which is direly needed - so much so that Rudy Harlow, President of the 5 R Films indicates certain food chains have threatened the cinematic life of the film and indeed the studio...Big white folks find the film 'dangerous' because it has no escape clauses in it; and the movie declines to offer whites the soap-opera of a sadistic Cleaver type momentarily whipping of individual whites; no white individual heads are whipped, but rather Why We Lose causes whites to turn wicked red by hitting them in the pocket-book and by specifically taking away that gushing green from dark-skinned hands, and demanding that our hard-won currency be spent in a Black store, which provides excellence of services, and the highest quality.

The film also holds on quarter with shoddiness among Black grocers, indeed the research commenced with the ideal of finding the best for Black shoppers, and though this film was neither produced, nor written by the Nation of Islam, it ends up with a story about the fundamentals of Black economic survival, which strongly affirms the direction - course set in motion some forty-years by a man, who has continually, and unceasingly worked night and day to build a sound Black nation: Messenger Muhammad.

Your Supermart, located on Chicago's Southside, at 8300 Cottage Grove, won the poll-survey study over scores of stores - which gain millions of dollars each year in the ghettos not only here in Chicago, but across the land - in categories of: Display Service, Neatness, Produce, Canned Goods, Quality of Meat, Bakeries...As Harlow points out, "Tell me where you can find eggs at 29 cents per dozen, well YOUR

Supermart is able to do so because they own their own chickens, and their own farms...the same is true with canned goods - ownership --which points the way it can be done.

Why We Lose is a Black appeal to the intelligence of the Afro-American community locked in the economic infernoes of North America (which spends over \$400,000,000 per year, in consumer marketplaces across the land) in that it accepts as a matter of principal, the concept that our consumers are no longer interested in rhetorical - rap sessions about the problem, and personal ego-trips about how our minds got all mashed up by the Great White Father, but rather, substantive reversals in those gushing rivers of fleeing dollars out of the Black community into the pale lily furred suburban dwellings of the enemy: It is above and beyond boycotts and it is deeply and abidingly concerned with cinematically recreating the rituals of how we live and purchase, and our tendencies towards, what E. Franklin Frazier called -- Conspicuous Consumption.

Why We Lose is concerned with using those memory rituals of our wrong-headed buying, as a king of spurning - critique object lesson, calling for a purge of our undisciplined buying, and calling for a purge of those elements within our culture, which are designed to destroy us, even as we purge ourselves of our paternalistic tendencies to crawl to the white man's stores for his high priced items. The film is deeply involved with replacing those deadening rituals of consumer folly with rituals of renewal via brick by brick building, selective buy Black programs - and by making Black the Best. (It is interesting that during the time of so-called revolution by many young mindless Blacks, we find many of their ilk turning hippy and chasing after the most degenerate aspects of white culture, which is quite obviously in decomposition).

The film, in the beginning, draws heavily upon the mythology of Black folklore of the Fox and the Rabbit. In the beginning of the movie we find rabbits using their carrots for money to purchase food from the Fox, who doesn't live in the community. Because the rabbits (like Blacks) are dependent upon their supplier, and are not producers, but rather almost totally consumers, they are wide open to the whims of the Fox, his rancor, his bad meat, and his prices...Ultimately, the rabbits learn in the form of a warning that it is only when 'carrots are deposited' in the rabbits own backyard (community) can there be true 'viability' or true autonomy; but before this takes place, the rabbits are set upon several fool's errands, so dependent upon the rigors of the neo-colonial mis-adventures that they are told they must fill out a series of forms, 'in triplicate' in order to get credit to spend their carrot-money in their own community. This bit of whimsical, but wise hyperbole in the prologue of the

film, reels the audience off into the human Black concreteness of the extension of the fool's errand parable, and as the film itself opens, we see Blacks - who have been told to fill out forms for credit to spend their money in the white man's store.

As the film unfolds we see evidence of mindless conspicuous consumption among Blacks; bumper-to-bumper autos in supermarts and along the streets; the obsessiveness with slick magazines which perpetuate dependency on sick values. One of the more powerful aspects of the movie is in its manner of statistically detailing its material, which tends to suggest the implication of the film are of great relevance in any Black community. Harlow is interested in getting exposure for the film in other cities. it has several shows throughout the city, but the people at 5 R are not interested in winning friends and influencing people at the expense of Black survival. He deems the movie's role as being instructive and an instrument towards our survival.

Why We Lose shows the power of advertising upon Black consumers, how he is teased, wrenched and wasted by trick-gimmicks; it is concerned with the psychology of the 'wretched of the earth', for instance, and it indicates how 97 per cent of the Blacks feel guilty about shopping at white owned stores...Many of these people use reasons such as 'reasonable prices', high quality meats for putting their money in the white man's stores; yet in fact they secretly distrust Black owned and operated stores; thinking that prices are too high, and they they receive bad meats there.

Why We Lose, also suggest that we may continue to lose and not survive if we don't as a people wake up...Scene after scene shows boarded-up sections of the Black community ; decay everywhere. Ultimately, all of the institutions for Black survival in the inner-city face this Condemned Property situation.

