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THE RHETORIC OF MINISTER LOUIS FARRAKHAN

A PLURALISTIC APPROACH

DISSERTATION

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
the Degree of Philosophy in the Graduate
School of the Ohio State University

By

Claudette McPadden Preston, B.A., M.A.

* * * * *

The Ohio State University

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CHAPTER I

Introduction

The appearance of Louis Farrakhan at Madison Square Garden on October 7, (1985) demonstrated, without doubt that he is now America's preeminent black leader. Benjamin Hooks of the N.A.A.C.P. could not have filled the Garden. There would not have been people standing against the walls on every level of the arena to hear John Jacob of the National Urban League. Jesse Jackson might just have filled the Garden. But Farrakhan filled not only the 20,000 - plus seats, he also drew another 3,000 to 5,000 people to watch the whole event on closed circuit television in the Felt Forum next door.1

It is unlikely that the above assessment of Louis Farrakhan as America's "preeminent black leader" will go unnoticed. Indeed, it is probably safe to say that at the top of the list of persons paying close attention are Reverends Benjamin Hooks, John Jacob, and Jesse Jackson. Moreover, if it is true that Farrakhan is the foremost black leader in America today - and it appears that for at least 25,000 blacks he might just be - than his discourse demands the attention of the rhetorical scholar.2

In America today the name, Louis Farrakhan, is centered in controversy. Some of his public statements have created a furor from one end of the country to the other. The manner and style in which he delivers his rhetoric has itself become a source of concern for both white and black Americans. The men and women who represent Farrakhan's support base via the organization he speaks for, the Nation of Islam, are likewise considered controversial. Public officials who have refused to issue official protests against Farrakhan's rhetoric have become controversial as well.3 As America's "preeminent" Black
leader Louis Farrakhan is a man with a rhetoric that makes positions of disinterest and neutrality virtually impossible.

An historical account of the black man's and woman's sojourn in America will quickly reveal the significant and, moreover, dominant role of the black preacher in the ongoing struggle for justice in the United States. Few persons can be found countering the claim that the black clergy has historically been at the vanguard of his people's strivings for freedom and equality. Even at times in the liberation struggle where spokespersons were not a part of the clergy, these blacks could still be heard publicly expressing their "special" relationship with God. Blacks such as David Walker, Nat Turner, and Sojourner Truth are three such persons. When the author of the opening evaluation, Julius Lester, points to Louis Farrakhan as America's preeminent black leader, he identifies yet another black preacher. When, however, one compares black religious figures at the forefront of black leadership - past and present - it seems that Minister Louis Farrakhan is in the class by himself.

Louis Farrakhan was born on May 11, 1933, in New York City. His West Indian mother, Samalya, was 15 years old at his birth and soon after his birth, left New York for Boston. Farrakhan's mother raised him alone. He has never known his father, and from his own admission has said his mother did not feel compelled to tell him anything about his father. He was raised in Boston with a younger brother, Alvan, in what has been described as a comfortable "middle class" background. Very little is known about his extended family though he often refers to an uncle named Samuel.
Farrakhan's first years of formal education took place in Boston and included violin lessons from a very young age. After high school he left Boston to attend Winston-Salem Teachers' College in Virginia where he majored in English. Three years later Farrakhan left college for New York and started a new life as a husband and father. He has been married for 33 years to Khadijah, formerly Besty Farrakhan. He is the father of 9 children and, at last count, 18 grandchildren. Some of his children are readily visible within the movement with one daughter in charge of the movement's Processing Department and a son the organization's Minister of Defense.

Prior to joining the movement Louis Farrakhan performed professionally as both a violinist and a Calypso singer and dancer. He was one of the first blacks to appear on national television when he performed on the Ted Mack Amateur Hour. In 1955 he was persuaded by a friend to attend a lecture by Elijah Muhammad. According to movement accounts he joined the Nation of Islam at the conclusion of this speaking event.

As a member of the movement he was told that his life as a performer was incompatible with the lifestyle of Muslim followers of Elijah Muhammad, and was instructed to choose between the two. Having decided on the latter, Farrakhan became a part of the movement through its Boston temple - today called mosque. His confidence and aggressiveness as a musician and performer were channeled into the movement and soon after joining he was appointed Captain in charge of training the men in the Boston mosque. Outside of the mosque Farrakhan worked during his first years in Boston as a storm door and window
salesman at a salary of $35 per week. He worked briefly as a dishwasher and, then, for $45 per week in Boston's Garment District. His success as Captain within the movement led to his being appointed to the Minister of the Boston mosque. According to C. Eric Lincoln and Essien-Udom, two of the first major writers on the movement, the Boston mosque emerged as one of the organization's fastest growing and most progressive. Both of these studies refer to Farrakhan under the name Louis X.

Farrakhan does not hesitate to identify Malcolm X as his mentor during his early years as a member of the movement. In pictures taken of the movement's speaking engagements and rallies in the late fifties and early sixties Farrakhan can be seen standing or sitting behind him. Malcolm X's assassination in 1965 set the movement teetering and left the New York mosque, the movement's largest, in disarray. Farrakhan's ministry was transferred from Boston to New York and shortly afterwards he became Elijah Muhammad National Spokesman.

There are several reasons why a rhetorical criticism of the rhetoric of Louis Farrakhan is warranted. The first reason is that he is certainly one of the most controversial public figures on the American scene today. To focus on his expression through rhetorical criticism, is a valuable way to reach a better understanding of the ideas promoted by the leader of Black Muslims.

A second reason to study the rhetoric of Louis Farrakhan is to determine its essential nature and substance. The rhetoric of Farrakhan is first, and foremost, theological. Principally, Farrakhan's rhetoric is about biblical prophecy. More specifically,
his rhetoric is about the second coming of Christ or the Messiah, his relationship to America's black masses and, finally, his relationship to America and the world.

The rhetoric of Louis Farrakhan seems inseparable from both his religious beliefs, assertions, and arguments and the controversy which surrounds him. While Farrakhan's ministerial brotherhood of yesterday and today assert that God is a mystery, Farrakhan's assertion is that God is a man and, as such, can be known. The rhetoric of Farrakhan is one which says that the Messiah is already present in the world. The message coming from his ministerial brethren is that of a "second coming." In general, black clergypersons focus little attention on the question of who God's chosen people are. A salient issue found in the rhetoric of Louis Farrakhan is that America's present population of thirty million blacks are God's elect. While black clergy have acquired their religious training and instruction from America's Christian theological schools, Louis Farrakhan argues that the rhetoric he speaks is directly from God through his final messenger, Elijah Muhammad.

Needless to say, the perspective taken for the present study of the movement known as the Nation of Islam is decidedly different from previous critical evaluations and responses such as C. Eric Lincoln's Black Muslims in America and E. U. Essien-Udom's Black Nationalism; A Search for Identity in America. Former studies of the movement have not identified a theological lens as the source of a sharper focus and, hence, more accurate understanding of its structure, function and,
ultimately, its purposes. Nevertheless, the foundation on which the rhetoric of the Nation of Islam is based is specifically theological.

A third reason for undertaking a rhetorical criticism of Farrakhan's rhetoric is that he is only the American citizen, past or present, black or white who holds the "distinction" of being one of the most widely repudiated persons in the United States. He has been openly repudiated by both the President and Vice President of the United States. Furthermore, Farrakhan stands alone as the only public figure in American history for which a special session of the United States Senate was convened. The result of the Senate's deliberations was a vote of 99 to 0 for repudiation of Farrakhan. The significance of Farrakhan's rhetoric as the focus for rhetorical criticism is intensified when one considers that audiences of 10,000 in Washington, D.C., 19,000 in Los Angeles and 25,000 in New York followed official statements of repudiation by the executive and legislative branches of the government. When large numbers of people willingly turn a deaf ear to warnings and pronouncements by persons charged with the responsibility of leadership for their nation, something is taking place in a different arena which must be analyzed and understood for the benefit of all concerned.

Still another reason why a rhetorical criticism of Louis Farrakhan's rhetoric is called forth is that as a rhetor he possesses a message capable of producing great variations in response. He has been described as having a "messianic posture." He has, however, also been compared to Adolph Hitler. Extremes in perceptions of public
figures should not, nor can they, be ignored. Rather, it may well be that the presence of such extreme evaluations provide clues to the uniqueness of the rhetor and the rhetorical potential of the message.

Finally, most published accounts regarding the size of Farrakhan's following estimate the figure to be between five and ten thousand. If such is the case, Lester's proclamation of preeminence must be based on something else and hence, is cause for a closer look into Louis Farrakhan and his rhetoric. Embodied in Lester's assessment is the unspoken suggestion that the Muslim minister's appeal is far broader and far more inclusive of larger numbers of people. If such is the case an in-depth analysis of Farrakhan's rhetoric is a reasonable expectation.

In summary, then, when a rhetor articulates a message which is controversial and which, nonetheless, still attracts the interest and attention of the significant numbers of people outside of the rhetor's own organization, ranks, or following, the rhetor in question becomes an excellent candidate for the doing of rhetorical criticism. When rhetors possess the ability to attract thousands of people to their messages inspite of broadbased denunciations of that message, what these speakers say to their audiences must be seriously studied. When rhetors are able to evoke striking differences in responses to the same delivered word, such words need to be analyzed. It is grossly naive to attempt to "play down" the significance of such speakers or to conclude that if ignored they will simply go away. The necessary response seems clear, and that is to focus deliberate and conscious attention on the speaker and his discourse; find out what he is saying, who is listening, and why.
As National Representative for the Honorable Elijah Muhammad, Louis Farrakhan has crisscrossed the United States and much of the world. His position, as indicated by his official title is that of representative for the man he often refers to as his spiritual father. As the movement's national spokesman, Louis Farrakhan is principally concerned with "resurrecting" the teachings of the Elijah Muhammad. In more exact language, Farrakhan is charged with the responsibility of articulating the rhetoric of Elijah Muhammad and the movement he led for 40 years. In his effort to fulfill his responsibility he covered more than 300,000 miles in 1983. Without fail, he refers to himself as a "student" of the Honorable Elijah Muhammad.

Farrakhan was catapulted onto the national and international scene in 1984 as a result of his endorsement of presidential candidate, Jesse Jackson. His initial statements of support for Jackson, however, attracted only a measure of attention. It was not until he chided Washington Post reporter, Milton Coleman, for reporting Jackson's reference to Jews as "hymies" and New York as "hymietown" that he become the subject of controversy which continues to rage. Farrakhan was adamant in his position that in reporting Jackson's remarks, Coleman, a black reporter, became a traitor to the aspirations of black people who had years of hope tied up in Jackson's candidacy. Farrakhan argued that Coleman was first, and foremost, a black man. He charged that Coleman's actions were clearly those of a traitor who, in turn, should be ostracized from the black community.

The potential value to the rhetorical critic of studying the rhetoric of spokespersons who engender great controversy and enormous
diversity of response almost goes without saying. The search for such a rhetor's heroes, villians, recurrent themes, significant symbols, style, delivery, and audience is pregnant with far-reaching theoretical and rhetorical possibilities.

The major theme of this study is to advance the idea that the rhetoric of Louis Farrakhan is a rhetoric which is spun from a meticulously and intricately woven theological cloth. The specific research question being asked in this study is, "Can study of the religious claims, arguments, and assertions contained in the rhetoric of Minister Louis Farrakhan provide fresh insights and new knowledge about him and the Nation of Islam?"

**The Rhetoric**

The term rhetoric, like the term movement has been defined and explained in many ways. Scholars and critics have been unrelenting in their efforts to add to the understanding of man and reality through fashioning definitions of rhetor. For purposes of the present analysis, the definition of Makay is appropriate; He explains, "I take rhetoric to be a way of thinking and expressing feelings and ideas for purposes of generating knowledge, influencing values, beliefs, attitudes, and actions (persuasion), and achieving mutual understanding."

Makay's definition of rhetoric is expressly useful for the present study for several reasons. First, Louis Farrakhan's "way of thinking" as well as the manner in which he expresses his feelings are directly related to the controversy surrounding him. Moreover, it is his thinking, as demonstrated in his rhetoric, which engenders both
positive and negative responses to that rhetoric. His analyses, interpretations, and recommendations for corrective measures for past and current issues make it difficult for receivers of his message to remain detached or distant. Farrakhan conveys feelings, ideas, and emotions via his knowledge. This part of Makay's definition is compatible with the study of Louis Farrakhan's rhetoric because Farrakhan's discourse, its content, and his style of delivery, result from his belief that the masses of blacks are "deaf, dumb and blind."  

The goal is, to him, clear and that is to influence America's black masses. Through his rhetoric he articulates concern for the items identified in the definition, namely, values, beliefs, attitudes, and actions. Farrakhan articulates a rhetoric which says to blacks that they are doomed unless and until they are re-educated about God, Elijah Muhammad, himself, themselves, and America. Such re-education he believes will result in blacks having correct beliefs, attitudes, and ultimately, actions. The definition of rhetoric, then, affords the rhetorical critic with a tool which is important for determining - by way of an analysis of Farrakhan's rhetoric - just what values, beliefs, attitudes, and actions Farrakhan argues blacks should possess and/or demonstrate. Finally, the definition is appropriate for the present study because of its dialogic goal ---- understanding. While better understanding is usually the goal of any public rhetor, when understanding is identified as an "end" in relation to other constituents, Makay's definition becomes even more valuable for the present study. The rhetoric of Louis Farrakhan is one which tells blacks that they must arrive at collective or "mutual" understanding of
their history, their present condition, and a course of action for their collective future.

Louis Farrakhan's rhetoric is a mosaic of theological claims and arguments. Principal among his claims is that the institution of American slavery was preordained by God. As such, the presence of millions of African men, women, and children in American today has major religious significance. Additionally, Farrakhan's rhetoric asserts that the condition the masses of blacks find themselves in is prophetic. His rhetoric advances the claim that divine intervention took place in 1930 when God, "in the person of Master Fard Muhammad" visited America.

A claim articulated in Farrakhan's rhetoric is that Elijah Muhammad "was" God's solitary student for a period of 3 years and 4 or 5 months. Farrakhan's message of divine intervention identifies himself as a man specifically prepared and guided by God and his final messenger, Elijah Muhammad. It is through Farrakhan's rhetoric that Genesis 15:13-14 is identified as the foundation on which the movement's and his assertions rest. These verses of scripture read:

"And he God said unto Abraham, know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them, and they shall afflict them four hundred years; And also that nation whom they shall serve, will I judge: and afterward shall they come out with great substance."38

Louis Farrakhan's rhetoric is also inclusive of three major themes. Broadly speaking, these themes are 1) the biblical ancestry of American blacks, 2) the decline and, ultimately, the fall of America, and 3) the need for the blacks and whites to be separated from each other. Further, Farrakhan argues that the significance of these
three themes is directly related to the movement's scriptural foundation, Genesis 15:13-14.

Louis Farrakhan's rhetoric also includes a discussion about blacks who are known collectively as the "lost-found nation of the tribe of Shabazz," a discussion of which is found in Elijah Muhammad's book, *Message to the Blackman in America*. The rhetoric describes these blacks as descending directly from the family of the biblical Abraham and continues that it was the descendants of the tribe of Shabazz who were taken from Africa in the 1500s. Farrakhan identifies America's present population of blacks as direct off-spring of the original Shabazz tribe.

The second major theme included in Farrakhan's rhetoric is that of "the fall of America." America's fall is consistently referred to as the War or Battle of Armageddon. This theme is inextricably connected to the enslavement of millions of blacks over a period of four centuries. It is these four centuries of slavery, asserts Farrakhan that have reduced blacks to the biblical "lost sheep," "dry bones" "Lazarus," and the "despised and rejected." On the basis of these biblical descriptions and the promise of "great substance" spoken of in Genesis 15, Farrakhan identifies American blacks as the people who God would choose in the "last days." The rhetoric continues that Armageddon -the final battle between good and evil - constitutes the end of an evil world and the beginning of a righteous kingdom on earth. Finally, while Armageddon is to be global in scope, Farrakhan argues that this "divine" battle will have its beginning within America because of her enslavement and continued mistreatment of blacks.
A vehement call for the separation of black and white has been a consistent theme in the rhetoric of Louis Farrakhan. A thorough discussion of this theme is provided in the book, *The Fall of America*. Initially, the call for separation included a request for an independent territory or block of states that would be set aside for blacks. Such an area would be "owned", maintained, and developed by blacks for blacks. In recent years the separation theme, while remaining intact as a salient part of Farrakhan's rhetoric, has changed in actual form. The masses of blacks are today urged to separate "mentally" from America. Specifically, the call for a mental separation is intended to encourage blacks to refrain from adopting white America's norms, values, ideologies, mores, folkways, and lifestyles. Farrakhan argues that blacks must become independent thinkers and doers - something he says is possible only with a true knowledge of God and themselves. The separation theme has remained an integral part of the movement's rhetoric.

Louis Farrakhan points to integration as a significant part of the Black-White problem in America. He argues that in light of the history of the two peoples failed attempts to live together harmoniously, peaceful co-existence is an impossibility. Return to Africa urgings have not to date been included in the expression of the separation theme. The issue of such return, however, is considered a matter to be negotiated. Finally, the inclusion of the separation theme within Farrakhan's rhetoric is consistent with the "judgment" in store for the nation to which Abraham's offspring have been enslaved. Farrakhan's
rhetoric, then, calls for separation as a necessary prerequisite and prelude to the judgment spoken of in Genesis. As an intricately designed mosaic of theological claims and arguments, Louis Farrakhan's rhetoric is provocative and, by most accounts, strange.

Collection of Data

The development of study and the collection of data must be viewed as integral pieces in the research puzzle. Every researcher conceptualizes the manner in which he wants his study to develop. The final work may or may not prove to be the result of his initial aspiration. For the most part, this is due to the element of discovery, an inherent part of each research undertaking. Discovery, then, along with the researcher's initial ideas are part and parcel to that stage of the study referred to as collecting the data and developing a plan for the study. Any researcher who is unresponsive to the unsuspected, unexpected, and yet, natural discoveries of research may produce a less than authentic, stagnant, and superficial product.

The study of the rhetoric of Louis Farrakhan, like other research topics, demands a conscious and deliberate approach to collecting data and developing the study. Moreover, decisions regarding the most appropriate starting points as well as those pertaining to the inclusion or exclusion of various items of research are so percarious as to be viewed either as sand castles at the mercy of every passerby or marble pillars yielding only to the most herculean force. With these things in mind, the following data is perceived by the writer as imperative if the present study of Louis Farrakhan's rhetoric is to have long-term significance.
Collection of Data: Primary Sources

Louis Farrakhan's Public Lectures

It is incumbent upon the researcher of contemporary figures to get as close to the figure under study as possible. This was primarily accomplished through attendance at Farrakhan's public lectures. The writer's awareness of the subject as a rhetor in the black community dates back to 1969. From that year until 1973 she attended between one and two lectures by Farrakhan per year. No lectures were attended from 1974 to 1978. In 1979 the writer's attention was again focused on the movement's National Representative. Since 1981, the first year of actual data collection for the dissertation, she has attended numerous public lectures. Audio cassettes were purchased following these lectures and notes compiled from their contents. The data necessary for subsequent audience analysis and evaluation were also collected during attendance at the public lectures. The majority of lectures were presented on college and university campuses. Beginning in 1983 speech sites began to include churches. The writer attended sermons given at churches in Washington, D.C. and Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Lectures were attended at schools in Columbus, Ohio, Baltimore, Maryland, College Park, Maryland, Wilmington, Delaware, Chester, Pennsylvania, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and Washington, D.C. Additional lectures were attended between 1981 and 1986 at such public facilities as the William L. Jones Armory in Chicago, Illinois, New York City Armory in Brooklyn, New York, the Genesis Convention Center in Gary, Indiana, Madison Square Garden in New York City,
Philadelphia Civic Center, the Washington, D.C. Convention Center, and the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C.

Farrakhan Cassette Tapes

Cassette tapes of Farrakhan's public lectures are prepared during his various speaking engagements. Tapes were purchased of speeches following various events. Additionally, the writer made use of lectures given weekly at the movement's Chicago headquarters. Farrakhan's lectures are seldom shorter than two hours and, more times than not, are three hours long. As such, a significant body of material resulted from notes taken during analysis of any given lecture. The taped lectures enabled the researcher to analyze Farrakhan's public discourse prior to the year the dissertation was actually begun. This proved invaluable because it broadened the writer's perspective of the movement and Farrakhan's message significantly. Cassette tapes also facilitated the writer's efforts to evaluate audience responses in a systematic and deliberative manner. Cassettes permitted the writer to assess audience response generally, but they also provided important information about audience responses to specific topics and issues raised by Farrakhan.

Television Interviews

Televised interviews became an additional source of primary information three years into the study. It was not until 1984 that Farrakhan's activities began to generate significant media attention. Interview sessions were taped from all three major network stations between April and June 1984. Three televised interviews were more than
one hour each and were conducted by the industry's top journalists. The writer video taped interviews conducted between Farrakhan and Phil Donahue, Farrakhan and Ted Koppel, and Farrakhan and Larry King. While data collected from each of these major interviews was important, the format provided by the Phil Donahue program added an additional body of information to the researcher's collection. This particular session provided the writer with her first opportunity to collect data from Farrakhan's interaction with a predominantly white audience. The Larry King program added the variable of the live phone call-in. In a two hour interview session, the writer was provided information through the questions and comments of listeners from across the United States.