But, Why We Lose poses a very important alternative: Get smart...During the course of the film we meet and see elderly Blacks ('They who have bore the most') shopping at YOUR Supermart...Why? Because after completing their research the film makers decide that even the cinematic engagement itself might pose an ego-trip which doesn't deal with specific solutions to our problems that it would only indict, and not consecrate their effort, nor solidify Blacks, so that one of the more beautiful sights in the movie is the commencement of "Smart Shopper Days," where members of the Black Senior Citizens Project do their shopping at YOUR Supermart, once a week.

A bus comes to get the elder people to do their shopping and brings them home. Some of the pictures on the pages of story by Lloyd Saunders, the gifted Vice-President of 5 R Films, pays delicate witness to the 'light of the body' in the eyes of these gentle folks who have waited so long to see Blacks do for Black self.

Part 2

CHICAGO, Illinois--A beautiful Sunday! As always, I was excited about going to the Mosque! I was learning interesting things each time, although being argumentative about most issues.

On a few occasions, a Brother or two would become so frustrated with my hard head, blows were nearly struck!Once, The Messenger told some Brothers whom had been at odds with me not to worry as questioning things was my way of learning.

After 'Processing' I had my "X" and on occasion when The Messenger would call me Ahmad, this would cause curiosity among some."Why does The Messenger call you Ahmad?" "If you have a Holy Name, why don't you use it?"

I would explain that The Messenger gave me that name as a young child. At one of our 'team' meetings, The Messenger remarked that I would "have to grow into that name Ahmad. "It won't be until you're 65 that you will be worthy of that name." He smiled.

As I progressed in years and learning, I would never use the name Ahmad. "The Messenger was only joking with you", some would tell me. "He didn't mean for you to wait until you're 65 before using your Holy Name!"

These and other reassuring comments were well meaning by my Brothers. But... I wasn't sure.

I waited until I was 65 before using and feeling comfortable with Ahmad Muhammad!

I learned and grew so much in those years approaching 65. I thought each day, how wise is Allah's Messenger!

While a teenager, married and a father to be, I had two, sometimes three jobs preparing for our first child. However, there was something wrong with my health.

The doctors I went to said that a gastric problem bothering me was serious and would require a drastic operation! I was devastated! No longer would I be able to work as hard or participate in sports and would have to give up my swimming instructors job after the operation. The complaint was so serious that I had to be hospitalized!

I kept putting off the operation. The doctors told me that I would die if I did not have the operation!

“So, you won’t be swimming and you’ll have to take it easy for the rest of your life, but you’ll still be living!” said the doctor. I didn’t call that living. “Let me schedule the operation date and get this over with!” stated the doctor. I hesitated. “Let me think about it some more,” I said, “I’ll call you”.

“The hospital has to know to save you a room and I have to know to schedule the operating room and all!” Said the doctor, anxious to start carving on me.

I went home in a fog. A few days after the doctor’s visit, I became so ill that I decided to schedule the operation. I had not confided in anyone about my illness. I felt lost.

Calling the doctor was hard to do. He sounded happy when I gave permission to schedule the operation.

Then, I thought it was because of his concern for me. Only later, did I discover that it was the money prospects that made him gleeful.

My old car would not start that day I was to schedule the operation, so I decided to walk that long walk to the doctor’s office to get the operation date and sign all the necessary documents.

I felt like it would be one of my last long walks.

It was a head clearing walk. I had never been this sad. There up ahead for me was a train bridge, about two or three blocks long.

It was dark under the bridge, even in the afternoon.

It was about one o’clock as I entered the long tunnel under the bridge. I barely heard the footsteps coming toward me.

“Oh!” said a firm voice! You just gonna’ PASS UP your Brother huh? As Salaam Alaikum!” said the voice! It was one of the Muslim Brothers in the senior swimming class!

“Wa Alaikum Salaam!” I responded! We embraced as Brothers in The Nation!

“Just gonna’ walk on BY me!” He said! “No! No! I said, “I’ve just got a lotta’ things on my mind!”

“What kinda’ things could a young man like you have on his mind to cause you to be off you guard like I caught YOU?” said the Brother. There we were, standing in the middle of a dark tunnel....this meeting...both of us...at this time...at this place! Think about how Allah works...when we are still and listen....His correct timing...His guidance! “Guide us on the right path!”

I opened up and told the Brother of my serious medical problem. He seemed concerned, then he said, “Brother, if I was you, I’d talk to The Messenger about this! I wouldn’t hesitate! He gave us His number to

call Him! Have you got The Messenger's number?" "No I don't." "I replied.

The Brother gave me The Messenger's telephone number! "Go on home now and call The Messenger!" (We didn't have cell phones then) "Tell that doctor to hold off a while til you talk to The Messenger!"

My doubting immediately rose up! "The Messenger is no doctor!" I blurted out! "How's He gonna help ME?" The Brother looked at me and shook his head! "Well FOOL, GO ON, HAVE your operation! You'll probably DIE from it anyway! BE like MOST ignorant people! Have your operation based on what ONE DOCTOR told you! You can BRAG on how severe your operation was! You can show your scars right along with the other fools! GO ON SCHEDULE it then!" The Brother was angry!

"I'm sorry," I said, "Thanks for the advice. I'll go on over to the doctor's office since I'm almost there and tell him to his face to hold off until I talk with The Messenger. We gave one another The Greetings. The Brother continued on West. I continued East to the doctors office.

"What do you MEAN you want to cancel the operation?" said the doctor! He was furious! "Why! WHY!" He said, staring at me like I stole something from him.

"I'm going to talk to The Messenger first!" I said.

"Talk to Him about WHAT?" whined the doctor!" He's no medical authority! Oh! So NOW He wants to tell people about operations! Stop being silly and let me schedule the operation!"

Old doc was really mad! I got suspicious! "I see your point doctor, but I'm going to talk with The Messenger first, then I'll call you!"

I hesitated before completing the dialing of The Messenger's telephone number. Just imagine, being so gracious and accommodating to your people that you give them your home address and telephone number!

Most of the time the officials could handle a problem but we were encouraged to notify The Messenger Of Allah if we felt there was a special need or the officials became lax in any area!

We were surely blessed!

The telephone rang twice! A secretary answered and repeated The Messenger's number. I gave her The Greeting and identified myself! "Wa Alaikum Salaam." She replied, "What can I do for you today?" "May I speak with The Messenger?" I said, breathing fast! "Did you have a appointment?" The Sister asked.

"This call is about my health!" I said. "One moment." She replied.

The 'moment' seemed like an eternity. The secretary came back.

"As Salaam Alaikum, Brother. Thank you for holding. The Messenger will be with you shortly."

I took a deep breath. "As Salaam Alaikum" said that same kind voice I will remember always. "How can I help you Brother?" said The Messenger Of Allah."Wa Alaikum Dear Holy Apostle." I said, returning The Greeting.

I talked on and on, spilling out all my pain and frustrations, wondering aloud why a young man like me would suffer so! The Messenger interrupted. "Brother...Have you prayed to Allah with your heart about this matter?" I responded, "Well....a little, maybe not as much as I should have."

The Messenger did not reply for a while. “Brother..When Allah sends you signs and messages, are you listening?”

The Messenger knew the answer to that. He kept on talking. “I would best to say that your family has a lot of eating problems. Is that correct? I also will say that they are overweight and sick most of the time. Is that correct?”

“How did you know that?” I said. “Almost all of my family is sick. I hope I won’t be fat like them but the doctor says being fat and sick runs in our family.”

The Messenger was quiet. He spoke. “The reason all of you stay on the sick bed is because you eat all the same foods in the same manner!” The Messenger’s wisdom can knock you down!

After you gain a wee bit of knowledge and look back on your past beliefs, your new learning makes solutions to once difficult problems so simple and logical.... and yet, you didn’t get it until The Messenger or one of His Ministers pointed it out to you!

What is obvious to the wise is hidden from the foolish.

“I can’t do that! I’ll DIE!” This was my reply to The Messenger when He told me to stop eating meat for three weeks and then consider a vegetarian diet.

“Your horrible condition will clear up and go away! You have nothing to lose!” He continued. “The operation you described to me is not a pleasant one and you could succumb to it. Go over to Mrs. Fulton’s. She has a health food store and restaurant. Go over there and tell her to make you some fresh carrot juice. Fresh now, not from a bottle! You drink that juice for your food for three weeks, nothing else! Your illness will disappear!”

The Messenger seemed so confident!

“How”, I thought, “could a little carrot juice cure?”

Dear Holy Apostle, I said, “I don’t think I could survive on just carrot juice for three weeks.” “Well Brother,” said The Messenger,” You might not survive an operation! Tell me Brother, isn’t it worth the chance?”

“Yes Sir! I’ll try it!” I said. The doctor had called my house repeatedly but I didn’t want to respond until after the three week period was up.

Some Brothers had taken me over to Sister Fulton’s and introduced me to her. She made me fresh carrot juice every day.

I began to look forward to my visits and started to like the juice. I got all kinds of negative comments from ‘friends’ not in The Nation Of Islam, but I kept on going with the juice.

Much to my surprise and amazement, within TWO weeks, my illness had disappeared! I could not BELIEVE it!

Right away I got on the telephone to the doctor! “Nonsense!” Said the doctor. “Come in to my office and let me examine you! I know that problem just didn’t GO away! When can you come in? Can you come in today.”

I told the doctor I would come right over. I didn’t tell him about the carrot juice. I knew that I would really

sound crazy if I told him that and above all. WHOM I got the information from!

“WOW!....Did my medicine do THAT?” exclaimed the doctor after examining me and finding no trace of the problem.

“Wow! Isn’t that amazing! MY medicine did that! Hold on a moment, I’m going to get Dr.———. I’ve got to show HIM this!”

Before I could tell him what really happened, he jumped up and ran out of his office, calling loudly for his colleague! They bounded back into the office like children finding a new toy!