Data were collected through small hotel suite sessions which, at one time, frequently followed Louis Farrakhan's lectures. Persons permitted to be a part of these sessions were afforded the opportunity to ask the Minister questions about his role and work as Elijah Muhammad's National Representative. These sessions also provided the writer with valuable opportunities to gain a sense of the relationship and/or rapport existing between Farrakhan and other black leaders. Such an opportunity was afforded in 1983 when at the Howard Inn in Washington, D.C., the Minister sat with the President of the "All African Peoples Revolutionary Party", and originator of the slogan and concept, "Black Power," Kwame Toure' (Stokeley Carmichael).

Collection of Data: Secondary Sources

The Writings of the Honorable Elijah Muhammad

It was through Elijah Muhammad that the rhetoric of the Nation of
Islam was first given national expression. The 1957 publication of a pamphlet entitled, "The Supreme Wisdom, Solution to the so-called "Negroes" Problem," articulated the movement's rhetoric during its early years of growth and development.

Written in two volumes of approximately seventy pages each, of the movement called at that time the "Temple of Islam," these two volumes also become the predecessors of Elijah Muhammad's book, *Message to the Blackman in America*.

*Message to the Blackman in America* is the most definitive and comprehensive presentation and discussion of the movement's rhetoric. A compilation and elaboration of articles written by Elijah Muhammad, this book provides the basis of the rhetoric coming from Louis Farrakhan on the three major themes identified under the heading of "The Rhetoric" on page 8 of the dissertation. *Message to the Blackman in America* is the single most important source for understanding the theological claims and arguments found within Farrakhan's rhetoric. Elijah Muhammad's 1973 book, *The Fall of America* provides an extensive and vivid discussion of the third major theme -- the Battle of Armageddon. This work is both descriptive and prescriptive in that it presents an extensive accounting of the order and form of America's "fall" while telling the reader that his only protection is to turn to God and a righteous way of living.

*Our Saviour Has Arrived* was written in 1974. The inclusion of the word "Saviour," in the book's title speaks to the theological root the movement identified in Genesis. Within this lengthy work Elijah
Muhammad provides the reader with a vivid description and discussion of God's intention to make blacks the "cornerstone" of a new world following the destruction of the present world. This book also includes an extensive analysis of various religious ideas and concepts. Finally, this work by Elijah Muhammad is an attempt to inform American blacks that God did, in fact, come to America to save them from a destruction that, while not intended for them, will afflict them should they fail to "fly to Islam."

Elijah Muhammad's two volumed book, How to Eat to Live, was written in 1967 and 1972 respectively. The goal of these two volumes is to end the consumption of what Elijah Muhammad calls the "slave masters' diet" by the masses of black people. Elijah Muhammad argues in this work that successive generations of pork consumption and ingestion of large amounts of carbohydrates and sugars have predisposed blacks to staggering levels of hypertension, diabetes, heart disease and, in recent years, cancer. Perhaps more important to the movement's theology, however, is that within the pages of How to Eat to Live are "divine" prohibitions against the consumption of pork and pork by-products.

How to Eat to Live also argues the importance of Fasting, explaining the practice as adhering to one of the five major principles of Islamic belief. This work is prescriptive in that through it Elijah Muhammad introduces a strategy for ridding the body of toxins ingested through pesticidal usage common in the production and
processing of commercially grown foods. Finally, Elijah Muhammad explains that the health problems of blacks can be solved through faithful adherence to the contents of his book. He asserts that he has written only what God personally instructed him to write.

In 1973, Elijah Muhammad wrote a booklet entitled, *The Flag of Islam*. This work contains a description and discussion of the movement's official flag. The primary argument contained in this book is that blacks in America constitute a nation within a nation and as such should have a flag proclaiming their independence. The movement's rhetoric argues that its flag, in using the symbols of the sun, moon, and star, is superior to other flags because none of these symbols can be "taken down" by military force or government edict.

The Writings of B. Jabril Muhammad

The writings of B. Jabril Muhammad are an inextricable part of understanding the movement and, subsequently, Louis Farrakhan's rhetoric. Most often referred to as "Brother Jabril," the author's personal history includes sharing his Phoenix, Arizona home with Elijah Muhammad for several months. His history as a minister within the movement includes being given the opportunity to supervise as many as one half of the movement's temples. He is inseparable from the movement's rhetoric inasmuch as he is the author of a carefully designed study guide series. Through these materials Farrakhan's rhetoric is systematically studied by the movement's followers. Specifically, Jabril Muhammad's role and function, via his writings
seems to be to articulate the relationship between Farrakhan's words, actions, and prophecy. Jabril Muhammad is also the author of the most definitive written defense of Elijah Muhammad's rhetoric to date. Understandably, he shares a close relationship with Louis Farrakhan.

**This is the One, Messenger Elijah Muhammad. You Need Not Look for Another**

This work stands alone as the most comprehensive presentation, discussion, and analysis of statements wholly or partially critical of Elijah Muhammad and the movement's rhetoric. Covering a period of approximately five years - beginning with the 1959 television documentary, "The Hate that Hate Produced," the author examines both written and spoken statements by journalists, writers, scholars, social and political leaders all critical of Elijah Muhammad and the movement's rhetoric. The origin of these criticisms, argues the author is the failure of these and other black and white professionals to "come to terms with whether or not Elijah Muhammad actually met God in 1931." 

*This is the One* is an excellent source from which an examination of the claims and arguments advanced today in the rhetoric of Louis Farrakhan can be made.

If one were asked to identify a "companion" to Jabil Muhammad's *This is the One*, without question it would be his 1982 book, *Farrakhan the Traveler*. This book stands as the first work which identifies Louis Farrakhan as the most important person in the movement today.
Having determined Farrakhan as such, the author interjects questions and advances arguments surrounding what he terms the "foolishness" of not supporting Elijah Muhammad's national representative.

The work is both descriptive and precriptive. The reader is presented with the movement's rhetoric through instructions to refer to specific chapters, pages, paragraphs and verses of Elijah Muhammad's books, the Bible and Quran. Dictionaries and other word books are suggested as supplemental reading material. The goal is unchanged. And that is to prove to the reader that Louis Farrakhan, the man and his rhetoric, are tied directly to the fulfillment of prophecy.

**Study Guides**

The rhetoric of the Nation of Islam is systematically and regularly studied using what are referred to as Study Guides. Their author, Jabril Muhammad, has written over one thousand pages of materials for the members of the movement to study within a group format. Analysis of the guides reveal an increasingly evolving rhetoric. For example, time spent with guides dated as early as 1981 show that when Elijah Muhammad began his work as the movement's head he was referred to as "The Messenger of Allah." Today, however, Study Guides identify him as "The Exalted Christ."

The Final Call, the major publication of the Nation of Islam, is intended to communicate information about Louis Farrakhan's activities as he travels throughout the United States and in countries around the
world. Each issue of the paper contains a reprinting of one of Elijah Muhammad's lectures usually alongside a transcript of a recent lecture given by Farrakhan. Additionally, each issue carries a reprinting of the proclamation, "What the Muslims Want, What the Muslims Believe".

Major print media have reported on Louis Farrakhan's activities and messages. Many reports have been written as front page stories, the content of which resulted in editorials being included in the same or subsequent editions. The July 5, 1984, edition of USA Today devoted its "Opinion Page" to Farrakhan.

Media coverage has not been confined to the newspapers, however. Large numbers of persons were introduced to Louis Farrakhan and the rhetoric of the Nation of Islam during the April 25th, 1984 broadcast of ABC's Nightline. Bill Kurtis, formerly of the CBS's Morning News, also provided data about Louis Farrakhan and the American public's preception of and response to him.

With few exceptions the media's response to Louis Farrakhan has been critical. In the great majority of instances he is depicted as subversive and radical, a disturbing mixture of Walker, Garvey, Malcolm, Toure, Newton, Hitler, Castro, Khomeni, and Qaddafi. Many historical, social, and political analysts write that he represents a significant threat to race relations in general and Black - Jewish relations in particular.

Acceptance and/or endorsement of Farrakhan's messages have been noticeably absent from both print and the electronic media. With the
exception of the *The Final Call*, few periodicals have assumed the position of champion of the rhetoric coming from the Nation of Islam's national spokesman.

Periodicals which have carried articles which might be considered "supportive" of the rhetoric seem to have done so more to bolster paper sales than as an indication of actual support for Farrakhan's claims, arguments, and vision. Some discussion of a biography has emerged from within the movement. Indeed, requests in the summer of 1983 for all "treatments" of the Farrakhan's rhetoric by print and electronic media suggested that a compilation process might be underway. There is little reason to speculate that an autobiography is forthcoming in the foreseeable future.

Analysis of the Nation of Islam appeared in articles written as early as 1935. Two of the early writings, "The Voodoo Cult Among Negro Migrants in Detroit" and "Registered with Allah," are important to the present study because they provide the researcher with dated assessments, evaluations, and characterizations of the movement - the result of which is deeper and, hence, stronger historical and political perspective.

"The Voodoo Cult Among Negro Migrants in Detroit"

Erdmann Beynon's characterizations of the movement is readily apparent in the title of the 1935 article. Classifying the Nation of Islam as both a cult and a sect, Benyon, a social scientist, considered the movement to be a significant topic for study "partly because of its synthesis of heterogenous cultural elements and partly because of its unique expression of race consciousness."

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Benyon facilitates his discussion of the movement through the use of certain headings or sub-topics. Among these are "The Organized Cult," "Relation to Other Negro Cults," and "The Prophet." While inclusion of these subtopics suggest the importance Benyon places on item, his actual discussion of each rarely contained more than three or four paragraphs. Only two paragraphs are devoted to Master Fard Muhammad. Moreover, discussion of the movement's religious claims and arguments are virtually absent.

Registered with Allah

Registered with Allah presents a discussion of the movement which, at best, might be called reactionary. Characterizations of the male members of the movement as a "Muslim goon squad" and of, then, 26 years old Elijah Muhammad as "the transplanted Georgia boy" carry serious undercurrents of prejudice and racism. The author relies heavily on the use of various movement expressions and descriptions to explain the nature and intent of the movement. The use of phrases and description like "trickenology," "spook civilization," and "blue-eyed devil" seem more for effect and impact than for purposes of clarification or explanation. Questions relative to the source of the author's information ensue from a reading of the first paragraph of the article. Master Fard Muhammad is described as a "darker skinned man." According to the movement's rhetoric Master Fard Muhammad is the product of a black father and white mother. Indeed, he is exceedingly fair-skinned.
Of the literature pertaining to the movement, two books have remained important considerations for persons interested in studying the Nation of Islam. These two books, published in 1961 and 1962, are C. Eric Linclon's *Black Muslims in America* and E. U. Essien - Udom's *Black Nationalism: A Search for Identity in America*. Both books provide considerable amounts of information about the movement's structure and day-to-day activities.

While Linclon's work contains many accuracies in its account of the movement, this work also contains an alarming number of inaccuracies and statements both fallacious and misleading. Using the term "Black Islam" Linclon appears to be writing from the perspective that the movement is renegade, outlaw, and generally an embarrassing response to the larger Islamic world community and to America's social and racial ills. No noteworthy consideration is made of the movement's religious assertions and arguments in Linclon's 1961 study.

Written a year later, "Black Nationalism: A Search for Identity in America" never quite generated interest or attention comparable to that engendered by Linclon's work. This assessment aside, Essien-Udom's work does stand on its own as a scholarly and, largely, accurate investigation of the movement. Within the pages of this work the author provides the reader with large amounts of information about the movement. However, his underlying assumption that the Nation of Islam is a Black Nationalist organization is inconsistent with the movement's rhetoric. The Nation of Islam argues that the essence and nature of "blackness" is that it is universal and not national. Finally, it is interesting to note that contained in both Linclon's and Essien-Udom's text.
studies of the movement is the reference to a "young Bostonian minister" who is rapidly becoming one of the movement's most dynamic and progressive ministers. He is identified simply as Louis X. The Louis X these writers refer to in their respective works is none other than Louis Farrakhan.

Organization of the Study

Chapter Two of the dissertation is devoted to a discussion of the critical method used to answer the major question asked in the study, "Can study of the religious claims, arguments, and assertions contained in the rhetoric of Minister Louis Farrakhan provide fresh insights and new knowledge about him and the Nation of Islam?"

Chapter Three of the dissertation is designed to present the reader with discussion of The Rhetorical Situation as perceived by the central figure of the movement, Louis Farrakhan. Specifically, the discussion presented to the reader in Chapter Three is aimed at answering the question, "What is the nature of the context out of which emerges the rhetorical discourse of Louis Farrakhan?"

Chapter Four will represent the first chapter in the dissertation devoted to a specific analysis of Farrakhan's rhetoric, using the constituents of Bitzer's Rhetorical Situation Model. Specifically, this chapter will offer the reader an analysis of the first of Bitzer's three constituents, Exigence. Ultimately, the goal of Chapter Four is to provide the reader with a presentation and analysis of "the imperfection marked by urgency" as revealed in Louis Farrakhan's rhetoric.
The goal of Chapter Five is to identify, analyze, and evaluate the Audience to which Farrakhan's rhetoric is directed. More precisely, this chapter will concentrate on Audience Images. The specific concern is to determine the image(s) Farrakhan's various audience have of him in relation to his rhetorical purpose and in relation to the emergence of various rhetorical problems. Simply stated, Chapter Five is concerned with how Louis Farrakhan sees each of his various audience and how his various audiences are likely to view him.

Chapter Six will focus on the third constituent Bitzer identified as a part of the rhetorical situation. This chapter is designed to focus the reader's attention of specific barriers and obstacles to Farrakhan's rhetoric especially as such relates to the question of whether or not his rhetoric is a "fitting response."

Chapter Seven, summarizes the study and makes critical claims. First, this chapter draws the reader's attention to the major observation found in Chapters Two, through Six. The primary claims of the study are discussed then, in relation to their historical, social and, most importantly, rhetorical significance. This final chapter offers an assessment of the merits of critical method employed in the dissertation. Finally, limitations are considered and recommendations are made for future study.
Chapter I

Notes


2Louis Farrakhan's history as a rhetor in the black community includes an address where an estimated 70,000 blacks were in attendance. The occasion was Black Family Day which was held on New York's Randall's Island in the summer of 1974.


8On July 30, 1984 Farrakhan delivered an address to the members of the National Press Club in Washington, D.C. His opening words were "I represent the Honorable Elijah Muhammad, a Messenger and Warner from Allah (God) to Black people, America, and the world. I do not speak to you from mere personal desire, I speak in the Name of the God Who raised up the Honorable Elijah Muhammad and I am backed by them both." (Taken from transcript of speech.)

9Farrakhan embarked on a major lecture tour in 1983 and used as his sole theme, "Christ Eminent Return: He Makes All Things New." Unlike many engagements which take place in high school and college auditoriums, these lectures were delivered, principally, from pulpits.


11Louis Farrakhan, "A Saviour is Born for the Black Man and Woman of America." Address delivered at Genesis Convention Center in Gary, Indiana, February 27, 1983.

12This religious motif meets with some resistance from persons who maintain that it originates from the personal motives and desires of its speaker and not from God. A more elaborate discussion is contained in Chapter Six and, to a lesser extent, Chapter Three of the study.
Farrakhan's rhetorical discourse takes on the appearance of absolute confidence and "fearlessness" precisely because he believes completely in these things.


Malcolm X comes closest to Farrakhan in the response his rhetoric has generated. His 1964 address to the United Nations result in calls for his censorship and urgings to bring him to trial on treason.

This figure differs from some published accounts. However, the researcher was in attendance on this occasion and, as such, stands by its accuracy. Audience totals consistently vary in published accounts and figures cited in the movement's own publications and/or by its officials.

Penelope McMillan and Cathleen Decker, "Israel a 'Wicked Hypocrisy' - Farrakhan Los Angeles Times September 15, 1985, I:3.

The generally reported figure is 25,000 with 20,000 or more inside of the Garden itself and another 5,000 inside the Felt Forum. Most accounts overlook the fact, however, that there were several thousand people who tried but were unsuccessful in their attempts to get inside of either facility. A far more accurate estimate of the "response" to Farrakhan's New York speech is 30,000 - plus.


The response to Farrakhan's references to the Nazi leaders lead to charges by the movement that the press was deliberately taking Farrakhan's words out of context. These charges continued throughout the presidential campaign.

Reference to the movement's members as the "followers of Louis Farrakhan" is generally unacceptable, at least from his perspective. Until very recently, Farrakhan has resisted all such designations as inappropriate.

The movement has consistently maintained that its influence in the black community should not be judged by the number of "registered" members. Most observers would have to admit that the vast majority of persons in attendance at Farrakhan's lectures are not members of the organization.
Journalist Carl T. Rowan has advanced the argument that the Muslim minister should be ignored. In an August 6, 1984 Washington Post editorial Rowan said, "I cannot silence Farrakhan. I cannot stop the media from exploiting him. I can, I hope, make some of my media colleagues understand the damage they do in chasing down black demagogues and making them national figures."

Farrakhan is the second national spokesman that the movement has had in its history. The first was Malcolm X who Farrakhan has described as his earliest mentor. Both men were specifically chosen for the position by Elijah Muhammad.

Since 1984 increasing efforts have been underway to establish ties with foreign countries and governments. While not generally publicized these efforts have met with considerable success. On at least one occasion the president of Ghana, Jerry Rawlins, provided Farrakhan with use of a private plane to facilitate his access to various parts of the country. Farrakhan has also addressed the police and military officers of this particular African nation.

The number of trips outside of the United States increased dramatically between the winter of 1984 and the summer of 1986. His most recent tour included speaking engagements in several African nations, Pakistan, and China.

The rhetor's continuous reference to himself as a "student" might be calculated as a strategy to compel his listeners to think of Elijah Muhammad. The extent that this is, in fact, what has happened is difficult to assess. With the exception of the movement's own membership, it is probably safe to say that Farrakhan is, inspite of such references, the principal focus of attention.

The movement asserts that it was the will of God that Jesse Jackson asked Farrakhan for support. More specifically, the movement contends that God used the campaign to make the Muslim minister known to greater numbers of blacks and whites.


The description of blacks as "blind, deaf, and dumb" appears frequently in the oral and written rhetoric of the movement. These conditions are, according to Farrakhan, the legacy of American slavery.

Louis Farrakhan, "Resurrection of the Dead" an address given around 1980. It should be noted that in this instance-and in others-the absence of exact dates and locations for speeches are a function of
the recording system and labeling practice of persons within the movement. Recent lectures do contain labeling which provides more information. In some instances it is possible to determine both date and location from Farrakhan's opening words.

34Louis Farrakhan, "National Press Club." Address delivered in Washington, D.C. on July 30, 1984. This particular address is among the movement's most important, at least in its recent history. For the first time in more than 10 years, the movement's rhetoric was presented to a national - and through them - international body of journalists and reporters. The potential c-span audience was 17 million.

35Louis Farrakhan, "National Press Club."

36Farrakhan announced during the movement's 1981 convention that Elijah Muhammad had escaped a death plot in 1974 and was, in fact, still alive. The movement's publication, Is it Possible that The Honorable Elijah Muhammad is Still Physically Alive?, was written with the intention of establishing a religious argument for Farrakhan's contention. See Bernard Cushmeer, This is the One: Messenger Elijah Muhammad --You Need not Look For Another (Phoenix: Truth Publications, 1970, 1971)

37Louis Farrakhan, "Who Is The Original Man?" Address delivered in Detroit, Michigan around 1982.


39While the present study has as its central focus the rhetoric of Louis Farrakhan, it is impossible for the writer to provide the necessary breath of understanding desired without the use of materials from Elijah Muhammad. Farrakhan maintains that his rhetoric is actually what Muhammad taught between 1934 and 1974. His assignment, he argues, is to give it greater clarity. Detractors contend that Farrakhan has deviated from Muhammad's original teachings and give this as the principal reason for not supporting him. See Elijah Muhammad, Message to the Blackman in America (Chicago: Muhammad's Temple No. 2., 1965)

40See Elijah Muhammad, The Fall of America (Chicago: Muhammad's Temple of Islam No. 2., 1973)

41Muhammad, Fall of America 164-168.

42Muhammad, Message 31-32.

43Muhammad, Message 31-32.

Louis Farrakhan, "God's Judgment of America." Address delivered in Los Angeles, California, 1981.

It is not altogether clear how Farrakhan's assertion that slavery was preordained relates to his argument that America is to be judged because of its enslavement of blacks.

Louis Farrakhan, "Resurrection of the Dead," address. The writer found neither date or location for this lecture. A reasonable guest is that the lecture was made sometime between 1979 and 1982.

Louis Farrakhan, "God's Judgement of America."

Farrakhan, "God's Judgment."

Farrakhan, "God's Judgment."

The movement's ideological base is extensive with elaborate detail and multidimensional explanations. Among its rhetoric is the argument that the American Indians are originally from the East but were banished from that part of the world because of a violation of a certain rule or law associated with Islam. The writer has never heard a specific reason given for this banishment. In recent years Farrakhan has established increased ties with the Native Americas, maintaining that they, too, are black.

Farrakhan seems to be under no delusion about America's blacks possessing an unarticulated desire to return to Africa. The movement's goal seems to be that of building bridges to various African nations in the event that some blacks make this decision. Moreover, the rhetoric reveals that the primary concern is the economic development of both Africans and American blacks.

Toure has been one, if not the most, visible and consistent of Farrakhan's supporters. He is commonly among a group of select persons who are routinely asked to address the movement's larger audiences prior to Farrakhan's main address.