“Look,” I said, “Your medicine didn’t do this! I stopped taking your medicine over two weeks ago!” He stopped in his tracks!

“Well,” he composed himself, “If my medication did not cause this positive result, what is YOUR explanation for this?”

I explained about The Messenger and His unorthodox methods of the use of carrot juice to correct an ailment not known to be mended by any other means but surgery.

As I related The Messenger’s instructions and the time element between first taking the juice, to the disappearing of all the symptoms, the doctors became silent. Sour looks of indignation sprawled over their faces. They could stand no more! “Baloney! BALONEY!” said my doctor!” You come in here and tell us that some QUACK told you to take CARROT JUICE and it HEALED YOU?”

Up I jumped at that remark!” The Messenger Of Allah is NO quack!” I said loudly! “Well, He may not be a quack,” the doctor quickly stated, realizing he was treading on dangerous ground! “He’s certainly not a medical doctor! I’m sure you would agree on THAT! Think about it! You start drinking carrot juice and by some miracle or whatever, your condition leaves! That’s a coincidence, just CHANCE! I’m sure you KNOW that! If cures were that simple, EVERYBODY would be drinking carrot juice! We wouldn’t NEED doctors! Your condition is still there! It will show up again and SOON!”

The doctor dampened my spirits. Sadly, I began to believe him. It sounded logical! For one not yet confident in his beliefs, the explanation rang true. The doctor scheduled the operation! I went home! I resumed eating the way my family had always eaten. In a few days after the doctor visit, I came down sick again.

I was too ashamed to call The Messenger. Something kept nagging after me to try the carrot juice again, even though it probably WAS just a coincidence, me getting well and all. So... over to Sister Fulton’s I went!

After a few days of carrot juice, I was all right again! Now... I wish I could say that the second time the Messenger Of Allah proved to be correct in this matter, was enough to convince the most dull wits among us, but it wasn’t!

I got deathly ill when I went BACK to my old eating habits for the THIRD time and had to be hospitalized!

The operation was to take place while I was in the hospital. Well, as many of us will do, when we are at death’s door, we start to increase our output of prayers!

Much like today .I will always remember my fervent prayers to Allah, while on my back in the quiet of a hospital room.

Ether odors mixed with medicinal smells drifting in the air. The darkness was all around me! How did I

EVER get in this condition I kept asking myself!

I would pray.” Dear Allah, please deliver me from this pain and make me well again. Are you trying to tell me something? Are you telling me to try The Messengers remedy again, for the third time? Dear Allah, I will try the carrot juice once again. If I recover a third time, I will listen and learn everything I can from The Messenger! I will study the correct diet! I will eat only one meal a day! I will stop eating meat! Please heal me!”

I called my mother.” Ma”, I said,” Would you please go over to Sister Fulton’s on 63rd. Street and get me some carrot juice?”

My mother assured me that she would do so right away but cautioned me that the hospital did not want outside food brought in.

“I know you’ll find a way Momma.” I said.

The doctors were waiting until I got stronger before they operated. For three days I drank the carrot juice my mother had brought in. I refused all the hospital food! I grew stronger by the day!

I strolled out of the hospital more able than when I went in and..without ANY operation! Praise be to Allah!

How many times can a Man save your life?

I began to study The Messenger’s Teachings seriously! I started to eat in the correct manner and from that day to this day, the awful condition never returned.

I could hardly wait to tell my family, my Brothers and Sisters at The Mosque, EVERYBODY, about this miracle!

All Praise is due to Allah for His Messenger, The Most Honorable Elijah Muhammad (peace be upon him)

Part 3

Swimming skills put me in touch with many people and opportunities. One such was the automobile industry. Back then, there were no Black automobile salesmen selling from automobile dealer showrooms. (On the floor) If a Black man or woman had a customer, that customer was brought in and given to a white salesman (there were no female salespersons either).These type of salesman were called,"Backdoor Salesmen."They could not 'write up' a

transaction, take a credit applications or negotiate directly with the

customer they had generated. And, they were NOT allowed to handle money!

I had taught one of the 'Backdoor Salesman"to swim and as he was getting

along in age, he told me of this opportunity. It seems that a certain

automobile dealer he brought customers to was 'ready' to hire a 'colored'

man and put him on the floor! He felt that I might be the person. He asked

me if he could set up an interview with the General Manager of the dealership. "You have a family now, you need more income! You'll make more money selling cars", said the "Back door salesman".

The interview was long. I was hired and scheduled for a two week course at the manufacturer's training center. I would be paid by the manufacturer for this period. The program was geared to teach a prospective salesman all phases of the automotive retail industry. After intensive study, the salesman would return to his dealership to begin employment.

I could hardly wait for Monday to report to the dealership and leave for the manufacturer's training center!. I rose extra early that Monday ! I wanted to make sure to be on time for the first day! The Messenger and my family believed in being on time. "Start early, so if there is a delay, you'll still be on time," my mother would always say.

I did not own a car then. The old car I had finally stopped running a while back. I took public transportation the first day, assuming I would be given a demonstrator (a car used by dealer personnel) to drive to the training center and then home. I had 75 cents in my pocket after my street car fare was paid.