Farrakhan includes in his lectures discussions of various rituals and "secrets" associated with such fraternal groups as the Masons and Shriners. His explanations of their meanings are enthusiastically received for two reasons. First, he maintains that the history and experience of blacks in America is "hidden" in the signs, symbols, and language of these societies. The second reason seems to be that many blacks feel that blacks who are members of these organizations have placed themselves above the masses of blacks who are not included among their numbers.

Interestingly, the movement predicts that there will come a time when blacks will respond to its rhetoric in such numbers that it will be necessary to reduce orientation period which are currently several weeks long down to 15 minute intervals.
A major part of the movement's instruction to its converts centers on diet which Farrakhan argues is the source of many of the problems confronting blacks. He maintains that blacks have never been taught how to eat or what to eat so they rely principally on the food items and preparations of food common among the slave population.

The issue of "divinity" is inescapable inasmuch as Farrakhan and the movement's membership base their verbalizations and actions on their belief that Elijah Muhammad met and was taught by God. This fundamental belief quite literally accounts for the "rightness" the movement assigns to all its claims, arguments, regulations, and positions.

The dietary regulations include eating only one meal in every 24 hour period and a three day fast at the end of each month. Followers are told that they should strive to consume food in longer and longer intervals. Twice per week has been identified as one goal.

These principles are significant in that they "automatically" link the movement's members with millions of Muslims/Moslems in the world. The other 4 principles are (1) belief in Allah and His Messenger, (2) belief in the Divine Revelation and the Hereafter, (3) belief in Praying at least 5 times each day, and (4) belief in giving Charity.

Like so much of the movement's rhetoric its flag is not without a significant amount of information. Briefly, the Sun represents freedom, the Moon represents equality, and the Star stands for justice.

At the peak of the movement's development (what is commonly termed "the first dispensation") there were many as 274 temples or mosques.


Bernard Cushmeer, This is the One 59.

The English spelling of the religious guide for adherents to the religion of Islam is Koran. The book is not generally available in either popular or religious bookstores within the United States. Under Elijah Muhammad, several thousand copies were made available to blacks. Reportedly, Farrakhan has made arrangements for a large shipment in the near future. He advances the claim that while the book is not accessible to the general public it is an important part of the libraries of America's masons and shriners -- the vast majority of whom are white and influential.

It was not until after Muhammad's teacher left the movement's Detroit base in 1934 that he disclosed that Fard Muhammad was God. In doing, so Elijah Muhammad became "the Messenger of Allah."
Since 1981 there have been five separate series of study guides. Typically, a given study guide is the focus of attention during one or more of the movement's weekly study sessions. Special guides have at times been prepared by Farrakhan. Regional ministers have also prepared guides according to their individual perceptions and insights on particular events or developments.

A significant collection of articles on Farrakhan can be found in the Washington Post, New York Times, and Los Angeles Times from March 1984 to August 1984.


The spelling of the Libyan leader's name is so numerous as to seem random. The writer has used the spelling found on the cover of The Green Book, authored by the Libyan and distributed by the Libyan Embassy in Washington, D.C.


Bontemps and Conroy, Anyplace 223.

Bontemps and Conroy, Anyplace 220.

Bontemps and Conroy, Anyplace 220.

Bontemps and Conroy, Anyplace 220.

Bontemps and Conroy, Anyplace 221.

The movement's members maintain that Lincoln's study is the most inaccurate and, therefore, damaging work that has been done on the movement to date. It further argues that as a Christian theologian Lincoln had already made important decisions about the very issues he set out to determine the veracity and/or significance of.

Lincoln took part in the movement's 1983 convention as a panelist for its Religion Forum. His remarks reflected a reassessment of many of his earlier conclusions about the movement.
Both Lincoln and Essien-Udom write about Farrakhan during his earlier days as a minister in Boston's mosque. This note is important as it counters arguments that Farrakhan's appeal among blacks is a recent phenomenon.
CHAPTER II

Method: The Approach

The purpose of Chapter Two is to bring into focus the theoretical approach to be employed in the study. More specifically, this chapter discusses the critical perspective from which the writer seeks to arrive at an understanding of Louis Farrakhan's rhetoric within the Black Muslim faith.

The critical method to be used in this study draws upon four specific theoretical perspectives. The choice of each perspective is a direct outgrowth of special concerns with which the subject under investigation was initially approached. The first concern is related to the Nation of Islam's status as a movement. Its classification as a movement was, however, not as much a concern as was its on-going history as an organization still being actively studied after more than half of a century on the American scene. The movement was clearly not one of America's best understood, in spite of having the distinction of being the most researched Muslim group within the United States. These things considered, the design of a critical method had to provide for a theoretical perspective that afforded the critic with a useful way of studying and understanding movements.

The second concern is to examine the movement's National Representative, Louis Farrakhan. Having concluded that, singularly, he accounted for the movement's renewed and increased visibility, not to mention its controversial and radical appearance, the need for an approach which looked specifically at leadership roles, functions, and rhetorical problems was a necessity. A third consideration in the
formulation of a suitable method related closely to that of the movement's leadership.

The fact that Farrakhan's rhetoric of the Nation of Islam met with such diverse responses indicated to the writer that some mechanism was needed within the overall design that would permit analysis, discussion, and evaluation of his audiences as well as his audience's assessment of him.

Finally, the nature and complexity of movement study suggested the need for a method that would be particularly sensitive to the most personal, private and minute articulations of its rhetoric as well as the articulations of its membership. An aspect of specific concern in the present study, then, was the achievement of broad analysis and accurate conclusions in the face of a movement steeped in controversy, public repudiations, growing audience responses, and a rather obvious and frenzied attempt to "explain" the man and the movement. A key question becomes, then, how can the investigator acquire a perspective of Farrakhan's rhetoric in the movement which will lead to the discovery of information and understandings not yet achieved? With each of these concerns in view, it became evident that the final theoretical design for the study of the Nation of Islam would be pluralistic. Admittedly, there are several choices of data available to the researcher. In the case of the rhetorical critic, the writer may elect to look to historical sources. Should these sources be determined inappropriate for the researcher's specific purposes, surveys, questionnaires, and polls are acceptable alternatives for
gathering data for subsequent analysis. A third source from which the rhetorical critic may gather data to be used in his/her criticism is through the discourse itself. It is this particular focus which the writer has chosen for the present study. More precisely, the present study of the Nation of Islam is an intrinsic analysis of Louis Farrakhan's public address. While this choice may appear unreasoned in light of the significant amount and variety of data collected, it is, nonetheless, appropriate as a means to understand both the rhetor and his movement. Moreover, as a view for determining actual data to be used in rhetorical criticism, intrinsic analysis of significant amounts data is confirmed within Edwin Black's article, "The Second Persona." With the above observations as a starting place, the method employed in this dissertation is delineated. With each of these concerns in view, it becomes evident that the final theoretical design for the study of the Nation of Islam would be pluralistic.

Rhetorical Situation

Writing in his 1968 seminal study, "The Rhetorical Situation," Lloyd Bitzer confessed..."situation is not a standard item in the vocabulary of rhetorical theory; "audience" is standard, so also are "speaker," "subject," "occasion," and "speech." Not only did Bitzer's essay invite scholars to review situation in a wholly different way as they approached their respective criticisms, but he raised the status of situation significantly when he stated, "so controlling is situation that it should be the very ground of rhetorical activity." According to Bitzer the rhetorical scholar can make significant progress in the doing of rhetorical criticism through consideration of
not just the speech or speaker, occasion or event, but rather by way of
the entire situation. Defining rhetorical situation, he explains that
it is a "complex of persons, events, objects, and relations presenting
an actual or potential exigence which can be completely or partially
removed if discourse, introduced into the situation, can so constrain
human decision or action as to bring about the significant modification
of the exigence." His description of situation as a "complex" is not
unlike the nature of movements themselves.

Movements are also complexes of people, events, objects, and
relations. They, too, provide opportunities for critical analysis over
an extended period of time for each of these components plus countless
occasions and the speakers and speeches which attend them. Bitzer's
definition of rhetorical situation is descriptive of the nature of
movements in a second way. He describes rhetorical situations as
complexes with various elements. Movement theory postulates among its
many definitions of movements that they are "collectivities" - not
unlike complexes. Additionaly, efforts toward affecting change in
the status quo - a primary goal of movements - do not preclude the
presence of components found within Bitzer's complex.
Indeed, such constituents as persons, objects, relations, are
precisely the stuff of social movements.

It would not be inaccurate to describe the Nation of Islam as a
complex for that is exactly what the movement represents. The job of
the rhetorical critic is to unravel its features and elements as a
dynamic organism seeking to affect change within black and white
America. Bitzer's definition of rhetorical situation speaks directly to the primary focus of the dissertation, Louis Farrakhan's public address. Within his definition he makes plain the saliency of discourse being introduced into the situation as an effective way to modify problems. Of the role of discourse Bitzer states:

...rhetoric is a mode of altering reality, not by direct application of energy to objects, but by the creation of discourse which changes reality through the mediation of thought and action. The rhetor alters reality by bringing into existence a discourse of such a character that the audience, in thought and action, is so engaged that it becomes mediators of change. In this sense rhetoric is always persuasive. 12

Bitzer's definition is uniquely suited to the present study for the above reasons and because of his suggestion that rhetorical situations are affected previously by exigence, audience, and constraints. A rhetorical analysis of a movement also requires the use of a theoretical tool that will allow for in-depth analysis of areas considered invaluable for accurate understanding of the movement. The prespective should, likewise, provide for a discussion that is not hindered by time restrictions as movements cover years and often decades or more.

Exigence

According to Bitzer, "Any exigence is an imperfection; it is a defect, an obstacle, something waiting to be done, a thing which is other than it should be." 13 While he does not identify the person or persons who will be primarily concerned with the exigence it is clear from his definition that the articulation of the defect or imperfection which characterizes a given situation is the domain of the rhetor...in
this instance Louis Farrakhan. It almost goes without saying that it will be through an examination of Farrakhan's public address over a span of several years that the most precise assessment of what he perceives to be the problem or imperfection will be determined.

Using Louis Farrakhan's public address to identify the exigence accomplishes two additional goals established in Bitzer's conceptualization of the rhetorical situation model. First, identification of the problem has the simultaneous affect of identifying the rhetorical audience - that person or persons who are most capable of functioning as change agents. Secondly, the exigence - once identified - specifies the change that is needed for which subsequent discourse will emerge from the rhetor. In addition to all of the above points of discussion, an analysis of Louis Farrakhan's public address as well as the wealth of materials found among the movement's own holdings will no doubt become a source for understanding - in a comprehensive way - the perspective he brings to the situation and the messages which he, in turn, produces.

A major goal in the discussion and analysis of exigence is not only to show - through Louis Farrakhan's words what is "waiting to be done" among blacks and within America, but - through his rhetorical discourse - to show concerted attempts by him to answer the call he makes within his messages.

Audience

Unquestionably, one of the factors of Louis Farrakhan's rhetoric which accounts for the predictable response to his various utterances is the openness and seemingly unconcerned posture he has assumed when
it comes to identifying his audience. Through the broad nature of the component, the writer is afforded the opportunity to analyze Farrakhan's audience without traditional parameters of place, occasion, time - an important consideration when doing movement research. The integral position of audience within the rhetorical situation is made clear in Bitzer's words when he states:

"Since rhetorical discourse produces change by influencing the decision and action of persons who function as mediators of change, it follows that rhetoric always requires an audience...It is clear that a rhetorical audience must be distinguished from a body of mere hearers or readers..."

Bitzer's principal concern that the audience consist of persons who are "capable of being influenced by discourse" and of "serving as mediators of change," establishes the parameters for analyzing this important concern of any movement. Farrakhan's public address is paid attention to in large measure because of his treatment of audience. Through this component the writer is also given sufficient means to discuss the specific reasons why the rhetor has determined his rhetorical audience to consist of persons or group which he identifies through his discourse. Finally, the responsibility and desired actions which the rhetor places on each group is also discernable through an analysis of Farrakhan's rhetoric.

Audience Image

On September 15, 1985, Louis Farrakhan lectured before an audience estimated to be 19,000 in Los Angeles. He was welcomed to the stage with a standing ovation and cheers of "Long Live Farrakhan."
outside of the Los Angeles Forum were protestors carrying picket signs. Most of the people walking along the sidewalk across from the lecture hall were white, but some were black. One black male marched carrying a sign which read, "Jews are the chosen people." Almost all the other picketeers carried signs saying, "Death to Farrakhan." Without doubt, one of the most compelling factors in a critic's decision to study one communicator over another is the attention which each receives from their public address. Needless to say, in those instances where the speaker's public discourse results in widely differing reactions from significant bodies of people, the critic's interest is considerably greater than in those cases were the response to the rhetor is only mild or fleeting. Moreover, the articulations of a speaker who delivers a message that is received with excitement and jubilation by some persons and scorn and censorship by others raises dramatically the degree of critical interest -- interest in the rhetor, the message and in the respective audience. Louis Farrakhan is such a communicator.

The most cursory examination of Farrakhan's rhetoric and the diversity of responses to it makes the need for a theoretical perspective which specifically addresses both the rhetor's perceptions of his audience(s) and the audience's perceptions of the speaker imperative. Such a perspective is provided through Makay and Brown's concept of "Audience Image." Summarizing the perspective they write:

...audiences have predispositions which influence the meanings they receive from communicators; they tend to understand, to evaluate, and to act upon these messages in accordance with such predispositions. The communicator may meet these predispositions, may modify them, or may violate them, but they cannot avoid dealing with them.
The point seems evident. Careful rhetorical criticism requires that deliberate attention be paid to the receivers of messages - in this instance Louis Farrakhan's audience. Moreover, criticism necessitates identifying the predispositions in attitudes, beliefs, images which a speaker's audience brings to the situation or occasion.23 Such deliberativeness should not, according to Makay and Brown, be underestimated as the ability of the rhetor to accomplish his rhetorical goals is inextricably connected to such efforts. Furthermore, an audience's capacity to understand and act according to the communicator's specified goals must be understood to be inseparable from its individual and collective predispositions. The source of rhetorical problems which emerge in the process of a speaker's persuasive efforts is to be found, ultimately, in his or her failure to come to terms with the effect prior beliefs, attitudes, feelings, and conclusions have on the meanings audiences, attach to his or her words and actions within the present situation.

Analysis of Louis Farrakhan's audience, when done simultaneously with and through his public address is the surest way to discover both the source of his audience's predispositions and his method of dealing with them. The process of analysis, will also reveal whether as communicator Farrakhan has determined the most appropriate rhetorical response to his audience's predispositions to be a modification of them, violation of them or meeting them head on.

As a theoretical perspective, audience image provides additional aid in analyzing a movement's audience(s). The perspective details
three typical ways people (audience) deal with messages regardless of the specific subject with which they concern themselves. They are filtering, refracting, and interfacing.

The "filtering" process is just as it suggests -- a type of pick and choose by audiences of portions or segments of speeches rather than the acceptance of rejection of the entire message. The practice is readily visible in reactions to the movement's rhetoric. It is not uncommon to hear blacks articulate statements of support for the movement's rhetoric of black economic development. However, the movement's position against birth control has been largely rejected. It is not unusual to hear both topics discussed within the same speech.

The second way receivers deal with messages is by reshaping them -- an action referred to as "refracting." In this instance the receivers will bend and distort the communicator's message in their attempts to "adjust" to them. Interestingly, this response plays prominently in the present study as Farrakhan has charged the media with deliberately distorting, through editing, his statements. The implication of this observation raises serious questions for it broadens the concept of refracting by suggesting a whole set of concerns should persons doing the "bending" and "distorting" be in the positions to influence the thinking and actions of others.

Interfacing is the last of the three options persons may use to respond to incoming messages. Here, messages undergo a complete change or metamorphosis. Within each of these choices the point being made is that speakers must be sensitized to the fact that the meanings
audiences have for messages will vary enormously. As a theoretical perspective audience image makes available three broad dimensions of behavior through which a critic may analyze and discuss audience's responses to a given rhetor. A discussion of each follows.

Assimilation-Contrast should be understood as a two part process used by message receivers to make sense or a respond to message senders. The first act on the part of the receiver or audience member is to look for and find similarities between what the speaker says and what he or she believes to be true at that moment. The second part of this dimension is quite opposite in its affect. Rather than seeing similarities in beliefs and attitudes, the listener assumes the position of detractor and opposer to the message and, perhaps, the messenger. As such, the communicator's view on a particular issue is considered to be extreme and hence the listener's response is to conclude that the position is further away from his own than it actually is. The effect is that an additional rhetorical problem emerges in the presence of Contrast because differences now are made to appear virtually irreconcilable.

The second dimension is Deletion-Addition of which two important variables are cited - ego-involvement and anchorages. These variables are at work in cases where a listener or audience member has added or omitted something from the message he or she has heard or read. The relevance of the dimension to Louis Farrakhan's public discourse is found in the language he employs to communicate the movement's vision. Theodore Roosevelt's reference to "The wild
preachers of unrest and discontent, the wild agitators against the entire existing order..." are not unlike descriptions contained in Farrakhan's own messages. Interpretations of Farrakhan's assertions, "Bloodsuckers of the poor" and "Islam as a social solution" depends on the individual anchorages and degree of ego-involvement of his audience members. In the instance of "Bloodsuckers of the Poor," the title of a 1985 lecture, is the vilified object inner-city merchants? Internal Revenue Service? Slum Landlords? Corporate America? As a social solution, is Islam considered the cure for Hunger? Divorce? Teenage Pregnancy? Crime? Racism? How one answers the question is a function of one's individual anchorage and the degree of personal identification.

Deletion-addition has been the source of considerable attention in what is generally called the Farrakhan Controversy. Analysis of movement discloses that since at least March 1984, the question of audience or receiver deletion-addition as been a dominant issue. Farrakhan has publicly charged the media with deleting various words or sections from his lectures, with taking words and statements out of context, and with adding words to speeches. The deletion-addition charge may not be altogether without merit. Aware of the significant argument surrounding Louis Farrakhan's characterization of Hitler as a "great man" and Judaism as a "gutter" religion, the writer examined the movement's claim that reporters and journalists deleted the qualifier "...wickedly great" from the initial reports. None of the first reports contained the qualifier though in the weeks following the uproar the qualifier does appear. Additionally, examination of charges
that Farrakhan called Judaism a dirty religion lead the writer to a tape of the actual lecture. While the name dirty or gutter is included in the lecture, neither are used as a description of the religion. In fact, the name Judaism is not present within the context of this particular discussion. It is clear from the two examples that deletion-addition is an important dimension in the overall study and understanding of the movement, Louis Farrakhan and his various audience. The inclusion of relevant excerpts from his public address should prove instrumental in arriving at an accurate determination of the presence and use of the second dimension by his audience.

The third, and final, is Rationalization. As Makay and Brown point out, "when a listener feels dissonant or inconsistent, he often rationalizes." Importance and clarity are determined to be importance factors in the presence of behavior termed as such. In other words, messages create few problems for receivers (audiences) who do not consider those messages to be significant. It is only, then, in the presence of claims, arguments and assertions which when uttered by the rhetor and given positions of saliency by the audience does rationalizing become an emotional or psychological necessity.

It may well be that the variable of clarity has much to do with responses - both good and bad - to Louis Farrakhan's rhetoric. Rationalizing behavior presupposes that the listener or audience is able to see distinct differences or contradictions between what is articulated by the rhetor and what he or she believes to be true. In the presence of such 'clarity' the need to explain away and understand the new image's relationship to the previously held image is
predictably great. Rationalizing would, then, be expected and a source of considerable comfort for the listener or receiver. While the user of rationalizing is not uncommon in audience responses to messages, it must be considered the less productive of the three dimensions of behavior because within it is, oftentimes, the deliberate denial of facts, evidence and proof contrary to the position or behavior assumed. Suffice it to say, the inclusion of a theoretical perspective which is responsive to the need to assess and understand the communicator's audiences responses to himself and his message strengthens significantly the overall design.

Audience image is valuable as a theoretical model because it addresses the individual nature of audience responses to Louis Farrakhan's rhetorical discourse. Assimilation-Contrast, deletion-addition, and rationalization are, by and large, subjective and highly personal behaviors. The diversity of responses to Farrakhan's rhetoric and the knowledge of the movement's most recent history demands such a perspective.

**Constraints**

About the third component of the rhetorical situation, Bitzer writes, "Besides exigence and audience, every rhetorical situation contains a set of constraints made up of persons, events, objects, and relations which are parts of the situation because they have the power to constrain decision and action needed to modify the exigence." The inclusion of the Constraint constituent in the theoretical design provides a broad avenue for assessing the movement's strenghts and
More importantly, through this one component the rhetorical discourse is examined from an entirely different vantage point. Through the discussion of constraints, the analysis moves from being descriptive and evaluative to being, in some ways, predictive. The depth of the investigation is increased and, subsequently, the critic's role is brought into a much sharper focus. The discussion on constraints should not only reveal the movement's present status it should also suggest discourse which is needed on specific topics pertinent to the movement, but which may be as yet unarticulated by the leadership. Additionally, this discussion should point to discourse which is incomplete, ineffective, and which otherwise, needs to be modified by the rhetor. Finally, the constituent, in the writer's considered opinion, leads the way for a frank discussion about beliefs, images, and attitudes currently held about the movement and Louis Farrakhan by persons within and outside of the movement which will, at some point, require Louis Farrakhan to modify his public address if he is to accomplish his long term rhetorical goals.

Not every rhetorical theorist and critic agrees with Bitzer's view of the situation. As such, this discussion would be misleading should it fail to include published reservations to the rhetorical situation as a critical perspective and method.

"Determinism," "fatalism," the "omission of historical actualities," and the addition of "elements" are among the variety of concerns and objections articulated by theorists and critics of Bitzer's perspective. Principal among the literature expressing various concerns and/or objections is that of Vatz, Consigny, and Patton.
Vatz's criticisms of Bitzer's model come close to being a complete rejection of the author's major statements. Indeed, after beginning his essay with the opening sentences of Bitzer's own article, he declares, "these statements do not imply situational characteristics." Vatz argues that Bitzer's model is, more than anything else, a "stimulus-response" design.

Consigny is among critics whose evaluation of Bitzer's model resulted in the introduction of additional factors or variables into the model itself. Objecting to the design on the basis that it "predetermines discourse," Consigny provides the reader with an additional consideration -"rhetoric as the art of topics."

Finally, Patton's essay, while introducing the elements of causation and creativity, is more an elaboration and clarification of Bitzer's model than it is a rejection. His discussion of the rhetorical situation as well as his critical use of the model have been vigorous and persuasive. Bitzer has, himself written, "I should like to express my admiration of John Patton's QJS essay (February, 1979), which expertly carried forward the argument for the situational view - and along the way provided lucid explanation of points my original essay left under-developed or ill-explained."

Notwithstanding the reservations of some scholars regarding the usefulness of Bitzer's model, this writer considers it to be an appropriate theoretical design for analyzing Louis Farrakhan's rhetoric of the Nation of Islam. Additionally, the complexity which attends all movement study makes the constituents of Exigence, Audience, and
Constraints invaluable for the depth of analysis the scholar of movement is charged with. What now remains in the presentation of a critical method for the present study is a discussion of the means by which a deliberate examination of the movement's leader is accomplished.

**Leader-Centered Perspective**

The logic of studying the Nation of Islam as a leader-centered movement hardly needs explanation and, certainly not defense. Not since 1975 has the movement been more visible on the American scene. Indeed, it is more accurate to say that the movement has not received such print and broadcast attention since the flurry of reactions which followed Mike Wallace and Louis Lomax's 1959, documentary, "The Hate that Hate Produced." Centering their narration around the public statements of then National Spokeman, Malcolm X, the documentary announced not only the movement's existence to the American public but also neatly categorized it as anti-establishment, anti-white and the direct result of hate. Since late 1977, Louis Farrakhan has worked as the National Representative for Elijah Muhammad to rebuild the Nation of Islam. However, it was not until the winter of 1984 that Farrakhan became the solitary focus of media's curiosity and interest in the movement. There now seems little reason to doubt that the Nation of Islam might best be analyzed and, subsequently, understood through a leader-centered approach.

In 1970, Herbert Simons posited a theory of persuasion for social movements. The center of attention was the leader of movements and, in
particular, the requirements, problems, and strategies they must be aware of and must employ in their leadership position. Simons was clearly concerned with what he perceived as "the extraordinary rhetorical dilemmas confronting those who would lead social movements." 49

Application of Herbert Simon's theoretical perspective of the leader's role in movements is accomplished in the present study in different ways at various stages. At the outset, it is important to consider that Simon's discussion of movements specifically identifies two particular types for consideration. They are reformist and revolutionary. 50 According to him the former movement type has as its leader a rhetor who articulates "change or repair of particular laws, customs, or practices within the society." 51 The leader of reformist movements is also concerned with revealing the "sharp discrepancies between existing conditions for the segment of society he represents and the expectations of his followers.

In the case of the revolutionary movement emphasis is on a complete new order. The rhetor of such a movement urges a regeneration of societal values and rebuke of persons who represent the old. 52 Analysis of the Nation of Islam reveals that the movement is, on varying levels and to different extents, both reformist and revolutionary. Farrakhan's public address discloses that as the movement's spokesman he is concerned with perceived gaps between the accomplishments and lifestyles of black Americans and all other Americans. 53 Within the movement's Constitution is a call to the
Further, he seeks to have the grievances of blacks redressed while at the same time insisting on a complete change in their and America's values and priorities. Application of Simon's reformist and revolutionary leadership goals to Louis Farrakhan's speeches and lectures will add greater dimension to conclusions reached about the movement.

Three major responsibilities for movement leaders are discussed within Simon's theoretical construct. The first of these responsibilities is to attract members to the movement. Farrakhan's public address is viewed as the principle mechanism for attracting blacks to the movement. Once exposed, however, the goal is the second of the three responsibilities - maintaining the followers. Because there is no established schedule of regular speaking engagements for various cities or communities, the means by which Louis Farrakhan seeks to attract and maintain followers and supporters is through the individual and collective efforts of the movement's local mosque officials and membership. A combination of weekly radio broadcasts in several major cities and the sales of the movement's newspaper, The Final Call, serve as both the first means of establishing communication and presence between the movement and others and also as a vehicle for maintaining a sense of progress and accomplishment for members. Simons' concern that leaders are faced with problems of maintaining members is also pertinent to the Nation of Islam because of the increased psychological and social pressures involved with membership.
in highly controversial movements. Needless to say, movement members are constantly put on the "defensive" by statements made by Farrakhan during speaking engagements and interviews held around the country. Though uttered in Chicago, New York or Libya local officials and followers do not escape the fall-out; hence messages are often forthcoming which seek to increase confidence and remove feelings of isolation and victimization. Efforts at maintaining the movement's followers are also observed to include the use of irregular telephone "Hook-Ups" from Chicago to local mosques. These occasions are generally reserved for the delivery of special instructions or addresses designed to clarify some new concern or controversy. On occasion, "For Registered Muslims Only" cassette tapes are prepared by Louis Farrakhan and sent out to mosques around the country. The annual convention is the most deliberate effort by Farrakhan to maintain and, to a lesser extent, attract and mold the movement's membership.

Simons' goal of molding the membership of movements is, principally, accomplished within the Nation of Islam through its two internal organizations, the Fruit of Islam and the Muslim Girls Training and General Civilization Class. As the formal divisions of the movement's male and female membership, weekly classes are scheduled for purposes of providing on-going instruction about the role and place of each sex within the movement and within the larger setting of the black community. Finally, Farrakhan's efforts to attract, maintain and mold followers is through the sale of lectures on audio and video
cassettes. Mass produced in Chicago, the tapes are distributed to cities for purchase by the movement's membership and for local sale and distribution.

The second goal Simons identifies for the movement's leader is that of "securing adoption of their product by the larger structure." This goal is directly applicable to Louis Farrakhan's function as National Representative for Elijah Muhammad as he has identified as his goal to make the movement - through his public address - "all inclusive." America's black masses are considered to be the "larger structure" or external system to which Farrakhan's discourse is intended. At the same time, the frequency of his statements directed to the "established order" cannot be ignored. Analysis of Farrakhan's discourse leads the writer to conclude that outside of Blacks, adoption (acceptance) of the movement's claims, arguments, and assertions is hoped for but not generally expected.

Simons' directive that "leaders must react to resistance generated by the larger structure," speaks directly to what has come to be most often referred to as the "Farrakhan Factor." Analysis of his public address is the most exact method of assessing Farrakhan's response to various external pressures. According to Simon such pressure may take the form of threats, harassment, ostracism of the movement's membership, refusal to recognize or negotiate with the movement and denying the movement access to mass media. Each of these pressures are present within the movement and will be discussed through the analysis of Farrakan's public address and the movement in general.
The discussion of rhetorical problems which is included in Simons theoretical perspective is germane to the overall analysis of Louis Farrakhan's role and function as the movement's primary spokesman. Based on the present design for leader-centered movement analysis the role and function of a movement's leader will not necessarily be in harmony with the needs, interests, or values of persons who make up the movement's membership. Leaders also must address discrepancies between what is expected from them by their followers and how they define their own role as a leader. This particular observation bears closely on the question of constraints as articulated by Bitzer. Dilemmas confronting a movement's leadership because of such discrepancies is addressed within the dissertation through the examination of constraints.

Finally, Simons' concept of the three types of leaders as moderate, intermediate and militant plays directly into the writer's critical model. Louis Farrakhan fits nicely Simons description of the militant leader whose tactics confer visibility on a movement and who has ready access to the people. He has admitted that specific speeches are delivered in certain cities because of a perceived importance of the message and because of the visibility that the city in question would provide. Washington, D.C., emerges as a key city among Farrakhan's lecture circuit because it is the seat of the United States Government. Other cities considered to be of particular import are Los Angeles and New York. In the Spring of 1986, Farrakhan spoke before a group of conferencees from Tripoli, Libya. He explained that
his decision to do so was deliberate and designed to insure that head
government leaders in the United States would hear what he had to
say. These and other more vivid and specific examples are provided
within the actual examination of Farrakhan's speeches, lectures, and
sermons.

The formulation of a theoretical approach that makes the prominent
position and role of leadership germane to the effective analysis of a
given movement was paramount to this study of the Nation of Islam.
Louis Farrakhan's national and international visibility, the movement's
controversy, and his own public address make the inclusion of Simon's
perspective wholly logical and, indeed, invaluable.

Participant Observation

Up until this point the writer has only alluded to "participant
observation." However, this component of the dissertation's
theoretical design holds a unique place within the study's theoretical
design. Indeed, it is the one critical approach which distinguishes,
markedly, the present study from prior investigations of the movement.

A skimming of the titles of articles and exposes' written about
Louis Farrakhan and the Nation of Islam since 1984 discloses an
apparent searching for an explanation and reason for both his presence
on the American scene and his affect on those within hearing of his
public address. "The Farrakhan Factor", "The Farrakhan Mystique", and
"The Farrakhan Phenomenon" are each pregnant with the same unanswered
question, "Who is Louis Farrakhan and what does he and his people
want?"
Participant Observation, historically employed as a method by sociologists and anthropologists, is an exciting method also available to the rhetorical critic. The significance, effect, and application of a leader's rhetorical discourse can be assessed immediately via the investigator's physical closeness and participation within the movement itself. Obviously, additional information is available to the scholar through his or her proximity to the movement's intended receivers - its members. The goal, according to participant observer pioneer, Florence Kluckhohn, is to participate in some fashion in the experiences and actions of those he observes. The following paragraphs delineate more fully the scope of this theoretical perspective in the present study. It might be noted, however, that one answer to the question, "Who is Louis Farrakhan and what does he and his people want?" can be found in a work by Znaniecki. He writes:

"When I wish to ascertain at first what a certain activity is... I try to experience it. There is only one way of experiencing an activity: it is to perform it personally. Practical men insist on this; they can tell you that you cannot fully realize what they are doing until you do it yourself."

While the writer's formal investigation of the Nation of Islam began with the 1979 commencement of her doctoral studies, her curiosity spans a far greater number of years. Her first encounter with the movement took place almost twenty years ago when in 1969, she visited the mosque (then called temple) in Baltimore, Maryland. At this juncture however, the years, 1981-1986, are of particular interest.

In the summer of 1981 the writer left graduate school with dissertation prospectus in hand. Quite by accident, she made contact
with a young Muslim who it turned out had been given sole responsibility for developing the local mosque in Baltimore. During the course of this first of many conversations, an invitation was extended to attend weekly sessions, called simply Study Group. Interestingly, the youthful member had an undergraduate degree in Black Studies and was well versed on the two major studies on the movement to date, *Black Muslims in America* and *Black Nationalism: A Search for Identity in America*. The invitation was also extended as a challenge to study the movement at the closest possible range.

The Study Group was a gathering of persons - not necessarily Muslims - for the purpose of dialoging on reading assignments taken from books written by Elijah Muhammad and lectures given by Louis Farrakhan. The formation of the group was in response to a directive from Farrakhan to persons wanting to become officially associated with the movement. The group met three times weekly during 1981 and 1982. There were a total of five people in attendance at the first session in which the writer was present. Sometime in 1982 the number of weekly meetings was reduced by one meeting. Between 1981 and 1982 the writer had amassed an extensive collection of movement materials including books, tapes, newspapers, and pictures. Moreover, channels had been established for the receipt of materials from followers outside of the Baltimore area.

In the summer of 1982, the writer was confronted with a major dilemma. Membership in the Baltimore mosque was still relatively small
and persons who were formally registered with the movement were often inconsistent in their participation. The writer's status as a "researcher" and visitor was becoming a source of increasing resentment and, for some members, irritation and suspicion. Communication networks that the writer had established between herself and the movement's members in Baltimore and in a growing number of other cities beginning in 1981 were starting to show signs of deterioration. It was evident to the writer that continued analysis of the movement, its membership, and Louis Farrakhan's rhetoric required greater access to larger numbers of persons and, if possible, at higher levels in the movement's hierarchy. The writer became a "registered" member of the movement in late summer 1983.

Official membership immediately moved the writer from the visitor-researcher list into the mosque's inner circle of activities. The vantage point from which the writer was able to study the movement changed dramatically.

It should be noted that the researcher's ability to gather information, and participate in the movement at varying levels was a function of the size of the local membership in the early eighties. Not only was it generally easy to become acquainted with individual followers but the possibility of working in an official (leadership) capacity was virtually assured...especially where attendance was reasonably assured as in the case of a researcher gathering data.

The writer moved from the rolls of the rank and file follower into that of a local mosque official in 1983. The request to function as
the Captain in charge of the mosque's female members raised the level of suspicion among more than a few of the "believers." The prevailing sentiment among a segment of its female membership was that the choice was made because of the researcher's professional standing in the community and that the writer's limited tenure in the movement would result in failure in the position.

Acceptance of the position opened many doors at once. Access to Farrakhan was obviously the most significant change where the analysis of his words were concerned. The position also provided the researcher with a number of opportunities to collect an extensive body of information about the movement's short term and long term planning strategies and goals. The writer, now in the place of third line management, gained access to various instructions, and directives as well as organizational changes that had to be distributed to the general body of members. Special lectures for the officials were also prepared by Louis Farrakhan which provided an additional avenue of insight.

The decision to include Participant Observation among the theoretical perspectives to be used in the investigation of the Nation of Islam through the rhetorical address of Louis Farrakhan seemed, to the writer, entirely logical. Indeed, the need to acquire the best vantage point for analyzing the movement and Farrakhan's public discourse was imperative - particularly in the presence of already existing evaluations and assessments of the movement's and his purpose, goal, motives, and vision.
In the design of their theoretical perspectives, movement scholars must not forget that the study of movements is first and foremost the study of people -- people and the choices they made through language and behavior as a collective. It is difficult to imagine a concern more important to scholars than identifying a critical method appropriate for his or her respective studies. And while the choice of method is, doubtlessly, a prerequisite for the doing of quality research in all fields of endeavor, method in the study of movements give rise to distinctly different considerations and, even precautions. It is believed that the theoretical design outlined in the preceding pages will provide the best possible answer to the major research question posed in the dissertation and, in so doing, will fulfill the principle goal of all scholars -- to advance knowledge and lead the way to improved criticism through like methods or new and different methods. It is, then, from a pluralistic perspective that the dissertation proceeds so that, in the words of Edwin Black, "we are likely to learn more."
Chapter II

Notes


2Nichols, Rhetoric 63.


6Several articles have been written with titles which reflect the "need" to understand Louis Farrakhan and the movement. Among them are, "The Farrakhan Mystique," The Farrakhan Phenomenon," The Farrakhan Frenzy," and "The Farrakhan Factor."


9Bitzer, Rhetorical Situation 5.

10Bitzer, Rhetorical Situation 6.


12Bitzer, Rhetorical Situation 4.

13Bitzer, Rhetorical Situation 6.

14Bitzer, Rhetorical Situation 7.

15Bitzer, Rhetorical Situation 7.

16The content and delivery style exemplified in Louis Farrakhan's rhetorical discourse includes specific references to groups and individuals and, as such, virtually insures reactionary-type responses.

17Bitzer, Rhetorical Situation 7.
The Los Angeles address emerged as one of the movement's most hostile situations as the days preceding his address had been inundated with statements of censorship and repudiation.


Photograph taken outside of Los Angeles Forum on September 15, 1985.


Makay and Brown, Rhetorical Dialogue 125.

Makay and Brown, Rhetorical Dialogue 127.

Makay and Brown, Rhetorical Dialogue 127.

In spite of a chorus of arguments in favor of birth control by black leaders of various organizations and the vast majority of black women, the movement takes a firm position against birth control maintaining that blacks need to be taught self-control instead.

Makay and Brown, Rhetorical Dialogue 127.

Makay and Brown, Rhetorical Dialogue 127.

Makay and Brown, Rhetorical Dialogue 127.

Makay and Brown, Rhetorical Dialogue 127.

Makay and Brown, Rhetorical Dialogue 128-134.

Makay and Brown, Rhetorical Dialogue 134.

Makay and Brown, Rhetorical Dialogue 135.

Makay and Brown, Rhetorical Dialogue 135.

The October 7, 1985 Madison Square Garden address of Louis Farrakhan saw the largest number of reporters and journalists in attendance to date. By this time it had become routine for Farrakhan to address the press section directly, usually at a place in his lecture where he suspected that his words would be "misunderstood."

The quality of the audio for this June 24, 1984 address varies from fair to only good. At the point where the Judaism statement is to have occurred the audio quality is only fair. The word, dirty, is unmistakable. Judaism, however, is not heard at this point in the address.
37 Makay and Brown, *Rhetorical Dialogue* 142-145.

38 Makay and Brown, *Rhetorical Dialogue* 142.


47 In 1975 Wallace Muhammad succeeded Elijah Muhammad as the movement's leader. Differences of opinion over changes in direction and religious philosophy lead to Farrakhan's eventual departure. In 1977 he began the process which has come to known as "the rebuilding of the Nation of Islam." What is generally referred to as The Fall of the Nation of philosophy lead to Farrakhan's eventual departure. In 1977 he began the process of rebuilding the movement according to Elijah Muhammad's original philosophy and design. What has become known, generally as "The Fall of the Nation of Islam" remains an important but, as yet, largely uninvestigated area of study.


49 Simons, "Requirements" 11.

50 Simons, "Requirements" 3.

51 Simons, "Requirements" 3.

52 Simons, "Requirements" 3.

53 The movement's rhetoric has actually become less "radical" in its expression of the gulf between black and white as various investigations articulate identical findings.
54See "What the Muslims Want, What the Muslims Believe," a concise declaration of the movement's demands, contained in each issue of its newspaper, The Final Call.

55Simons, "Requirements" 3.

56Simons, Requirements" 3.

57Local mosques are instructed to make arrangements with their respective phone companies to receive the Chicago broadcasts. It has been more than a year since this method of transmitting special lectures or instructions has been employed. Increased levels of static during transmission is one reason. A second reason seems to be the increased financial burden placed on local mosques and, consequently, the movement's headquarters.

58Called Saviour's Day in commemoration of the February 27, 1877 birthday of the movement's founder, Master Fard Muhammad, the convention is the one time during the year when Farrakhan can be assured of speaking to the largest number of members and sympathizers at one time. The convention represents the one time during the year where an outwardly festive demeanor and attitude is acceptable.

59The two groups are more commonly referred to as F.O.I. and M.G.T. respectively.

60Simons, "Requirements" 3-4.

61Deliberate efforts on Farrakhan's part to establish ties with the Christian community is most dramatically displayed through his relationship with Jesse Jackson - former Presidential candidate but also Baptist minister. The movement's 1984 convention theme, "Unity: A Weapon More Powerful than Nuclear Bomb," was an aggressive move toward changing long-standing views that the movement attracted only certain groups and types of people.

62It is the movement's position that Elijah Muhammad's teachings can benefit all people. It maintains, however, that it is first, and foremost a message for America's blacks. Other minorities and, then, all oppressed peoples are viewed as intended receivers.

63Simons, "Requirements" 4.

64Simons, "Requirements" 7-11.

65Simons, "Requirements" 8.

These terms are largely a reflection of the difficulty associated with understanding and explaining the wide range of reactions and responses to Farrakhan's rhetoric.


The movement's membership is highly sensitive and critical of these two studies and have, historically, maintained that neither author got close enough to the movement to arrive at accurate conclusions.

"The believers" is an expression commonly used to refer to the movement's members as a collective.

Black, 177.
CHAPTER III

The Black Experience
The Rhetorical Situation

Scholars of the "black experience" point to a dynamic context out of which the rhetorical discourse of blacks have emerged. By and large, the context is historical, sociological, economic, and political in nature. Regardless of context, however, each researcher's goal appears similar -- to better understand the rhetor's rhetorical purpose and overall effectiveness.

The purpose of this chapter is to turn the reader's attention to the question, What is the nature of the context out of which Louis Farrakhan's rhetorical discourse emerges? In an effort to arrive at an explanation of context as Farrakhan perceives it, the writer will attempt to do several things within these pages.

Drawing from Louis Farrakhan's rhetorical discourse, the writer will seek, first, to establish what she perceives to be the context from which black rhetoric emerges. Having done this an analysis of the "complex of persons, events, objects, and relations" considered to have created the problem Farrakhan seeks to remedy through his rhetoric is discussed.

Finally, a goal of the chapter is to provide the reader with an expanded view of situation by discussing context on both the local and national levels. The examination of the situation "locally" will focus the reader's attention on Detroit, the city of the movement's birth. Exploration of the situation from a national vantage point looks at influences which have Presidential or Congressional origins. The final
pages of this chapter will give a brief overview of what appears to be emerging attitudes and dispositions toward blacks and their position and status in America in the 1980s.