The sun was shining so bright. I was happy, happy to have a chance at increasing my income to support a growing family. It was a beautiful day to start a new job. As the streetcar neared the new car dealership, I saw a crowd of people milling around the main entrance, I was puzzled. I got off the streetcar and walked toward the dealership. There must have been over one hundred people standing outside. They had angry looks on their faces and they were all white, except two men! These two Black Men turned and looked at me! They had on blue utility uniforms. I was to find out later that day,

that they were porters, working at the dealership. I started to ask a man near me what was going on but he turned away from me. I walked toward the main door. One of the Black Men came swiftly up to me and cautioned me not to try to go in yet.?"Why not?" I asked, "What happened "You did,"He said in a sad way. "They walked out to protest you being hired as a salesman!."

This was my greeting oin the first day on the job! The owner of the dealership appeared at the entrance and stated in a loud voice, drowning out the mumbling and grunts of the ignorant crowd of his employees! "Whoever is not in the building in ONE minute, will NOT be working here after that!" He closed the door. In seconds, the hostile group rushed in before the minute was up! I was relieved that my first two weeks would be spent at the manufacturer's training center, located in a suburban area of Chicago, Illinois.

I was apprehensive about starting at the new job based on my first experience there. On the last day of class, we 'graduated ' and were told of the grand lifestyle we would now be living and to keep in touch. They were releasing us with a generous pay for the two weeks. It was time to start selling cars at our respective dealerships. Mine was the only face of color in the class.

On returning to the dealership, my learning increased when I found out that I would not be stationed with the other salesmen. I would be stationed across the street in the used car repair building! My desk would be placed right in the window. I was to have NO salary, but to work on commission only and would have to purchase my own car. This was REAL education!

I inquired to the General Manager as to why my pay plan was different from the rest of the salsmen and why I would not be getting a car. "Having a

salary and providing you with a car just makes you lazy. If you work on commission only, you will work harder." Thus spoke Gene, the General Manager to a twenty one year old confused Black Man. I wondered how I could feed and clothe my family based on this new information.

It took me over two weeks to sell my first car. I was excited! I felt that with more time and sales, I would be ready to let my F.O.I. (Fruit Of Islam) Brothers in The Nation Of Islam know what extra job I now had. I didn't let go of my YMCA swimming job yet, or other side jobs. I was dumb, but not THAT dumb. I was soon to see, once again, the power of Allah through His Messenger, The Most Honorable Elijah Muhammad (peace be upon him)! The Supreme Captian, Raymond Sharrieff, sent two Brothers over to check on me and the situation I was in. One evening at approximately 8:00 P.M. , closing was at 9:00 P.M., these Brothers rushed in the door of the used car repair department. Right away their knowledge saw what I could not see. "Well Brother!" , said the eldest, "They put you right in the window! You know why ?" Before I could answer, the second Brother said, "The neighborhood is about to change. They want the Negroes (one of the many names we were called then) to know they have Black People working here. THAT'S why they got you in the window!" "I'll bet they not payin' ya nothin' either," said the younger Brother. "Where's your car?" I sat down at my very used metal desk and was silent. We're not making fun of you Brother", said the elder. "This devil is taking advantage of you! We're not going to allow this! I'm going to report this to Captain Sharrieff AND The Messenger!" "Why?" I said, "What can they do?"

The following day, I received a call at work from Brother Captain Sharrieff. The Captain informed me that before some of the Brothers and

Sisters start to buy cars from me, the awful situation I was in there would have to be cleared up. I was wondering what he meant. All of a sudden he said, "Brother, The Messenger wants to see you tonight! Meet Him over at Shabazz Grocery (our first grocery store in Chicago) after closing!" "Yes Sir!" I replied. I felt good that the Nation I was in and The Leader of it would find any time for a Follower! I had never heard of this kind of Leadership before or since!

Brother Minister Milton X, the manager of Shabazz Grocery, was locking the door as I walked up, Brother Milton was the Minister of Temple number 3, in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Although living in Chicago, Illinois, Brother Milton Would make the drive to Milwaukee on a regular basis and still manage the Shabazz Grocery Store. I marveled at those Ministers who lived in Chicago and serviced areas as far away as Indianapolis, Indiana.

"As Salaam Alaikum Brother! The Messenger will be here shortly," said Brother Milton. I returned The Greetings. Just then, The Messenger drove up, alone, in his old Ford Thunderbird. It was a rough looking car. I was not alone in thinking it would be a grand idea to get The Messenger a new car. I was surprised to see The Messenger without security. It made me nervous! He noticed right away. "Don't worry Brother Ahmad, Allah will protect the both of us."said The Messenger. "But Dear Holy Apostle," I replied, "shouldn't you always have security?" Imagine, me, telling The Messenger.....