For Louis Farrakhan the nature of the context in which blacks speak and write should be none of the previously mentioned contexts. Farrakhan's argument is that black speakers and writers must perceive the nature out of which their rhetorical discourse emerges to be theological. More specifically, Louis Farrakhan's rhetoric argues that the rhetorical discourse of blacks - past and present - is an unwitting response to God's plan for preparing a people for a future role and position. This plan, asserts Farrakhan, can be summed up in two words...American slavery. The people in preparation are the black man and woman of the United States. The rhetorical discourse of blacks, from emancipation to the present, contends Louis Farrakhan, is a response to the effects of American slavery. It is his position that the great majority of black speakers, writers, as well as the masses of black people, have little understanding of the magnitude of damage done to blacks emotional, psychological, and spiritual selves during 310 years of chattel enslavement. He made this view of context evident during an address before the National Press Club in Washington, D.C.,

"Little did those who brought our fathers and mothers into slavery realize that they were creating a problem that would take the Almighty God and His Guidance to the nations to solve. And little did those who brought us into slavery realize that out of this wretched people Allah (God) would lift up a criterion to measure the worthiness of the nations to escape the fall and destruction of this world and to qualify them to enter into His New World Order."
The Nation of Islam consistently articulates a rhetoric which says that blacks have been in America since 1555. According to the movement's rhetoric sixty-four years separate the generally reported arrival date and the actual year when blacks first appeared in the United States. While the year of arrival may seem of lesser significance than the fact of arrival, Louis Farrakhan argues that the date is of major significance in understanding the present population of black men and women in 1986.

In the book, The Invention of the Negro Conrad supports Farrakhan's claim. Here the author describes the procedure by which the first Africans were transformed into slaves. According to Conrad, America's slave making method was an intricate and elaborate "invention" process. Conrad explains that a major part of the process was the separation of children from their parents. A steady infusion of fear inducing situations and/or events was also considered invaluable tools for the "invention" of a slave.

Among the movement's own materials is the tract, "The Greatest Story Ever Told" wherein a description is provided of what Louis Farrakhan asserts is the deliberate injection of fear into the "gene makeup" of blacks. Farrakhan adds that so effective was this strategy that subsequent generations of black women gave birth to children who, at their birth, possessed an unexplainable fear of whites. The tract describes the method in the following way:

"The main object of the plantation was to take the baby from its mother and to let a white woman raise it or a very trusted Black nanny. By the 1700's the white man had produced a new race of people who did not know their names, language,
history, culture, and religion nor God. The third stage was to inject fear into them. One way this was brought about was by taking a Black woman, pregnant with child and tie her hands and feet to stakes. The plantation owner would notify all plantation owners in the area who would bring their slaves. Once assembled, the slave master would cut open the woman's stomach. The baby would fall to the ground and the slavemaster would, then, crush the head."

Interestingly, Farrakhan's concern is echoed in Sex and Racism in America. Its author, Hernton offers an almost identical account as that presented in "The Greatest Story Ever Told." Hernton's observations are, however, made within a broad discussion of racism practiced against black women.

There is clearly no shortage of studies detailing and chronicling slavery's many horrors. Some studies are more comprehensive than others. None tell the complete story as only those who lived through it or died as a result of it can. Every account is wrenching. It is difficult to imagine that for centuries millions of people seemed unaffected by the tragic goal and purpose of slavery - the merchandising of men, women, and children.

The rhetoric of Louis Farrakhan argues that through the institution of slavery blacks "lost their minds." He contends that the slave making process combined with the institution itself produced a people who were unlike any other people in the world. He argues further that the long term result of slavery is that blacks have not had an original thought for centuries. Rather, he asserts, blacks have been transformed into a people whose thoughts and utterances originated from their former slave masters and, later, from an educational system
designed and controlled by whites. He points to the year 1832 and the Virginia House of Delegates as evidence that his contentions and conclusions are reasonable and warranted. His discourse has included the following statement by Henry Berry, who in 1832 said:

"We have, as far as possible, closed every avenue by which light may enter the slaves minds, if we could extinguish the capacity to see the light, our work would be complete; they would then be on the level with the beast of the field and we should be safe." 19

More than fifteen generations of blacks were born, existed, and died as the physical property of white American. Indeed, it was only with the threat of internal strife so great as to destroy a nation that the leadership of America was impelled to address the issue of slavery. After fifteen presidential terms and more than three hundred years of chattel slavery, President Abraham Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation. The great majority of early reactions to the Emancipation ascribed only the loftiest intentions to Lincoln's efforts to set blacks free. However, more recent studies pose important questions concerning the motives of the "great emancipator." 20 Author Dan Lacy included in his work, The White Use of Blacks in America, Lincoln's own words regarding the institution of slavery. Lincoln reasoned:

"My paramount object in this struggle is to save the Union...If I could save the Union without freeing any slave I would do it, and if I could do it by freeing all the slaves, I would do it, and if I could save it by freeing some and leaving others alone I would also do that. What I do about slavery, and the colored race I do because I believe it helps to save the Union." 21
Louis Farrakhan articulates a view which says that blacks were, and continue to be misled about Lincoln's motives. He argues that while significant amounts of evidence exist contrary to frequently published reports of Lincoln's compassion and sympathy for the slaves, blacks continue to be indoctrinated into the belief that their only friend in America was Abraham Lincoln. Farrakhan does, however, say to blacks that out of all of America's presidents, Abraham Lincoln was the only one who was honest about his perceptions of America's race problems. On July 30, 1984, Farrakhan stated before an audience at the National Press Club in Washington, D.C.:

"Abraham Lincoln addressed a contingent of black leaders in the White House on the propriety of separation between white and black. He said, in part, "You and we are different races. We have a broader difference than exists between almost any other two races. Whether it is right or wrong I need not discuss..." He continued, "I think your race suffers very greatly, many of them by living among us, while ours suffer from your presence. In a word we suffer on each side. If this is admitted, it affords a reason at least why we should be separated."22

With the Emancipation Proclamation more than 4 million men, women, and children went from slavery to freedom. 23

A part of Farrakhan's rhetoric is the claim that it is preposterous to conclude that freed blacks were emotionally, psychologically, or morally prepared to leave America's plantations. This conclusion is not unreasonable when one considers that neither emotional nor psychological health can be logical expectations in the presence of centuries of beatings, burnings, lynchings, and rapes. Additionally, questions pertaining to the presence of positive and
healthy perceptions of morality become a sham in the face of men forced to function as human studs and women as seasonal breeders.

Few would argue that the above concerns are not grave matters, indeed. Farrakhan, however, argues that far worse than the emotional, psychological or moral bankruptcy of blacks was the spiritual miseducation blacks, became the victims of unwittingly. Historian E. Franklin Fraizer includes in his work, *The Negro Church in America* the following lesson slaveowners were instructed to teach:

"God will reward me, and indeed I have good reasons to be content and thankful; and I sometime think more so than if I was free and ever so rich and great, for then I might be tempted to love and serve myself more than God...But I can't help knowing my duty. I am to serve God in that state in which he has placed me. I am to do what my master orders me."25

Louis Farrakhan is of the opinion that exploitation and, moreover, control of blacks was facilitated through America's religious instruction to her slaves. Historical records do point to Christian doctrine as a method used by the slaves' owners and overseers to keep their growing populations of blacks even-tempered and looking to a better life beyond slavery. Historical accounts also reveal that blacks first offered religious teachings were most often those who worked closest to their masters...usually as cooks, housekeepers, and nannies. When it became clear to slaveowners the enormous profits to be made from the importation of blacks from Africa the need to develop a source of control outside of the overseers eyes and whip was undeniable.

According to the rhetoric of Louis Farrakhan Christianity as it was taught by America's slave holders was a perfect vehicle for
controlling the country's growing numbers of slaves. Farrakhan's view, while perhaps seeming to be extreme, is nonetheless shared by more than a few reputable scholars. John Hope Franklin writes in his book, Black Religion: The Negro and Christianity. "Virtually from the beginning Negroes were introduced to the rewards of Christianity for the good of the planter in this world and for the good of the slaves in the world beyond." Frazier, likewise, concurs. About the early years of slavery he writes, "There were efforts on the part of the whites to bring the slaves increasingly under the influence of the Christian religion."27

Various scholars have written that for the slaves Christianity at least its outward trappings provided one of few "escapes" available to the slaves. Additional analysis of the institution, however, reveals that the slave owners willingness to impart the Christian doctrine to his slaves was more out of his determination to extend his control over the growing population than as a demonstration of his religious duty or Christian ethic. Indeed, a policy of preventing slaves from meeting in large groups was strickly enforced. Fraizer notes, "It was a general rule that there could be no assembly of five or more slaves without the presence of a white man. This applied especially to those gathering for religious purposes.28

As much as there was on the part of the slave owners a pragmatic value in giving the slaves religious instruction, there were to be found among slave owners and religious persons of that time persons who were against the growing practice. Detractors of the position that the
slaves should be given Christianity argued that if baptised the slaves
would conclude that they should be equal in status with their masters
and, as such, be free men and women. Law, however, made it clear that
such would not be the case. According to, The Negro Church in America,
"The initial opposition to the christening of Negroes gradually
disappeared when laws made it clear slaves did not become free through
the acceptance of the Christian faith and baptism."  

The question of whether the slaves should be formally instructed
in Christianity became an important topic of dialogue between early
Anglican, Puritan, and Roman Catholic slave owners, missionaries and
priests. The victory of the Roman Catholic priests to give the
slaves religious guidance was made easy by the results of their
efforts. Franklin writes in Black Religion, "The priests won the
commendation of the planters because they succeeded in proving that the
religious slave was more docile." Franklin reveals that the Puritans
took a more direct approach in addressing this concern. He states,
"The Puritans did not provide their "Christian" slaves with a religion
or theological understanding of freedom - as the Puritans understood
freedom. Their slaves were left with the impression that to be a
"Christian slave" was good enough for them." These and similar
accounts by historians suggest that Farrakhan's concern about the
spiritual growth and development of blacks is not altogether
unjustified. At times, the slaves themselves, expressed
dissatisfaction with their religious preparation. One slave conveys
her point in the following manner:
"Dey did allow us to go to Church on Sunday about 2 miles down de public road, and dey hired a white preacher to us. He never did tell us nothing but 'Be good servants, pick up old marce and old misses' things about de place, don't steal no chickens or pigs, and don't lie about nothing! Den dey baptize you and call dat you got religion."33

Louis Farrakhan is vehement in his argument that blacks need to be given a new religious instruction. He asserts that they have never been told the truth about Christianity because the religion, especially as it was taught to them by their first instructors, was designed to as a means of control. Farrakhan argues that only through the teachings of Elijah Muhammad can blacks ever arrive at completely truthful religious instruction. Finally, within the rhetoric of Louis Farrakhan is the claim that the result of generations of religious miseducation by whites, and through white controlled seminaries blacks, is a deeply felt sense of inferiority. Far more important to Farrakhan, however, is that as a result of, what he has concluded is a perverted religious instruction, blacks have developed an exaggerated suspicion and fear of non-Christian doctrine and the people who bring it. Not everyone will conclude, as Louis Farrakhan has, that the rhetorical discourse which comes from black speakers and writers must be in response to a United States policy which was "officially" ended in 1865. Some persons will, no doubt, be found arguing that the needs of blacks have been adequately attended to since emancipation. Others might claim that blacks have needed only to pull themselves up by their own proverbial "bootstraps." And still others will contend that blacks have been
given too much. It seems, however, that of far greater importance than which perspective one takes is an examination of the source of these and similar views.

Obviously, a discussion of the situation which leads to the three aforementioned claims might have its beginning with the Emancipation Proclamation. By decade such a discussion might well create a mosaic of places, people, events, and feelings which would lead to a composite picture of the black experience in white America over many years. And while the writer is not denying the importance of knowing such information, this chronological approach is not the appropriate course to take for the present study.

There are two periods in the history of black America which are expressly salient to the study of the Nation of Islam. The first part of the following discussion focuses the reader's attention on the United States of the late 1920s as these are the years immediately preceding the 1930 birth of the movement. Of special interest in this examination is Detroit, the city where the Nation of Islam first planted its roots. The Second part of the discussion which follows concentrates on a much greater span of time and is national in its scope. This discussion begins with the 1954 Supreme Court case, Brown vs. the Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas. From the perspective of many social and political analysts the Court's decision represented the first year of a ten year period that witnessed black Americans make the greatest social and political gains since emancipation. As such, this period carried with it the greatest potential for modifying significant imperfections in the fabric of American society.
DETROIT: 1920s

Louis Farrakhan is the National Representative of a movement that had its birth on July 4, 1930, in the mid-western city of Detroit, Michigan. As the automobile capital of the world Detroit had emerged as a microcosm of other growing industrial cities more common to the Eastern part of the United States. In many respects it stood above them and had become something of a "promised land" for those wanting to earn the most money for their labor.

There is little reason to doubt the magnetism of the Ford assembly line. Men, women, and their families poured into the city. Immigrants by the thousands wasted no time in putting down their American roots there. Thousands of others came from the small towns and communities of other mid-western states. Large numbers of persons also streamed into Detroit from the Southern part of the United States. By 1925 there were approximately 80,000 blacks in Detroit.

Attracted like others by job opportunities, blacks came to Detroit from the towns and cities of the rural South. Much of their migration came at the beginning of World War I. It would be misleading to suggest that the influx of so many thousands of people from such diverse backgrounds and ethnic groups did not create a less than friendly atmosphere. In truth, Detroit was among the most racially tense cities in the United States. Competition for jobs was fierce and Ford's policy of leaving ten percent of its positions for the city's ghetto population insured a steady flow of new residents. Blacks migrating to Detroit increased the supply of youthful workers
significantly, also. The national statistics showed that 29.6 percent of America was between the ages of 25 and 44 years old. Half of Detroit's black population fell within this age range. Elijah Muhammad was 25 years old when he arrived in Detroit.

Detroit's reception of its black migrants was unmistakably hostile. Blacks were, quite frankly, an unwanted commodity. B. J. Widick summarizes the social status of blacks saying:

"Blacks always faced both race and class discrimination. Immigrants faced irritating prejudices and class bias, but they were accepted as whites and therefore superior in status to the blackman."43

Attempts by blacks to find better housing outside of the increasingly crowded slum areas they were restricted to were vigorously fought. Whites were unwilling to permit blacks to integrate their own neighborhoods or to establish additional segregated residential areas for them. In 1924 the city's mayoral election almost resulted in the mayorship being held by a member of the Ku Klux Klan. The campaign had been based on a two issue platform...anti-catholicism and white supremacy. Two years later the newly elected mayor commissioned a study designed to determine the racial climate in Detroit. Among its conclusions:

"The Negro is humiliated in so many public and privately owned institutions and amusement parks that he has resorted to the church as a place which he can be sure of spending his leisure time."46

Neither assembly line nor church was able to cushion the blow dealt blacks in 1929. Already at the bottom of the country's socio-economic ladder, the Depression had the affect of rubbing salt into a gaping
wound. Eighty percent of Detroit's black population was unemployed. By 1931 more than half of the city's families received public assistance. Blacks made up almost half of them or 102,000 people. The city's Board of Health reported that almost one in every five children suffered from serious undernourishment. Eviction proceedings skyrocketed to a rate of 7,000 each month. Needless to say, the percentage of blacks in these figures was disproportionately high. It was in this Detroit, that its founder, Master Fard Muhammad, found blacks in on July 4, 1930.

Fard Muhammad worked among Detroit's blacks between 1930 and 1934. In 1934, the year of his departure, the movement's membership ranks had grown to 8,000. The movement's emphasis on self-help and self-respect provided its early following with a whole new world or, in the words of the movement's rhetoric, "a nation within a nation."

This, then, was the background for the movement's 1930 birth. And while the above discussion deliberately concerned itself with Detroit, it would not be inaccurate to say that in more ways than different Detroit was a mirror reflection of America. What differences existed were in extent and details not in substance or essence. Obviously there were in the movement's beginning, as there is today, blacks for who the movement's rhetoric is not considered the answer. For these persons, the struggle for equality and justice had to waged on a different battlefield.

**Brown vs. The Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas, et al.**

By most standards the May 17, 1954 Supreme Court ruling in the Brown vs. Board of Education in Topeka, Kansas marked a period of
unprecedented social and political gain for blacks in the United States. The Court's decision declaring separate but equal education unconstitutional ended - at least on paper - segregation in public schools. The next decade saw a steady increase in additional gains for blacks and minorities. A brief review of the most far-reaching court decisions follows.

The 1957 Civil Rights Act created both the Civil Rights Commission and a Civil Rights Division in the Justice Department. The most sweeping civil right legislation in United States history was the 1964 Civil Rights Bill. The Bill made it illegal to discriminate in federally funded housing projects. In addition, the Bill included the allocation of monies for integrating parks and playgrounds. It provided federal funds for the support of the newly established Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. The Voting Rights Act of 1965 did several things. The Act provided blacks with legal access to public accommodations. It made it illegal to discriminate against them in federal aid programs. Finally, the act increased the strength of the Voting Rights Laws of 1957 and 1960. Civil Rights Acts in 1966 and 1976 intensified the language against discrimination of blacks on the basis of their race as well as other types of discrimination. In particular, the 1967 Act made it illegal to discriminate against blacks in hiring practices and provided judicial enforcement of the Supreme Court Law which banned housing discrimination.

It is difficult to imagine that either black or white would argue that blacks did not make significant progress in just a little more
than a decade of court decisions. If there is a point of contention it will most likely be found in the enforcibility and "staying power" of the Laws and Acts. Often heard among black leadership is the retort that peoples attitudes can never be legislated or mandated by court decision or presidential decree. A brief overview of this same period, on yet another front, should provide an additional perspective on this last point.

Historcial events serve to further clarify the disparity between written proclamations and pronouncements and the everyday struggles of black outside of Washington, D.C.'s Capital Hill. Some of the history during this period is such that it appears that no legislation at all was coming out of Washington to safeguard the rights or lives of America's blacks.

The Birmingham, Alabama bombing death of four black children pointed a accusing finger to what more and more people, black and white, saw as their country's recalcitrance. On June 12, 1963 Medgar Evers, Mississippi's State Chairman for the N.A.A.C.P. was murdered. Almost a year later to the date of his death, Lemual A. Penn was shot to death by a sniper as he drove down an Athens, Georgia highway. In 1965 Watts, Los Angeles erupted in rioting. In its aftermath 34 people were dead, 856 had been injured, and damage was estimated to be 200 million dollars. Three thousand people were arrested. In this same year rioting also brought out in Chicago, Illinois and Springfield, Massachusetts. In 1966 James Meredith was once again the center of black protest. This time he was shot while marching through Mississippi in a drive to persuade blacks to register and vote.
The 1968 assassination of Martin Luther King ignited the entire country. No major city escaped rioting or the presence of federal troops. Few cities came through the days of rioting without having added to their individual histories a list of deaths, injuries and large arrest counts. King's death divided the country and left a feeling of hopelessness among blacks and many whites that yet remains. Such feelings were not to be ignored especially in view of the federal investigation which followed the days of rioting. Among the Commission's conclusions were:

1. The nation is rapidly moving toward two increasingly separate Americas.  

2. In the long run, continuation and expansion of such a permanent division threatens us with two perils. The first is the danger of sustained violence in our cities. The second is the danger of a conclusive repudiation of the traditional American ideals of individual dignity, freedom, and equality of opportunity.

3. We cannot escape responsibility for choosing the future of our metropolitan areas and the human relations which develop within them. It is a responsibility so critical that even an unconscious choice to continue present policies has the gravest implications.

Otto Kerner's conclusions seem much like self-fulfilling prophesy. For not only did he proclaim the emergence of a black and white America. But as the Commission's chairperson, he added that the passage of two decades would see the division between the two peoples "so deep that it would be almost impossible to unite."
There are few blacks in 1986 who do not feel that their condition and position is indeed grave. Some in leadership position have concluded this point in their respective "State of Black America" addresses over the past few years. Gains made since Brown seem to be the target of growing Congressional and Presidential reconsideration, re-assessments, and reclassifications. Affirmative action decisions of the 1970s seem high on the list of victories now in line for such "second looks." Presidential misgivings about the merit of the Voting Rights Acts have, likewise, created additional concern among blacks. The Administration's determination to balance the federal budget, on what many critics argue is the backs of the already poor and dispossessed, has made the 1980s a psychological war zone for blacks and poor whites. The situation takes on ever-growing dimensions as black communities grope under the increased weight of severe unemployment and mass underemployment. The meteoric rise in drug use and abuse with the crime that attends its sale and use have additionally left black communities throughout America drowning in an ocean of despair and futility. It is a situation out of control. Lester C. Thurow offers little reason for blacks to hope for or even expect that white American will turn things around for them. Writing in *The Zero Sum Society* Thurow says:

"The time has come for some unwelcome candor, to admit that white America does not want to deploy its resources toward redeeming black citizenry. Any meaningful amelioriation of black America's condition would require money and effort, personnel and priorities - indeed moral and emotional commitments - that the white society simply will not muster."
Thurow concludes that the plight of blacks is destined to worsen because whites possess no true sense of guilt, shame and, hence, responsibility for their role in slavery. It does seem that the previous discussion has come now full circle.

It is patently clear that America's race problem does not have its beginnings in Detroit, Michigan in the 1920s. Nor are its origins to be found with King in Memphis Tennessee. Still further, the unhappy alliance between black and white cannot be traced to the bullets which killed him. If the roots of America's problem with blacks is to be found at all it will, argues Louis Farrakhan, be on board the ship which brought the first blacks into North America four hundred and thirty one years ago. The solution will be found in the realization that the peculiar institution of slavery created a people so peculiar that white America does not need, want, and no longer knows what to do with. It is a situation, he contends, that can be addressed only by God, Himself.

If the rhetoric of Louis Farrakhan is to be understood at all, it must be through the nature of the context of American slavery. Attempts to analyze the movement and Farrakhan's discourse outside of the context as he perceives it are unlikely to provide real answers to what is in the process of happening when one observes the movement and Louis Farrakhan as its National Representative. In 1984 Farrakhan identified the context for what was potentially his largest audience ever. Speaking before Washington's journalists, reporters and a potential c-span audience of 17 million he said:
"The Honorable Elijah Muhammad said to us that neither justice nor peace shall come to the nations of the earth until the four hundred year old problem of Black people in America has been solved with justice. The reason why no other nation can have justice or peace until the problem of Black people in America has been properly solved is because Allah (God) Himself is championing our cause."73

If the goal of Chapter Three has been realized, then the reader has been adequately prepared for the analysis of Louis Farrakhan's rhetorical discourse which begins in the next chapter. This chapter had as its specific purpose to answer the question, "What is the nature of the context out of which Louis Farrakhan's rhetorical discourse emerges?" Several important points of information have been revealed regarding Farrakhan's rhetoric and, each of them should facilitate our understanding of both him and the movement he represents. A review of the major discoveries are, however, in order.

First, and foremost this chapter disclosed that unlike other speakers and writers of the Black Experience, Louis Farrakhan places the source of the current ills suffered by the masses of black people squarely with the institution of American slavery. Perhaps even more importantly, Chapter Three reveals that through deliberate distortion and false interpretations of Christian doctrine and tenets, America's first slaveowners and slave makers controlled a growing population of slaves. Having begun the discussion of situation from the perspective of Louis Farrakhan, the discussion was then developed to include two additional areas of focus. The first of these areas pertained to the site of the movement's 1930 birth - Detroit, Michigan. Next, attention
was turned to an examination of situation using wider lens...the United States as a whole.

Two principal conclusions were reached in the discussion on Detroit. The first was that as a microcosm of 1920s America, Detroit was actually two cities...separated by color. Whites lived in one city and blacks were consigned to life in the other. Secondly, the problem between black and white was exacerbated by the Depression of 1929. The result was that an even greater feeling of isolation and despair engulfed Detroit's blacks.

The discussion of the situation from a significantly enlarged scope resulted in several findings. This discussion disclosed the presence of a stark dichotomy between what was taking place within the chambers of Congress and what was taking place in cities and towns in most sections of the country. While between the years of 1954 and, roughly, 1968, several civil rights issues were raised for which the United States Congress passed laws for their remedying, events and incidents in cities and towns across America made it clear that the situation confronting black and white America could not be solved with Congressional balloting and Presidential signatures. The final paragraphs of Chapter Three offered the reader examples of what appears to be retrogressive government policies and social attitudes relative to the status of blacks in America. It is now time to turn the reader's attention to Chapter Four, the chapter in the dissertation where the specific and detailed analysis of Louis Farrakhan's rhetorical discourse is to begin.
Chapter III

Notes


2 Louis Farrakhan, "Who is the Original Man?" address delivered in Detroit, Michigan in 1981 (?).


4 The 310 year figure is derived by subtracting 1555, the year which the movement maintains the first Africans were brought to the America, from the year the Emancipation Proclamation was issued.

5 Louis Farrakhan, "National Press Club."

6 See W. O. Blake, The History of Slavery and the Slave Trade which contains numerous accounts citing dates for the arrival of the first blacks into America prior to the commonly stated 1619 date.


8 Conrad, Invention 10.

9 Conrad, Invention 62-63.

10 Conrad, Invention 17-63.

11 Conrad, Invention 17-63.

12 "The Greatest Story Ever Told," is among the literature found within the movement's own archives which has neither author or date. The writer is reasonably sure, however, that it is among the movement's earlier materials.

13 Farrakhan maintains that time and circumstances have produced a generation of black youth who neither their parents or outside authority figures are able to control much less advise. See his "Black Youth," address delivered to a "youthful" audience at Howard University on February 10, 1983.

14 "The Greatest Story"

16 Hernton, *Sex and Racism* 120-126.
20 In spite of studies more critical of Lincoln's position on the slavery question, the vast majority of older blacks and a surprising number of black children view him as their personal champion during this period of their sojourn in America.
22 Louis Farrakhan, "National Press Club," address.
24 Louis Farrakhan, "Let My People Go." This address was given sometime between 1982 and 1983.
27 Frazier, *Negro Church* 17.
28 Frazier, *Negro Church* 11.
32 Franklin, *Black Religion* 118.
35 Widick, *Detroit* 23.
36Widick, Detroit 23.
38Widick, Detroit 31.
40Widick, Detroit 30-33.
43Widick, Detroit ix.
44Widick, Detroit 3-22.
45Widick, Detroit 3-22.
46The Negro in Detroit (Detroit, Mayor's Interracial Committee, 1926).
47Widick, Detroit 44.
48Widick, Detroit 44.
49Widick, Detroit 44.
50Widick, Detroit 47.
51Widick, Detroit 47.
53It should be noted that there are actually 5 cases which constitute Brown vs. Board of Education. While all of the cases address the issue of segregation of education, the first four cases actually centred on graduated and professional schools. The fifth case focused attention on segregation at the high school level.
55The 1964 Voting Rights Act was the most comprehensive civil rights legislation to gain congressional approval in 95 years.
56Revolution in Civil Rights 4.
This concern has grown among many black leaders as well as activists for women's rights and employee protection rights in light of what many analysts consider is the most conservative rhetoric on civil rights to emerge from an Administration in more than a decade.

Nightly news reports made it seem as though there was no movement in government toward improving the lot of blacks.

Much of the shock surrounding this particular incident was because it took place in one of Birmingham's churches, a location may apparently felt was immune to attack.


Since 1984 "State of Black America" addresses given by black leaders have pained an increasingly dismal future for the whole of black America.


Thurow, Zero Sum 199.

Louis Farrakhan, "National Press Club."
CHAPTER IV

Exigence: A Need To Re-educate Blacks

The analysis of Louis Farrakhan's rhetoric reveals a need to re-educate blacks into a knowledge of two major figures: namely, Elijah Muhammad and Master Fard Muhammad. It is Farrakhan's position that the absence of an "accurate" understanding among blacks of both men represents "an imperfection marked by urgency" or exigence. Indeed, for him this is the controlling exigence in the situation as he perceives it. In addition to these two figures, there is one significant "minor" figure which Farrakhan contends stands as a barrier or exigence to spiritual growth among blacks because they have been given a distorted view. The person is the biblical Jesus of Nazareth.

The first division will contain a discussion of Louis Farrakhan's major assertions, claims, and arguments about Elijah Muhammad's teacher. The second will focus on Elijah Muhammad's teacher, Master Fard Muhammad. The Third section will present a discussion of Farrakhan's major claims, assertions, and arguments about Jesus, and as such, his re-education goals in this area.

The final section of Chapter Four will be devoted to analysis of the three areas of religious re-education with regard to exigence, and questions will be asked and answered. These questions are, Is the Exigence which Louis Farrakhan identifies clearly perceived by him? Is the Exigence clearly perceived by his audience? Is the Exigence perceived to be strong or weak?

ELIJAH MUHAMMAD

With the exception of the movement's own publication, The Final Call, the overwhelming majority of scholars and journalists writing
about Louis Farrakhan have identified him as the leader of the Nation of Islam. Their label is incorrect. To date, writers have virtually ignored the fact that Louis Farrakhan speaks on behalf of someone else. His rhetorical discourse is delivered as the National Representative of Elijah Muhammad. Scholars' and journalists' proclivity to assign the title of leader to Farrakhan has not gone unnoticed by him. In spite of repeated references to himself as "National Representative" the labeling persists. Included in numerous speeches are admonitions to the movement's followers and its critics against this practice. In his speech, "Black Man's Fear," Farrakhan describes the perception he wishes the movement's followers and observers to have of Elijah Muhammad and of himself. He explains:

"Whether you know it or not the Honorable Elijah Muhammad was the most profound teacher you will ever know. That man that was in your midst that you didn't understand is the basis of what I'm saying and doing today...hoping to God that you will eventually come to understand not Louis Farrakhan but the Master that is behind him or rather the two of them that back me up...What the Honorable Elijah Muhammad has given me to do is to carry on his work."

This under consideration, the writer advances the claim that efforts to understand the Nation of Islam and Louis Farrakhan must be undertaken with a view of the beliefs, perceptions, and understanding Farrakhan holds about the one he speaks for. Moreover, if as a "representative" Farrakhan is able to engender the attention and distinction that he has, then, it would seem an examination of what he believes about Elijah Muhammad is both germane and imperative.

As a symbol of Elijah Muhammad is of paramount importance to Louis
Farrakhan. Indeed, if a single goal of Farrakhan's rhetorical discourse were identified it would be to give blacks what he believes is an honest and detailed understanding of his teacher...a man of whom he says:

"We didn't understand the message of the Honorable Elijah Muhammad. His aim was to connect us, the lost brother to all of our people over the world."2

Examination of what Louis Farrakhan believes to be true about Elijah Muhammad reveals that there is a primary belief on which every other claim, argument, and assertion can be said to rest. It would not be incorrect to say that every speech, lecture, or sermon he delivers has as its foundation this sole belief. Louis Farrakhan is convinced the Elijah Muhammad met God. Furthermore, he believes that Elijah Muhammad was taught by God from 1931 to 1934... a period covering approximately 3½ years. He believes that God annointed Elijah Muhammad to the level of Exalted Christ. Farrakhan's reasoning about God's selection of Elijah Muhammad is seen in the following sentences:

"The scripture says God formed Adam from the dust of the ground. That's very heavy. Because when God wants to make a man he doesn't start with a man that has already been made. He starts with something that has been considered nothing...dust."3

Elijah Muhammad was born Elijah Poole in Sandersville, Georgia on October 7, 1897. He was the seventh of thirteen children born to sharecropper parents. His father was a Baptist preacher and Elijah grew up intensely interested in the Bible. The movement's own scholars report that Elijah Muhammad often said that he wished that he had lived during the time of such prophets as Abraham, Lot, Noah, and Moses so that he could have helped them in their work. His formal education
ended at the conclusion of his fourth year of school because his father needed his help with the work of sharecropping. The movement's historians relate that Elijah and his father argued frequently over the different meanings and interpretations they each saw in biblical scriptures. Reportedly, after many years the father agreed with his son and converted to Islam.

Much of Louis Farrakhan's acceptance of Elijah Muhammad's claim about meeting God is connected to the rhetorical situation as he sees it. As was disclosed in the preceding chapter, Farrakhan believes that the institution of American slavery left blacks spiritually miseducated and spiritually blind. Though emancipated in 1865, the institution of slavery had, from his perspective, produced a people who fit the biblical descriptions of the lost sheep, the deaf, dumb, and blind, the despised and the rejected, and the dry bones in the valley. From his view the affects of slavery on the first Africans and the religious legacy they, unwittingly, passed on to their offspring, made divine intervention a reasonable expectation. Farrakhan is fully aware of the controversial nature of the conclusion he has reached regarding the "appropriateness" of God's intervening into the affairs of America's black masses. He responded saying:

"But you are so arrogant. You don't think that wisdom should come out of a dumb, silly people such as the black man of America. The poor black people...they should be taught by the whole world because we have nothing to teach anybody else."  

It almost goes without saying, that Farrakhan's view is markedly different from those conveyed in the above quotation. His position is that slavery uniquely qualified America's blacks to receive God's direct help.
He also advances the argument that God selected Elijah Muhammad as the person through which blacks would be spiritually re-educated. He argues that there is a direct relationship between God and Elijah Muhammad. According to Farrakhan, the roots of this divine relationship are traceable to the 3½ years Elijah Muhammad spent as a student of the movement's founder, Master Fard Muhammad. (Wallace D. Fard and Wallace Fard Muhammad are two versions of the same name used by Muhammad's teacher).  

According to Louis Farrakhan, Elijah Muhammad's mission was twofold and was to be completed in two stages. The first part of his mission was to let blacks know that God, Himself had come to America to intervene in their affairs. He was also to let blacks know that God had come to them using the name "Wallace D. Fard, often signing it W. D. Fard." Muhammad's mission included letting blacks know that he had been personally taught by God and was God's last messenger to them and the world.  

The second part of Muhammad's mission was to redeem America's population of former slaves and their offspring. According to Farrakhan, the redemption of blacks in the 1930s required that they first be made aware that it was illogical and irrational to take for their God and religion the same God and religion of the people who brought them from Africa and who, subsequently, put them in slavery. Based on Louis Farrakhan's discourse the second part of Elijah Muhammad's mission also included getting blacks to understand that the nature of slavery necessitated that the slavemaster deny the enslaved control over every aspect of his life. Muhammad's goal, then, was to persuade blacks that the slave master systematically stripped them of
everything he considered a threat and that the process included their memory of the God and religion they brought with them from Africa. Elijah Muhammad's mission from God was to bring blacks back to their original knowledge of God and his way of life.

About Elijah Muhammad, Farrakhan also advances the argument that his teacher's successful work among blacks is inseparable from Master Fard Muhammad's work with him for 3½ years. He argues, further, that Muhammad could not have failed in his mission because God pre-ordained his success.

When Louis Farrakhan speaks of Elijah Muhammad's efforts to redeem Blacks he often refers to those among the movement's early converts who were reformed from lives as drug addicts, pimps, pushers, and prostitutes. Included among Elijah Muhammad's successes is Malcolm X who was first introduced to the movement while incarcerated in Charlestown State Prison. Farrakhan argues that Malcolm's extraordinary debate performances against scholars from Harvard and other prestigious institutions were attributable to Elijah Muhammad's "supreme wisdom." The fame and reputation which accompanied Malcolm when he left the movement, are well known and, argues Farrakhan, were never credited to the proper source. Making this point Farrakhan says,

"You want to give credit to Malcolm. You don't want to respect Malcolm's teacher. You were taught by Malcolm and Malcolm opened your eyes...as a disciple of the Honorable Elijah Muhammad. Taught you for 13 years as a disciple for Elijah Muhammad...The light of Malcolm struck every leader that's around and behind that light was the Honorable Elijah Muhammad."

Under Elijah Muhammad's leadership the movement flourished. Forty years after Fard Muhammad's departure the number of followers had grown
for an estimated 8,000 in 1934 to a figure said to range from 25,000-15
250,000. There were more the 50 temples thoughtout the United Sates
and others in the islands of the Caribbean. Business enterprises
included clothing stores, supermarkets, bakeries, restaurants, and food
packing plants. There were schools in many cities, apartment buildings
and the Guaranty National Bank of Chicago with assets of more than 10
16
million dollars. The movement's newspaper, at that time called
Muhammad Speaks, was the most successful black newspaper in America
and, with upwards of one million sales per edition, had a circulation
greater than many black or white publications. In 1975 the movement
imported more than one million pounds of fish from Peru, and in so
doing, became the largest importer of fish in the United States. With
an economic base reported to be more than 80 million dollars, the
movement became the employment office for thousands of blacks in cities
across the country.

Such success is well documented in the literature on the Nation of
Islam and questions about the source of Elijah Muhammad's successful
efforts have often been raised. Author James Baldwin is among the
movement's critics and observers in search of an explanation. In his
book, The Fire Next Time Baldwin writes of Elijah Muhammad:

"He has been able to do what generations of
welfare workers and committees, and resolutions,
and reports and housing projects and play grounds
have failed to do. How has Elijah managed it?"

Interest and, at times, what seems to be awe over the movement's growth
and development under Elijah Muhammad's leadership, is not lost on
Louis Farrakhan. He does, however, argue for a different understanding
of Muhammad's work among blacks:
"Most of us looked at Elijah, the little Georgia-born man. We hated him without a cause and if we spoke of him we spoke of him as a man that was good for the junkie. He was good for the prostitute. He was good for those Negroes that don't know anything. But you spoke of him as though he was not good for you learned people, you intellectuals. You don't even realize how you fulfill the scriptures. He couldn't get the lawyer. He couldn't get the businessman. So he sent his disciples out into the highways and byways and he got the people who were lame and blind and sick and palsied. And the Honorable Elijah Muhammad took the worst of black people and stood us up and and cleaned us up. What you were looking at was the work of the Jesus going on right in your midst. You saw it but you didn't understand what you were looking at."21

Several pages back the writer disclosed that Louis Farrakhan believes that Elijah Muhammad met God. He believes that God personally instructed Elijah Muhammad for 3½ years. He believes the Muhammad has been raised spiritually to the annointed position of the Exalted Christ. There remains, however, one final point of Farrakhan's belief system regarding his teacher which is in need of articulation. It relates specifically to Elijah Muhammad's present status.

Analysis of Louis Farrakhan's rhetorical discourse discloses that his references to Elijah Muhammad are consistently in the present tense. Statements about Muhammad includes such wording as "The Honorable Elijah Muhammad is teaching us" and "The Honorable Elijah teaches us." Farrkahan's avoidance of past tense to refer to Muhammad is indicative of his belief that Elijah Muhammad is, physically, still alive.

On Friday, February 28, 1975 a funeral service was held for Elijah Muhammad. Louis Farrakhan stands firm in the position that it is not Muhammad who was buried. He believes that Elijah Muhammad is still
living and at various times over the last nine years Farrakhan has called for an official exhumation of the body. He has offered to pay all expenses connected with opening the grave and says that Muhammad's dentist of many years has agreed to produce the dental records and perform the tests. His request for exhumation was supplemented with a promise that if laboratory tests proved him wrong he would abandon his role as Elijah Muhammad's National Representative and his work with the Nation of Islam. Apparently, he has not received a response from Muhammad's family and in recent years has not reissued the call for exhumation. In a lecture given in January, 1986, Farrakhan referred to his intital declaration that Elijah Muhammad was yet alive. In part he said:

"When I mentioned in 1981 that Elijah Muhammad was alive. I knew that I was taking a chance because I know that you believed when you have a funeral and a body, how in the hell can a man come behind that and say that Elijah Muhammad is alive physically?" 23

Farrakhan's claim that Elijah Muhammad is still alive is rooted in his belief that Fard Muhammad is God. He argues that if Fard Muhammad did not have enough power to save the one he had exalted to the Christ, then He has no power to help anyone else. 24 If such is the case, Farrakhan argues, then blacks have little reason to rally behind him as he is looking to Master Fard Muhammad for guidance and protection. Going into more detail about his position he says:

"Don't you realize that something wonderful has happened among you. You didn't realize it when Elijah Muhammad was physically among you. But he's dead. He's not dead! He's not dead. You are just like the silly Christians who saw Jesus on the cross and said, 'Oh, its over. It's
finished.' Then in the day of pentacost He shows up and His disciples are preaching a resurrected Christ. That Bible is not a book of mythology. It's real. But it ain't real for 2,000 years ago. It's real in 1986."

Found within Farrakhan's rhetoric is a definition of Christ. He says that rather than being the name of a particular person, the word is a title meaning "one annointed to crush the wicked." He adds that "the Christ" comes to crush the wicked and in doing so brings about the judgement of the entire world. The Christ also ushers in God's righteous kingdom on earth. Louis Farrakhan believes that Elijah Muhammad is this Christ. He is convinced, as he addresses his discourse to blacks, whites, and government leaders within America and outside of America, that everything he says and everything he does is divinely backed by Master Fard Muhammad and Elijah Muhammad...God and His Christ. To his detractors and others in doubt over his arguments he expresses both resolve and determination in the following manner:

"I don't really give a damn whether you believe or disbelieve, but I got a job to do and I'm going to do my job. My job is to make his great commission known, brother. You don't even realize how great a people you are that the Messiah that the whole world is looking for would come right up out of you. He would be a man raised from the dead. Not out of the cemetary. You are the dead and one would come up from among you that would be annointed to crush the wicked. Anointed by the great Mahdi, Master Fard Muhammad, a man with power to kill. A man with power to heal. Not a spook. Not a spirit."27

Inspite of Louis Farrakhan's clearly enunciated view of what he believes is Elijah Muhammad's true identity and purpose, the subject of his teacher's divinity has rarely been discussed in either print or broadcast media. Efforts to arrive at explanations of what has variously been call "The Farrakhan Mystique," "The Farrakhan
Phenomenon," and "The Farrakhan Factor" contain few references to Elijah Muhammad and still fewer about the assertions, claims, and arguments Farrakhan had made in countless lectures and sermons. This is unfortunate since conclusions reached by various scholars and criticsim the last two and one half years of study are more similar than different. At this point the observation must made be that studies which continue to classify Farrakhan's rhetoric as racist and anti-semitic do little in the way of advancing our knowledge about either the man or the movement he leads. An entirely new school of thought on the Nation of Islam and Louis Farrakhan does seem to be justified, and the strength of this position must be found in the words of the rhetor who says, "I would have nothing to say to you were it not for almighty God Allah and were it not for the Honorable Elijah Muhammad."

MASTER FARD MUHAMMAD

On July 30, 1984, Louis Farrakhan addressed the membership and guests of the National Press Club in Washington, D.C. His opening remarks included these words:

"I represent the Honorable Elijah Muhammad, a Messenger and Warner from Allah (God) to black people, America, and the world. I do not speak to you from mere personal desire, but I speak in the Name of the God who raised up The Honorable Elijah Muhammad and I am backed by them both. This statement that I just made should be given careful study and weight."