As we stood by the entrance to the store, Brother Emanuel, The Messenger's oldest son walked up. He had the key. Brother Emanuel gave The Greetings as he opened the door. The Messenger could read my thoughts. He smiled. It's best not to tempt Allah, " said The Messenger. "I don't go everywhere alone but sometimes, I just want to be by myself. "I see you

looking at Daddy's car."said Emanuel, "Don't frown, we've been tellin' Daddy to get a new car but He won't listen to us." I was frowning because he called The Messenger "Daddy!" The Messenger spoke! "A car is not a reflection of us. You get a car to go from here to there." He gestured with His hands, pointing from one spot to another. "That's all a car is for, to go from A to B."

As The Messenger taught us in front of Shabazz Grocery, there in the outdoors on 71st Street, I knew we were blessed! Such a Leader and Teacher that brings wisdom to every situation, enabling you to live a life with more understanding and less pain. "We mustn't think of ourselves as a car. A car is made of iron and steel and will be worth a dime in a few days. It's just transportation." Said The Messenger.

What an odd place for a meeting I thought. A small grocery store. Well, it turned out to be a wonderful meeting, with many young Brothers in attendance! It was not held in the store, but in a building in BACK of the store!. We all followed Brother Emanuel and The Messenger through the Shabazz Grocery Store leading to the back door. Then we went outside in the back and entered a strange looking small building. No one would ever have guessed that another building was there. Brother Emanuel opened the door to the other rear building and in we went. The place seemed to have only one floor The Messenger and Brother Emanuel smiled. "This is where we have some of our most important meetings,"said The Messenger. This is also where Emanuel does some of our commercial pressing." Emanuel turned on one of the pressing machines and gave us a demonstration of his expertise. Nestled all around were gurneys filled with clothes of all kinds. What would we be discussing here, I thought? I could not imagine that my new job selling automobiles

could be the reason for an important meeting. It wasn't!

"You Brothers have shown a willingness to work hard and have qualities that will help our people. From time to time we will have meetings and you will have posts given to you. Make sure you do your best on every job given!" said The Messenger Of Allah ! We were FIRED UP ! I had forgotten about my problems at my new job as the meeting progressed.

The gathering was coming to a close. "Brother!" said The Messenger, looking in my direction, "Let's talk about your job. From what I hear, you are working but receive no pay unless you sell a car. Is that right?" "Yes Sir!" I replied "The devil has seen fit not to give you a car to drive. Is that correct?" "Yes Sir Dear Holy Apostle!" The Messenger frowned. "Why do you think you have such a meager set up?" The Messenger said! "Well, the General Manager told me that working on commission makes you work harder and keeps you from being lazy. If you have to work hard to buy a car, you will appreciate it more." I replied. "How many salesmen do they have at the store?" said The Messenger. "About 10 Sir ?" I said. "Do they all sell more cars than you? Brother if working for a commission only and not getting a car was the best pay setup, those 10 white salesmen would be on the same plan you are on! Do you understand?" Said The Messenger. "Yes Sir, but maybe it's because they sell a lot more cars than I do. Duffy sold 10 cars last week and Schultz sold 8." I was going on and on about how many cars each salesmen had sold, when The Messenger interrupted me. "How do you KNOW this Brother?" "They told me and the General Manager told me," I said. Without changing expression, The Messenger Of Allah said, in a firm voice, "They lie! They are not selling that many cars!" Everybody looked at me. "Here is what I want you to do!" said The Messenger. "When you go in to

work tomorrow, walk across that street to the main office! Go in and ask to speak with the owner, NOT the General Manager or any OTHER manager! Ask to speak with THE OWNER!" The Messenger's eyes were burning into mine! He continued! "Tell the owner that you want a salary, a new car, and all the benefits given to the other salesmen, immediately! You are probably on your way to being the top salesmen! They have been lying to you! When you do as I ask, I will have the Secretary inform those among us that we have a car salesman who will help us get cars. You will learn the business so that you will get your own car place!" My knees buckled again!" But Dear Holy Apostle!" I blurted out,"I can't do that! I'll get FIRED! I'll lose my JOB!".."Brother.."said The Messenger Of Allah,"You don't HAVE a job!" ..You don't get paid a salary!...You don't get a car!...You don't have benefits!..You don't HAVE a job!"

"Do ONE thing well per day..at the end of a year, you will have 365 tasks done well ..The Messenger would tell us this ever so often!

If my knees would stop shivering, maybe I could get up the nerve to do as the Messenger asks , I thought. "Admit it, "I said to my self. "You're scared! Three days had passed since I had talked with the Messenger. I had made no movement toward the other side of the street. I watched the salesmen go in and out, talking to customers and going home in their brand new cars "Probably making lots of money," I thought. "The Messenger says they are lying to me about what they have sold. They look happy enough. How would The Messenger know what goes on over here?" These and other thoughts went through my hard head.

"Brother!", said a loud voice, "Have you gone to see about your salary and car"? It was one of my Brothers from the Mosque. "As Salaam Alaikum!" He

said, "Wa Alaikum Salaam!" I replied. "Man! Man!" He said, "I can tell you haven't gone anywhere! Brother! Don't you know that when The Messenger tells you to do something, you DO IT!" I dropped my head a little and said, "I want to do it but every time I get up the nerve, something pushes me back down." "Well, Brother, I'm going to tell The Messenger you are wasting His advice and just sittin' here in the SHOW window, scared to death of some devil you propably have never met!" The Brother was right! I had never met the owner and I was scared. "Don't tell The Messenger, "I said, " I'll probably go over tomorrow."The Brother shook his head, "I don't have to tell Him really, He already knows you haven't gone!"Out the door the Brother went, giving me The Greetings.

What a beautiful day it was! The sun was so bright as I looked across the street to the new car showroom. I had gotten to work early this day. Two weeks had passed since talking to The Messenger about how I should handle my affairs and I had yet to act. I had this heavy weight in my chest and stomach. Fear is an awful thing when it gets the better of you. I had avoided going to the Mosque for fear of being ridiculed Fear...Fear..Fear. I started to pray! I called on Allah to give me strength to do at least one thing well today, as The Messenger taught us. Immediately, another of The Messenger's teachings came rushing into my mind, "When you rid yourself of the fear of losing your life, losing a job or being maimed, you become a different man! Pray to Allah to remove that fear and you will become capable of doing anything you want of good!" I took a deep breath!...Oh, it felt good. I got up from my chair, went over to the door, opened it and stepped outside. As I took these new found breaths I felt differently than I had ever felt. My eyes fixed on that fancy entrance to the new car showroom.

"Today's the day!" I said quietly to myself... "All Praise is due to Allah !"

I started walking across the street! I felt strong and getting stronger!

"Didn't The Messenger Of Allah tell me to do this?" I asked myself. "I have NOTHING to fear!"

Florence was a fearful legend at the dealership. Her job was the executive secretary to the owner. The employees hated to go near her! I had never met her but I sure had heard of her. Mean! Hateful! Cruel! There were many negatives to describe Florence. I thought of all the stories as I neared her office, which guarded the owner's office. To see him, you had to go through Florence!

"What dya' WANT ?" Florence's voice belted out even before I reached the front of her desk. "WHAT DO YOU WANT?" She said again! "I want to see the owner", I said. "Oh, do you have an appointment?" "No I don't, "but I want to see him!" Before my sentence was finished, she was talking over me. "Well !..You CAN'T see him ! He's too busy to see YOU!", Florence stated loudly! Just then the owners voice came drifting out from his office. "Florence! Who wants to see me?" Florence frowned up, giving a fierce look! "It's that NEW guy! That GUY from across the street!" "Send him in Florence, send him In!." With great reluctance, Florence motioned me in and grunted, "Go on in then!"

I gave her a piercing look as I passed in front of her desk. If looks could maim or kill, we both would have been in awful shape! "What can I do for you?" said the owner! I started to introduce myself. "Oh!" said the owner, interrupting me, "I already know who you are! You're our top salesman! Sit down! What can I do for you?" The owner's office was designed to intimidate. Furnished with a large oak desk, large heavy leather chairs and imposing plaques decorating the walls, it announced SUCCESS! He had told me that I

was the top salesman. I wondered why the General Manager and the other salesmen would go to so much trouble to lie to me! How did The Messenger know this? He has never been here and yet, He told me that I was probably the top salesman! I could hear the drone of the owners talk as I thought about The Messenger. "Well !"said the owner, "What can I do for You?"..The Messenger Of Allah taught us to look straight into the eyes of a person! I did that! "I want a salary, commission AND a new car!" I replied without hesitation! Things went so fast! "Of course!"replied the owner!"Florence! Get in here!" bellowed the owner! Florence came running into his office, a look of grave concern on her scowled face!"Yes Sir!"said Florence!

"Florence, get Gene in here right now! I want you to put our number one salesman on salary AND commission immediately!" Florence looked sick! She scribbled something on her note pad and quickly left the office!"Yes Sir! Gene said, huffing and puffing! "Gene!" said the owner, "find this salesman a brand new car, fill it with gas and bring it over to the new showroom parking area! I'm moving him to an office on this side of the street! Florence has already set up his new pay plan. I want you to sign off on it!"

"Uh, Yes Sir!" stated Gene, appearing stunned and a wee bit faint, "Yes Sir!" The owner looked at me and said "Is there anything else I can do for you?"

I walked back over to the used car repair department to collect my belongings and move to the main showroom. I was in a daze! Not due to the prospects of suddenly being in a position to receive more than ample income to raise a family, but in thinking over and over how The Messenger Of Allah simply brought about this whole matter! Here was a Man in our midst that was honest with us! He looked into our eyes and hearts and told us, "If you