The name of the God Louis Farrakhan credits with "raising up" Elijah Muhammad and with "backing" him is Master Fard Muhammad. It is a name that, when mentioned to the majority of America's blacks, evokes little, if any, response. And while in recent months Farrakhan has
spent increasingly more time to discussing him in his public address, Master Fard Muhammad remains largely unheard of among blacks outside of the movement's membership.

Reviews of both past and current research on the movement have not revealed any particular affinity for studying Elijah Muhammad's teacher either. Generally speaking, studies have given Elijah Muhammad full credit for the birth of the Nation of Islam, referring to Master Fard Muhammad, almost as an afterthought. In more recent investigations there seems to be a developing tendency to make fewer acknowledgements of Muhammad's role as the focus turns, almost immediately, to Louis Farrakhan. In December 1985 Jabril Muhammad said, "Too many people in the course of discussing the Nation of Islam want to act like Master Fard Muhammad almost didn't even exist." 29

According to the written history of the Nation of Islam Fard Muhammad came to America from Mecca, Saudi Arabia on July 4, 1930. The date of his arrival, claims Farrakhan, corresponds to Chapter 15 of the Book of Genesis verses 13-15 - which he says declares God's intention to appear as a man in the world. This scripture is also said to refer to blacks' sojourn as slaves in the United States. Farrakhan says further that Fard Muhammad made several trips into the United States over a twenty year period prior to the July fourth date. His purpose was to observe the lifestyle and general condition of blacks. Fard Muhammad reportedly came to America's blacks because they were the only people in history who had never been sent a warner from God. About his July 4th arrival Farrakhan has said:

"You have been crying out for 400 years under the continual stroke of white people but God couldn't come in the first century. He couldn't come in the second century. Had had to come on time." 30
There are, needless to say, several important observations about Louis Farrakhan's belief that Master Fard Muhammad is God which need to be attended to. The most obvious of these is that Farrakhan believes that God is a man. He has been taught by Elijah Muhammad and, subsequently, has accepted the claim that since the world's creation there have been a succession of Gods. The first God, he argues, was responsible for the physical creation of the universe as we know it. This God is also responsible for the creation of the first man and woman. The work of the first God, he states further, ended at this point. Farrakhan believes that all the Gods since the first have been the biological children of a council of 12 scientists or Holy men and their respective wives. (The first God was self-created). These Gods live for a prescribed period of time and then, like other people, die. He accepts Elijah Muhammad's teaching that following the death of a particular God the rule of the world automatically passes on to the next God in the line. Master Fard Muhammad whose birthdate Farrakhan gives as 1877 is the last God who will rule the present world order. The next world order too, will be ruled by Fard Muhammad - for at least for 50,000 years.

A significant part of Louis Farrakhan's rhetorical discourse on Fard Muhammad grows out of his belief that history was written by a council of Gods in 25,000 year blocks of time. It is also written in advance of itself. In different words, everything that exist today - people, places, things, and situations - is the natural unfolding of the council's plans of 25,000 years ago or some fraction thereof. In
the instance of Fard Muhammad, the history included the preparation of an unusual-familial background.

Based on Louis Farrakhan's rhetoric Fard Muhammad's father, himself a God, had a personal history which included selecting a white woman as his wife. He was a black man. Their union, while based on love, was also a critical part of a larger theological plan to be unfolded hundreds of years later...and in America. Farrakhan presents the argument that the Warner who would come to blacks had to be someone who could easily blend in with America's dominant society...at least in appearance. He had to be able to gain access to both blacks and whites. Secondly, this divine strategy necessitated the birth of a child who was the biological offspring of two different natures. According to Louis Farrakhan, the presence of both a black and white nature within this person was imperative because the one who would come to blacks had the unique task of judging America and, in doing so, giving justice to two different groups of people. This being the case, a child (Warner) from each background was the most appropriate solution. Found in Farrakhan's sermon "Christ Imminent Return: He Makes All Things New," is one of many accounts of Fard Muhammad's parentage and purpose:

"I rejoice that a mysterious man came from Mecca. He had a black father and a white mother. He was made of both because he had to give justice to both. A man born of a woman on February 26, 1877. How could He the originator of the heavens and the earth born in 1877 when you don't have any birth record of God? But this man Fard Muhammad obeyed the Lord of creation and the Lord of creation blessed him with knowledge and wisdom. And he grew into power. Not an ordinary man, but he grew into a man like the first man, not a man but a
God. Not common as you know man but superior man.
Supreme man. Yes, commanding angels, forces of
nature. I know its hard for you to believe. But
hell, you're going to see it in a few days."34

Farrakhan's rhetoric relative to Fard Muhammad's parentage also reveals
one other additional concern. Explaining, he says:

"He was a wise teacher. He came in a solid white
country after a black people. He had to come
without observation. White folk check every black
person out that comes into this country to make
sure they don't get up next to you, teach you
anything. And you can't get up next to them and
teach them anything. They keep us divided against
our own people so nobody from there would ever be
able to wake up the sleeping lion. So he came in
a way so they would think he was one of them."35

Fard Muhammad's initial contact with Detroit's blacks was as a
door-to-door salesman. In this capacity he met a significant number of
blacks in a relatively short period of time. Through the sale of
various items, though most often it was silks he sold, he began
teaching the movement's first believers. Contained in various studies
of the movement are accounts of his early meetings with black men and
women in Detroit. Peter Goldman, in his work, The Death and Life of
Malcolm X, offers the following general overview of the early
gatherings.

"He seems to have been received first as a
teacher, or a minister - nothing more. But one
day, the oldest Muslims say, He called for a glass
of water, gathered a few of the believers around
and made them see an image in it - the figure of a
man praying. Another time, it is said he plucked
a single hair from His head, dipped into water and
pulled it out; ten thousand hairs had sprouted
from it. Just so easily. Mr. Fard said, could He
destroy white America."36

Among the movement's own materials on Fard Muhammad is a description
that it is said He provided of Himself. Contained in what is called by
Sometime in the Fall of 1934 Fard Muhammad left Detroit. Approximately 8,000 blacks remained behind as "registered" followers. He gave Elijah Muhammad the responsibility of leading the movement. Once in place, Muhammad disclosed to the movement's members that Fard Muhammad was God, Himself.

From Louis Farrakhan's vantage point, the social moral, economic, emotional, and especially spiritual condition of blacks was such that only God could have helped them. Moreover, Farrakhan contends that God's blessing to "Abraham's seed" was to choose a person from America's former slave population, teach him directly and, in doing so, make him the world's last messenger from God. He is convinced that this person is Elijah Muhammad.

One of the more intriguing disclosures in Farrakhan's rhetoric of Fard Muhammad concerns the particulars attending his decision to come to America. Apparently, at some time prior to the beginning of the present 258,000 year cycle of history a certain council of Gods convened for the purpose of deciding the fate of America's blacks. (Fard Muhammad was among them). The discussion among the council pertained to the fulfillment of biblical prophecy which speaks of the destruction of the present world. The question was, what would be done with thirty million black men and women, and children who out of no fault of their own lived in a country soon to meet God's chastisement? With the exception of Fard Muhammad, the council agreed that blacks were lost in America's vices and sins to such an extent that they should be considered "irreconcilable," irretireveable," and irredeemable."42 Farrakhan advances the argument that Fard Muhammad
the only dissenting vote. Furthermore, he declared that he would come to America himself. A most interesting footnote to this account is that if Elijah Muhammad had not recognized Master Fard Muhammad on September 22, 1931, he would have left America and the fate of blacks would have been sealed.

Unquestionably, Louis Farrakhan places much emphasis on Elijah Muhammad's teacher. Indeed, he has instructed the movement's members to intensify their study of Fard Muhammad. He also admonished the movement's believers to be careful about looking passed Fard Muhammad to Elijah Muhammad and in recent years has warned them about focusing their attention on Elijah Muhammad instead of Fard Muhammad. His view is clearly stated in the speech, "Understanding Master Fard Muhammad." He states:

"I think that all of us need to go back to school again. I think that all of us need to stop a minute, without condemnation. But begin to look at Master Fard Muhammad and what He said and what He taught and why He said it and why He taught it." 45

JESUS

There are probably not too many better examples of the reverence black people have for the prophet, Jesus, than that found in these words for an early spiritual, "You can have the world, just give me Jesus." However, it is these and similiar expressions of love for Jesus which has lead Louis Farrakhan to charge that when whites (slavetraders and makers) became blacks' first teachers of Christianity, they were automatically placed in a position of having tremendous power over the slaves spiritual selves. It is a position,
he asserts further, that has produced a people who, today, have an incorrect and dangerously romanticized understanding of Jesus. It was, more importantly, a position which virtually guaranteed that both the first slaves and subsequent generations of blacks would demonstrate an inordinate degree of deference, admiration, and fear of whites. According to Louis Farrakhan all this and more began with the introduction to Jesus.

Within Farrakhan's rhetorical discourse is the claim that plans to use Jesus as a tool for controlling the first blacks were evident as early as 1555. Several historical accounts give the name of the first slaveship as Jesus. Other sources give both Jesus and Jonas as the vessel's name. Farrakhan argues that the first slaveship was, in fact, named Jesus. He maintains that the words, "you can have the world, just give me Jesus" refer specifically to the slaveship which brought the first Africans to the United States.

Among Louis Farrakhan's major arguments is that as a direct consequence of their miseducation about Jesus, blacks are subconsciously afraid of whites. He attributes the fear to the visual representation of Jesus that was given to the slaves. He further argues that once the slaves were told that Jesus possessed powers to punish and to save and, then shown pictures that depicted him as white they developed an illogical and irrational acceptance and tolerance of their condition. Farrakhan also makes the claim that once the slaves learned that Jesus was white defiance of their owners became even more difficult. In other words, a fight on any level against whites became a fight against Jesus. Moreover, to fight against Jesus meant to be a
disbeliever in God, Himself. In Farrakhan's words are found additional clarity for this view:

"Black people were actually afraid to stand up against white people because they felt secretly that they were fighting Jesus. See white folks took Jesus and made him white. You say, 'well color don't make no difference.' Well if it didn't make a difference, why did you make him up your color? Evidently it makes a difference. You made him white. You made his mother white. The subtle suggestion was, the father's white, too."47

Louis Farrakhan believes that the failure to the masses of blacks to be more aggressive in their efforts to effect social, political, and economic changes in America has much to do with a subconscious belief that both Jesus and God are white. The result, he contends, is that in 1986 blacks are immobilized because of an unconscious unwillingness to offend or provoke God's (whites) anger. He explains the absence of vigorous attempts by blacks to improve their lot and ascribes an overall motive to whites miseducation of the early blacks stating:

"Our people never revolted and because of how the white man taught us about Jesus, we took them as the people of God. So that to revolt against them equaled a revolt against Jesus and God. And they used this to hide themselves. And they used this so that they could work effectively behind Jesus' name and behind religion."48

An additional claim which Louis Farrakhan makes relative to blacks understanding of Jesus is that they have been given a false picture of his personality and demeanor. Farrakhan takes the position that Jesus was a revolutionary and an open fighter against inequality, prejudice, injustice.49 Blacks, he argues, have been give an image of Jesus as a timid and mild-mannered man. He makes the claim in his rhetorical discourse on Jesus that where the prophet is concerned scriptures which present him as being patient, accepting, and tolerant are most often
stressed. Most frequently cited are such biblical admonitions as "turn the other cheek," "love those that persecute you for my name's sake, and " forgive them for they know not what they do." Farrakhan asserts that through these interpretations of scripture blacks and other non-white people have been immobilized in their efforts to improve the quality of their lives. Such miseducation he claims has made these same peoples unwitting victims of economic, political, and social exploitation. He makes this particular point in the following manner:

"You know white people came to Africa with the Bible and the so-called message of Jesus Christ. When it ended up we had the Bible and Jesus and they had the land and the mineral wealth. They came here to my brother, the American Indian and now the Indian is on a reservation. He got the Bible. He got Jesus. He got the reservation. In Mexico, Central and South America, look at the people. They live in abject poverty, squalor, filth, and disease. They got the Bible. They got Jesus Christ. White folks got the country."50

Louis Farrakhan has reached the conclusion that as a result of religious miseducation America's first Africans and, through them, every subsequent generation of blacks have become a people who are largely unproductive and complacent. He is adamant in his belief that blacks and other non-white people have been made "slaves" to an incorrect understanding of Jesus and, argues that if these people were given the "truth" about Jesus, their lives and position among the world's races and nationalities would be permanently changed for the better. He sees as an integral part of his work as Elijah Muhammad's National Representative the re-education of blacks and, indeed, all other peoples about this prophet.

Examination of Farrakhan's rhetoric discloses the movement's belief that if Jesus is to be understood it must be as an entity of
five men and not as a single person. Rather than being a name, Louis Farrakhan says that the word, Jesus, is a job description. In other words, "the Jesus" is a person whose life and work mirrors the life and work of the first Jesus. He reports that the Jesus who blacks look to for salvation was named Isa Ibn Maryum and that the first Jesus is dead. While he does admit that the Bible does speak about the first Jesus, he contends that most of what is written there does not. Rather, the discussions are about other men who would follow the first Jesus's footsteps. These men are to perform various functions until the coming of "Jesus The Christ" who would be empowered to usher in and direct the actual judgement of the world.

Notwithstanding Louis Farrakhan's determination to teach blacks about the religious significance of Elijah Muhammad and Master Fard Muhammad, there is no more crucial concern than the biblical prophet, Jesus. Farrakhan is certain that if he is able to get blacks to understand the concept of Jesus as an entity then they will be freed of much of the confusion he believes exists within them about the prophet. It might be well to point out here the identity three other figures of Jesus. They are 1) Master Fard Muhammad, 2) Elijah Muhammad, and 3) Louis Farrakhan. As students of Elijah Muhammad, the movement's membership has also been identified as a figure of Jesus. Reportedly, the membership is being prepared through Farrakhan to function as "saviours" for the masses of blacks. Farrakhan's resolve in this sector of religious re-education is made clearer in the following words:
"See, white folks, you thought you had really put it over on the peoples of the world. You put it over on yourselves. You gave our people the right man when you gave them Jesus. But, you gave them the wrong understanding of that man to make their love of Jesus serve you and not Jesus. But did not you know that one day somebody was going to come...walk right up to you and take your Bible that you killed black people in and raise those same people from the dead that you killed with the Bible."52

In order to pursue analysis of the Exigence on yet another level three questions were raised as a part of this chapter's design. Again, these questions are; Is the Exigence which Louis Farrakhan identifies clearly perceived by him? Is the Exigence clearly perceived by Farrakhan's audience? Is the problem perceived to be strong or weak? It is now time to provide answers to each of these questions. Before doing so, however, the writer makes the point that what follows is not intended to be an analysis of Farrakhan's audience(s). Chapter Five has been set aside for doing that. Instead, the discussion below is an overview - if you will of the general receptivity and perception of Blacks to the Exigence Farrakhan articulates. Having made this point, the subsequent discussion begins with the question, Is the Exigence which Louis Farrakhan identifies clearly perceived by him?

Examination of Louis Farrakhan's words offer little reason to suggest that his perception of the exigence is anything but clear to him. Inasmuch as he has already made public his belief that Fard Muhammad is God, Elijah Muhammad is the Exalted Christ, and that he is being guided and backed by both, his identification of the exigence must, as a logical consequence, be correct. The confidence with which Farrakhan addresses his various audiences suggest a degree of certainty
that many observes find unsettling. The content and style of delivery in speeches given to audiences in Washington, Los Angeles, and New York makes it difficult to argue that Farrakhan does not believe that he is supported by divine or supernatural power. Blacks' own perceptions are, however, another matter. More to the point, Is the exigence Louis Farrakhan articulates clearly perceived by his audience?

Inspite of audiences ranging from 10,000 to as many as 25,000, there is little evidence to suggest that the thinking of blacks is in line with Louis Farrakhan's view of the effects of American slavery on them. This is not to say that various writers have not considered slavery's far-reaching results in their own studies. It is to say, however, that contemporary writers of black history and the black experience seldom connect American slavery to the present condition of blacks in the United States. Louis Farrakhan's position is that the two are inseparable. Scholars such as John Hope Franklin and E. Franklin Fraizer have each written about the use of Christian doctrine to control America's early population of blacks. Neither they nor other scholars have brought this argument forward to contemporary America. Farrakhan's claim is that unless the argument is viewed in contemporary terms, there will be no accurate understanding of the plight of the country's black.

Blacks are well aware of their beginnings in America. They know that their ancestors were slaves. They also know that the institution of slavery caused immeasurable suffering and death for millions of their foreparents. Blacks also identify the Civil War as America's internal war over the abolishment of slavery. They mark 1865 as their
emancipation through the efforts of Abraham Lincoln. Obviously, these are not the only facts about slavery which blacks know. Many blacks know much more. Some are experts on the subject. However, Farrakhan, would argue that a significant number of American blacks - perhaps the great majority of them - know nothing substantive about the institution.

As has already been stated, Louis Farrakhan's rhetoric includes three areas of re-education. They are Elijah Muhammad, Fard Muhammad and Jesus. And while Elijah Muhammad and Fard Muhammad are given primacy in his rhetorical dialogue, blacks see these men quite differently.

In the case of Fard Muhammad, the masses of blacks have no prior knowledge of him. Even in the face of aggressive efforts to inform blacks about him, Farrakhan must contend with the fact that as Christians, blacks do not believe in the personhood of God. They have been taught and, subsequently, believe that God is a spirit and mystery that cannot be known in the sense of one person knowing another person. Needless to say, Farrakhan's task in this area is significant. Not only must Farrakhan's rhetorical discourse convince blacks that God is a man and that Fard Muhammad is God, he must also persuade them that God considers America's black masses of enough value to intervene into their affairs.

In the instance of Elijah Muhammad Farrakhan's efforts are, in some respects, easier. In other respects, they are significantly more difficult. Initial re-education should not be difficult for Farrakhan inasmuch as the movement has a 56-year history in the United States.
With Elijah Muhammad as its leader for all of forty years, thousands of blacks at one time belonged to the ranks of the F.O.I. and M.G.T. - the movement's names for their male and female members. Thousands of other blacks listened to Muhammad from a distance. Farrakhan's difficulty arises from his belief that his teacher is "Jesus, the Christ" and that he is alive. He, quite frankly, has his work cut out for him.

If Farrakhan is correct in his contention that blacks believe that Jesus is white, then his first rhetorical goal must be to convince them that this is not true. He must next persuade them that the man who people called Jesus 2,000 years ago is dead and, as such, cannot return to save them. He, then, will need to employ all of his rhetorical skills to show Blacks that Elijah Muhammad has been appointed by God to be the Messiah much of the world's people are waiting for. Finally, Louis Farrakhan's task includes getting Blacks to believe that his teacher Elijah Muhammad has been empowered by God to judge America, the world...and blacks.

Conclusion

From Louis Farrakhan's perspective, no subject should be of more importance and interest to blacks than Master Fard Muhammad and Elijah Muhammad. No subject is more misunderstood than Jesus. For him the imperfection is unmistakably strong. It is also marked by urgency. His reasoning follows this course; If Elijah Muhammad is The Christ, then his principal duty is to crush the wicked. His duty is to bring judgement to the world...beginning with America because of her mistreatment of blacks. The fact that The Christ is one of America's blacks should not be construed to mean that black people are
automatically protected from his judgment. On the contrary, Muhammad's presence in black communities from 1934-1975 was intended to provide them with a means to escape being judged with the rest of America. Because they rejected Elijah Muhammad blacks are no longer given any additional consideration. The only source of protection for them and (for that matter, anyone else) is righteousness. Elijah Muhammad's physical return is imminent, and with his return comes the complete destruction of the world and the ushering in of God's earthly kingdom. It is with this system of beliefs that Louis Farrakhan speaks to black and white America. It is with this same system of beliefs that he travels to countries around the world.

In October 1985 a new series of tapes lectures began to emerge from the movement. The series was entitled The Messiah and raised several questions which might well be considered the foundation on which all of the preceding discussion is based. These questions are,

1. Is it in the interest of a slave master to preach to the slave the truth about God?

2. Is it in the interest of God to use the slave master as a vehicle through which his truth would come to the slave?

3. How can He trust the slave master?

4. Why should the slave even trust the slave master in the first place to bring him the knowledge of God?

5. Should not the slave be extraordinarily suspicious?

Louis Farrakhan's answer to each of these questions is a resounding no. His rhetorical discourse represents his deliberate and determined effort to respond to each of the above questions.
Several things have been accomplished within the pages of this chapter. First the identity of major areas of religious re-education was made. The specific area revealed are three in number and are Elijah Muhammad, Master Fard Muhammad, and Jesus. Analysis of Louis Farrakhan's perception and understanding of Elijah Muhammad showed, first, that Farrakhan sees himself as a student on an assignment from his teacher. Secondly, Farrakhan's rhetorical discourse revealed that his primary goal as a rhetor is to re-educate blacks about Elijah Muhammad. Analysis also evidenced his belief that Elijah Muhammad is the Messiah, Mahdi, and Jesus prophesied to bring about the judgment of the world. Included within this discussion were numerous examples of discourse specifically intended to inform the reader of his perceptions of Muhammad. A major disclosure within this discussion was that Louis Farrakhan believes that his teacher, Elijah Muhammad, is still alive.