follow me and do what I say, you will be successful in ALL that you do of GOOD! Allah has told me to tell you this! All you must do is give it a try!"..Doesn't that make sense? Isn't that plain and simple? Yet, no matter HOW MANY times we Black People SEE and are a PART Of MIRACLES wrought by Allah through His Messenger, we STILL refuse to believe! Just like today! I could hardly wait to go the Mosque that evening to tell the story! Fifty years have passed since that incident and still, I get excited when thinking of it! While telling my Brothers and Sisters at the Mosque after class, what had happened, The Messenger came over. All conversation ceased except our Greetings to the Messenger. He returned The Greetings and said to the group, "Now, Brothers and Sisters, we can go buy our cars from this Brother!" The Messenger's son Nathaniel was one of the first! Success came as a result of the support of Muslim Followers of the Honorable Elijah Muhammad (peace be upon him)! They came from everywhere! The Messenger explained to me, my responsibility to not only sell automobiles at a fair price, regardless of what the dealer instructs, but to teach our people how to manage their finances and what to watch for in all financial transactions! He explained that the power of the amount of sales generated by the concentrated purchases of Brothers and Sisters in the Nation of Islam, would give me the leverage to insist on the BEST treatment for my customers! He was correct! When you are being removed from a grave, your mind is not as sharp as it becomes with time and instruction! What seems logical now, was a mystery then, until Allah's Messenger made it plain! Black customers were taken advantage of then, much like today, reflected in higher prices, higher finance charges, availability of financing and

general service. One thing about The Messenger, if you complained about a problem that needed to be addressed, don't moan in front of Him, because He would immediately put you in charge of solving that problem! That post would be yours to contend with!

When I complained that Black People could not borrow money readily because THEY (the whites) would not loan it fairly, The Messenger said, "Then YOU be the THEY, Brother! Go find others who will help and START a loan company! Do some research and get it done! If we don't like a thing, let US change it!" What a Wonderful God, to raise from us such a Messenger and to think that He was doing these and much greater works all over the country! Every day!

The pooling of resources, as taught by The Most Honorable Elijah Muhammad (peace be upon him) works! Soon, the small finance company was up and running and assisted many with financial needs! When others would say, "You can't do that!" The Messenger of Allah would say, "You can do ANYTHING you desire of good!" He was right!

Millions have heard of the many varied businesses, schools and institutions started by The Messenger Of Allah, and man with no 'formal' education. The Messenger would say in a joking manner that it was fortunate that he DIDN'T have a formal education, because He would not have been able to accomplish all that He did! Of course, He had the best education! Face to face with Almighty God Allah for three years and four months!

The success The Messenger had was proof that His education came from a much higher power than this society has EVER been able to produce! Not in just ONE man, but in the MILLIONS who are HOLDERS OF ADVANCED DEGREES, that have NEVER been able to come CLOSE to the work done by The Most Honorable

Elijah Muhammad (peace be upon him)!

Is it so difficult to understand that reformations made among the Black population by the Honorable Elijah Muhammad (peace be upon him) have NEVER been duplicated?!...Have never been CLOSE to being duplicated, by ANY so-called 'leaders', BLACK OR WHITE...COMBINED?

Should not this FACT be noted and appreciated in determining WHO is raised by God? Blacks who profess to lead, should SHUN the title of 'leader' and HIDE! Considering the shape that our people are in today, it is a MOCKERY to refer to yourself as a 'leader' of Black People!

Being deaf, dumb and blind; the so-called 'leaders' do not realize how SAD and FOOLISH they appear to the world! Strutting, posturing, clowning, bragging, entertaining and enumerating academic degrees! (Bogus or authentic!) Black People are DROWNING in degeneracy and filth!

Have the 'PROMINENT NEGROES' NOTICED the images of our young girls being promoted in various media? Have they NOTICED the local schools with grammar and high school young sisters as cheer leaders, copying the decadent image of African-American women sent around the world?

HAVE YOU BEEN WATCHING? They HELP the devil to "Make evil fair-seeming!"

Black people are wandering in confusion and danger! Our communities are like HUGE MENTAL INSTITUTIONS, gigantic hospital wards, appalling concentration camps! Take a look and watch our people roaming up and down the streets, victimizing one another'...Meanwhile, the 'leaders' strut, 'do lunch', have seminars, 'town meetings' and knock each other down scheduling television and photo opportunities!...All for trinkets!...Pitiful.

Now, after 75 years, some of this world has caught up to The Teachings of The Honorable Elijah Muhammad (peace be upon him) regarding the deadly

harm of cigarettes, cigars, pipes, narcotics/drugs, (legal and illegal)

liquor, pork and other malignant elements!

Many have adopted a more civilized, healthy way of eating. Should not a thinking person wonder WHY The Messenger was so successful in reforming His People and all others were NOT? Would not a mentally alive human being conclude that Allah (God) in reality, be guiding This Messenger?

On examination, would not this sincere person realize that The Messenger was telling the TRUTH, when He stated that He had met face to face with God?

Any enlightened people would have to ask these questions, "WHERE did He receive all the correct remedies to our many ills?" "WHO gave Him all those correct and exact prophecies?" "HOW could The Honorable Elijah Muhammad (peace be upon him) in the face of UNPARALLELED OPPOSITION, CONTINUE to rise, teach and BENEFIT His People?". If He didn't get these life-giving, positive and accurate instructions from Allah (God) then FROM WHOM? Who WAS The Man, Who came in the Person of Master Fard Muhamad? The faithful Followers of The Honorable Elijah Muhammad (peace be upon him) KNOW the answer!

**Read Part 4 of the History of Brother Ahmad
Muhammad**

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