This chapter contains a discussion of Master Fard Muhammad, Elijah Muhammad's teacher. As in the instance of Muhammad, the writer's purpose at this juncture is to provide a more reasonable portrayal of Farrakhan's perceptions and views of the man he says is the source of his strength. Several things were revealed within this discussion, principal among them was that Louis Farrakhan believes that Fard Muhammad is God. Through the use of variety of quotes, the reader was given a more exact understanding of Muhammad's teacher of three and one half years...through the eyes of Farrakhan. This discussion also revealed that Louis Farrakhan is determined to introduce blacks to Fard Muhammad through his various lectures and sermons. The chapter points
out that Farrakhan's acceptance of Fard Muhammad as God is tied to biblical scriptures he contends pertain specifically to Blacks' experience within America.

The final section of this chapter is devoted to a discussion of the biblical prophet, Jesus. This presentation - perhaps more than those of Fard Muhammad and Elijah Muhammad - reveals the provocative nature and comprehensiveness of the movement's religious claims, arguments and assertions. This particular section of the chapter examines Farrakhan's contention that the early slaves and subsequent generations of blacks have been controlled by whites through their presentation of Jesus. Clarity of his position is provided in terms of specific public lectures. Within the discussion of Jesus it was disclosed that Farrakhan argues for the existence of five Jesus's as opposed to one Jesus who lived 2,000 years ago. Having placed Jesus of Nazareth in the position of the first of the five Jesus, the remaining four were identified as Master Fard Muhammad, Elijah Muhammad, Louis Farrakhan, and the movements general membership. The name, Jesus is explained to indicate specific duties and activities rather than the proper name of any single individual. As such, it is reported that each of the subsequent Jesuses picked up from where prior ones left off, did some of the same work, and in all instances meet with greater success.

The last pages of this chapter explored three questions: Is the Exigence which Louis Farrakhan identifies clearly perceived by him? Is the exigence clearly perceived by Farrakhan's audience? Is the problem perceived to be strong or weak? At this point the writer noted that
while Farrakhan was convinced of the correctness and accuracy of the exigence, Blacks - in general - do not have the same perception. Additionally, this discussion raises questions about Farrakhan's ability to accomplish his rhetorical goals in the presence of black's deeply rooted belief in Christianity. An overview of Louis Farrakhan's belief relative to the three areas of religious re-education is offered in the final paragraphs of the chapter. Finally, the writer drew closing observations from recent movement lectures which seem to provide additional clarification of Louis Farrakhan's message and, in particular, the Exigence he articulates. Principal among these questions are two in the series. Is it in the interest of the slave master to preach to the slave the truth about God? and Should not the slave be extraordinarily suspicious?

There seems little need to argue the uniqueness of Louis Farrakhan's arguments, claims, and assertions about Elijah Muhammad, Fard Muhammad, and Jesus. In addition, there is small reason to doubt that he believes that he is on an assignment from God through Elijah Muhammad. Additionally, it seems clear that Farrakhan feels compelled to deliver his message of re-education to all who will listen. The focus, then, of Chapter Four is the Rhetorical Audience.
Chapter IV

Notes

1Louis Farrakhan, "Black Man's Fear," address delivered in Chicago on October 7, 1983.

2Louis Farrakhan, "This is the One, The Honorable Elijah Muhammad," address given in Chicago. Not dated.)


4Louis Farrakhan, "Who is the Original Man?" address delivered in Detroit, Michigan in 1981 (?).

5Farrakhan's National Assistant, Abdul Akbar Muhammad, is regarded as the movement's official historian. He has been a member of the movement since 1964.


7During the 3½ years that Fard Muhammad remained in Detroit he used at least four names. While the movement's members have found no apparent difficulty with the use of more than one name, critics of the movement maintain that Fard Muhammad's use of several names was "suspect." Among the movement's members there seem to be only a handful of followers who have more than a most basic knowledge of him.

8Elijah Muhammad, Message to the Blackman in America (Chicago: Muhammad Temple No. 2., 1965) 16.

9Approximately sixty five years separated the 1930 birth of the movement and the slaves' freedom through the Emancipation Proclamation. As such, it would not be difficult to find blacks who had actually lived as slaves within the United States.

10Several studies make the point that many of the first Africans were Muslims. See Chancellor Williams, The Destruction of Black Civilization (Chicago: Third World Press, 1976).

11The movement often points to Elijah Muhammad's lack of formal education as partial proof that he was guided by a power and force of "supernatural" origins.

12The movement has always attracted a significant segment of any prison population since Malcolm's conversion in the 1950s. In the summer of 1984 Farrakhan addressed inmates at Lorton State Prison in Virginia.
The Supreme Wisdom is the name of Muhammad's earliest text of movement philosophy and ideology. Elaboration of its contents resulted, in large measure, in the movement's "bible" Message to the Blackman in America.

Louis Farrakhan, "The Making of a God."

Figures on the movement's membership have always been difficult to collect. So often do the reported figures vary that there has emerged the familiar "saying among the movement's adherents, "Those who know don't know and those who know, don't say."


Chicago Tribune, "Nation of Islam Moves Ahead."

Chicago Tribune, "Nation of Islam Moves Ahead."

Chicago Tribune, "Nation of Islam Moves Ahead."


Louis Farrakhan, "The Making of a God."

Jabril Muhammad, "Where is Jesus now?" address delivered in Phoenix, Arizona around June 1986.

Louis Farrakhan, "Christ Eminent Return."

Clearly, one of the more provocative dimensions of the movement and Louis Farrakhan is their total faith in what they argue. There is little shortness of commitment in public utterances. Recently, the observation was made by Jabril Muhammad, one of the movement's top officials, "If one thing in the movement's theological belief and foundation is incorrect, then everything is incorrect.

Louis Farrakhan, "The Making of a God."

Louis Farrakhan, "Christ Eminent Return."


Louis Farrakhan, "Understanding Master Fard Muhammad."
31Elijah Muhammad, Our Saviour Has Arrived Chicago: Muhammad's Temple of Islam, 1968).


33B. Jabril Muhammad, "Long Range Planning."

34Louis Farrakhan, "Christ Eminent Return."

35Louis Farrakhan, "Christ Eminent Return."

36Peter Goldman, The Death and Life of Malcolm X

37English Lesson C1 is one of several lessons that new followers are required to learn. Recitation of a lesson known as the "Student Enrollment" must be recited perfectly before a person is formally registered with the movement.

38Louis Farrakhan, "Understanding Master Fard Muhammad."

39Elijah Muhammad, Message 17.

40Louis Farrakhan, "Understanding Master Fard Muhammad."

41The movement's ideology includes the belief that 10,000 registered believers are needed in order to complete its mission of converting the 144,000 people who are said to be the survivors referred to in the Book of Revelation.


43Extensive discussions of this particular contention are included within the movement's "Messiah" series of lectures.

44Among the three goals established for the movement's membership in 1986 were (1) to generate 5 million dollars in revenue, (2) to raise the spiritual level to the movement's followers, and (3) to increase the members' understanding and knowledge of Master Fard Muhammad. These goals were identified for the membership through the movement's local ministers who were held responsible for accomplishing the three goals.

45Louis Farrakhan, "Understanding Master Fard Muhammad."

46See W.E.B. DuBois', The Nermo Where he states, "The english trade begin with Sir John Hawkin's voyage in 1562 and later, in which" "The Jesus, our chiefe shippe" play a leading part."

47Louis Farrakhan, "Black Man's Fear."
Interestingly, Martin Luther King took a similar position in his famous correspondence to a group of white clergy who charged him with being an "outside agitator" when he arrived in Birmingham to support protesters there. See King's "Letter From Birmingham Jail."

Through Franklin and Fraizer's works are becoming somewhat dated, their conclusions are no less accurate. Few current analyses of the black problem assess the effect of institutionalized religion on blacks especially as has a bearing on the present plight and condition of America's blacks.
CHAPTER V

Farrakhan's Audience Images

Inasmuch as "rhetorical discourse produces change by influencing
the decision and actions of persons who function as mediators of
change,"¹ a comprehensive analysis of the rhetoric of Louis Farrakhan
requires an in-depth understanding of his audience. The general
purpose, then, of Chapter Five is to present discussion of a second
constituent of the rhetorical situation model, the audience.

There are two specific aims for this chapter. The first is to
identify the principal audience(s) for which Louis Farrakhan's rhetoric
is intended. The second aim is to determine the rhetorical goals he
has established for his various audiences. Extensive analysis of
Farrakhan's lectures, speeches, and sermons will be used in order to
accomplish the goals of this chapter.

In addition to identifying Farrakhan's audience and assessing the
rhetorical goals for each, Chapter Five is also concerned with arriving
at a more accurate understanding of the rhetorical problems which
emerge as a result of the rhetor's utterances. And while it might be
surmised that such a discussion would not be unlike a look at the
rhetor's (movement's) constraints - the focus of Chapter Six - the
employment of concepts specifically applicable to his audience images
result in a largely different type of exploration and, subsequently,
different findings.

The final pages of this chapter, then, will be devoted to the
analysis of Louis Farrakhan's audience from this second important
vantage point. In this regard, three questions are central to this
Principal among Farrakhan's claims is that the presence of thirty million blacks in the United States was preordained by God. Moreover, he argues that the physical enslavement of blacks to America was unavoidable because it was a part of a larger plan designed by God 6,000 years ago. Turning to a scripture which he contends describes this prophetic destiny he as often said:

"In the Book of Genesis, in the fifteenth chapter, the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth verses, God said Abraham, 'know of surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs. They shall serve them and they shall afflict them 400 years. After that time I will come and judge that nation which they shall serve and after which shall they come out with substance and go to their fathers in peace and be buried in a good old age."'

Farrakhan's claim that the presence of blacks in America has divine origins also includes observations about specific time constraints. He asserts that the capture and subsequent transport of blacks to America in 1555 marked the beginning of - if you will - a "divinely sanctioned" period of slavery. However, he adds to the argument that 1985 represented the year when the ordained period of slavery officially ended. Providing clarity to the position he says:

"John Hawkins, the English slave trader brought our fathers to America on a ship named Jesus in the year 1555 and from 1555 to 1955 is 400 years, and from 1555 to 1985 is 430 years. And it is written in the Book of Exodus that in the 430 year of the sojourn of the children of Israel they went out from the land of bondage."

Interestingly, he maintains that while Black America has produced such men as Frederick Douglass, Booker T. Washington, W.E.B. DuBois, Martin Luther King, and Malcolm X over the course of many years in the United States, the 430 year prophecy made the possibility of these persons
achieving complete success an impossibility. In other words, it is Louis Farrakhan's position that while blacks have emerged as leaders and spokespersons for the hurt and suffering of their people, prior to 1985 they had no chance of meeting with victory. Victory was possible only in the first year after the preordained period of time - 1986. He does not discount, however, the value of previous black leadership and argues that their efforts were absolutely necessary as a foundation for the movement's work in the 1930s and today.

Additionally, Farrakhan argues that negroes are a totally "invented" people who are without a homeland in the United States or Africa. This homelessness, he maintains, has made them an emotionally and psychologically destituted people. Further still, he asserts that there are serious implications for both America and its black population because the present generations of blacks possess no knowledge of their African roots, know little about its lifestyles, language, folkways, mores, customs, religion or God prior to their being brought to the United States. He is adamant in maintaining that the slave making process was, in fact, intended to produce a brand new kind of being...not necessarily human. Within his rhetorical discourse about and to blacks he argues that they were purposely given the name, Negro, because of the "success" of the invention process. He tells his audience that the frequently heard explanation of Negro to mean "black in Spanish" has been used as a diversionary tactic so that blacks will not investigate the deeper meaning of the word. He maintains that blacks are named Negro because of their mental condition and not because of the color. He further maintains that the term comes
from the Greek word necropolis which means cemetery or place of the dead. Addressing the mental condition of blacks in his lecture, "Blue and White Nile" he explained:

"A veil has covered you. The veil that covers you is the veil that is over your eyes now. The veil that is over your mind, the veil that is over your spirit. It's the veil of ignorance of who you are, who God is and what the true nature of God and your own nature is. You are veiled and covered right now so you have never seen your real true self."

Also among Louis Farrakhan's many arguments is that a major part of slavery's legacy is that blacks have been subconsciously indoctrinated with what he terms a "slave mentality." He asserts that as a group of people, blacks are the only "race" that will support and unite with every other race before they will show unity and give support to members of their own. He contends that the roots of this proclivity is slavery. The argument he makes for the "unnatural" demonstration of disunity is that during slavery it was life-threatening for one slave to attempt to come to the aid of another who was in danger or distress. This was especially the case when the plantation owners and overseers exercised power and authority over the slaves as their property. The long-term consequence to blacks, argues Farrakhan, is that as a group they unconsciously adopted a predisposition toward isolation and non-interference into the personal lives and well-being of each other. Many of the early slaves adopted the attitude that individual safety and comfort exceeded the long-term needs of their larger numbers. Farrakhan points to Nat Turner as an example of the "slave mentality" at work, calling to his audience's attention Turner's unsuccessful attempt at revolt through the actions
of another slave made privy to the specifics of the planned insurrection. Historical accounts disclose that the slave in question relayed the information to the owners of slaves involved in the plan. The revolt was squelched and Turner was killed.

Once emancipated blacks developed an even broader protectionist philosophy the end of which, claims Farrakhan, was an ever-increasing willingness to reject and/or deny responsibility for the well-being of each other. This perspective, he asserts, has resulted in the failure of any one generation of blacks to collectively do better than the generation which it succeeded. He maintains that the far-reaching results have been a perpetual widening of the emotional, social, psychological, and economic gap between the black "classes and the black masses." He is relentless in the charge that black intellectuals and professionals possess no real sense of duty or obligation to the masses of blacks. While he admits that there are many exceptions, he contends the charge is justified for the great majority of blacks who fall into the two classes. Directing comments specifically to the black professional and intellectual during this 1984 annual convention speech, he said:

"Black intellectuals and Black bourgeoisie, we need you. Your brain and power has got to stop thinking all day and night for ITT and IBM and the big corporations and banks of America. You must give some of your energy and expertise to the liberation struggle of your people. You must learn that no man can rise above the condition of his people."

Louis Farrakhan has identified as one of his rhetorical goals the re-connection of the black intellectual and professional to the
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His discourse contains numerous admonishments from within their own communities. Further, he charges them with misdirecting their hostilities to Jewish, Arab, and Asian persons doing business in the black community. On at least one occasion he has used the metaphor of a woman's breast as the means by which other ethnic groups and races have been "fed" by mass consumerism among blacks. Taking a firm position on the subject he states:

"You should not blame the Jews. You should not blame the Arabs. You should not blame the Koreans and the South East Asians. You have a breast, but you won't put yourself on your own breast. So no wonder you are weak and powerless. But since you've nursed everybody else to strength, don't you think that we could nurse our ownself to strength?"19

In 1985 Louis Farrakhan unveiled an economic program called People Organized and Working for Economic Rebirth. P.O.W.E.R., as it is most frequently called, is designed to be a system for multilevel marketing of products produced and distributed by blacks for sale within and outside the United States.20 Farrakhan has stated that his initial goal is to garner some of the estimated 204 billion dollars blacks have available to them in purchasing power.21 According to Farrakhan P.O.W.E.R. also represents a conscious attempt on his part to change the spending and saving habits of blacks. Found within his public address are consistent references to the way in which blacks spend money. He often compares their spending habits to the Bible's Prodigal Son who throws away his wealth in "riotous living." On January 18, 1985, the first speech of what came to be called the Power Tour was
given in Detroit, the city of the movement's 1930 birth. On May 1, 1985, a similar P.O.W.E.R. lecture was delivered in Washington, D.C. Describing the program as an "economic movement," Farrakhan said:

"We propose that we use the blessing that we have received from our sojourn in America to do for ourselves what we have been asking the whites of this nation to do for us. P.O.W.E.R., People Organized and Working for Economic Rebirth works very simply. It puts the consumer together with the black producer in a way that gives us both equal benefits through a system of distribution that we set up that we become the producer, we are the distributor, we are the consumer and the money stays within our circle. Then we can build our own community up and become a strong and powerful people right within the land where we were sold as slaves."23

Farrakhan's public address articulates the message that the preordained period of slavery ended at midnight on December 1985. It is his contention that after 430 years in America blacks are now in need of being shown how to behave in their "new" status as freed people. Blacks inability to function as free people he argues, has made them their own worst enemy in the 1980s. Referring back to a lesson he was taught as a student of Elijah Muhammad he describes what he views as the present dilemma confronting blacks:

"We as black people are in the present but our actions belong to the past. And if you are in the present and your actions belong to the past, you are not grammatically correct. You are not communicating properly. You cannot get your message over. You cannot and will not be successful. If you are in the present and in the present you say you are free than your actions must not belong to the past of slavery. The Honorable Elijah Muhammad said to us if we do not act in accord with the time, we cannot be successful."24
As inglorious as the history of blacks in the United States may seem, it is precisely this history that Elijah Muhammad's National Representative contends laid the basis for his second major claim. That claim is that the offspring of America's slaves are God's Chosen or Elect.

The Chosen

At the outset it should be understood that Louis Farrakhan's belief that America's blacks are God's Elect has its origin in biblical scripture which says that there would be a people living in the last days of the world to whom a warner would be sent. It is Farrakhan's belief that blacks in America are the only distinct group of people in the world who have not received a divine messenger or warner. He points to Moses as the prophet sent to the Jews, Jesus as the prophet who were sent to Jews and all other whites, and Muhammad of Arabia as the warner to the Arab peoples and nations. While he does not argue that the messages from these prophets were unavailable to persons outside of the "chosen" populace, he does make the claim that neither Moses, Jesus, or Muhammad of Arabia was sent specifically to the transplanted black man and woman in America.

The appropriateness of blacks as receivers of Farrakhan's rhetorical discourse is also determined by their overall condition. He asserts that none of the former warners could solve the problems which confront 40 million blacks. Further, he advances the view that only a black man who was raised within the boundaries of the United States
could understand the "Negro." As is most often the case, he provides a theological argument saying:

"It was prophesied that God would come and choose the despised, the rejected, the unloved, the unwanted, and they would be his people and He would be their God. Is that right? Is there anybody more despised, more rejected, more unloved than the black people of America? God promised that He would marry with us."26

Farrakhan's claim that blacks are God's Chosen People has not gone unchallenged. And while the title has most often been ascribed to persons of Jewish ancestry, this has not been the quarter from which public opposition to the claim has come. Arguments countering Farrakhan's chosen people claim have emerged from other Islamic groups which charge that there is no validity to the concept. These persons reject the claim that covenants are made between the Supreme Being and groups of people or races. Farrakhan's argument, on the other hand, is that there have been times in history when God has made such alliances with each of the three major religions in the world — Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Responding to persons who reject the Chosen People doctrine he explains:

"In one sense that is correct. In another sense that is not correct. The Holy Quran teaches us that Allah gives people their rulership in terms. And the Quran teaches us He will raise up a nation when He sets a nation down and see how they act."28

Qualifying this argument, he adds:

"But if you violate the convenant then Allah is not bound to carry out His part of the convenant when the people violate their part."29
Clearly a major part of the controversy which surrounds this particular argument, especially for religions that do affirm the doctrine, is that none of the three major religions has fulfilled its part of the convenant. Rather, argues Louis Farrakhan, God has made a new agreement with the black man and woman of America and that agreement is that through Elijah Muhammad they will become the spiritual teachers and leaders of the world. His viewpoint:

"And since you have violated the convenant which was given to you through your prophets God is not dutibound to keep His convenant with you. In fact, He is chastising the Jews, the Muslims and the Christians. And the whole world appears as though there never was a prophet."

Farrakhan's claim that the mission of giving spiritual instruction to the world's people lies with blacks in America is based on two of his prior claims. First, his assertion follows from the belief that Genesis 15:13-15 refers specifically to God coming to blacks in America for the purpose of finding Elijah Muhammad and raising him to the annointed position of the Messiah. Secondly, Farrakhan's belief flows from his contention that through slavery blacks were unwittingly prepared to function as leaders for other people. Addressing a Chicago audience in June of 1985 he said:

"You are already morally set up to give justice to all the people of the earth because, if you can smile at the white man after what he has done to us and not mistreat him, then you can give justice to the whole human family of the earth. The whole world is waiting on you."

Louis Farrakhan maintains that America's black masses are the people of God, His Chosen People. They are, he argues, a people who have arrived to the completion of a destiny that began 431 years ago aboard a
slaveship call Jesus. They are a people who were deliberately enslaved for 310 years in order to be made into a people completely unlike any other people among the world's populations. Blacks are, he maintains, the people through whom God has chosen to reveal himself to the world and through whom he will bring about his earthly kingdom.

As unlikely as it seems, Louis Farrakhan's public address might be viewed as a response to conclusions reached by the Kerner Commission's report on Civil Disorders. Where the Commission argued in 1968 that American was becoming two separate societies, Farrakhan asserts that the introduction of slavery into the nation precluded little else from taking place. The Kerner Commission concluded that if something were not done to address the growing disparity between black and white by 1988 the gulf between the two people would be so wide that unity would be impossible. It is Louis Farrakhan's contention that in 1986 black and white relations have gone the distance.

It would be grossly understated to say that Farrakhan's assertion that the institution of American Slavery is at the root of present day problems has not met with enthusiastic support. Indeed while blacks and whites recognize the horror and shame of the peculiar institution, none seem willing to give slavery the commanding power and influence Farrakhan does. Additionally, discourse on the subject of blacks being God's Elect, while enthusiastically embraced by the movement's membership and those in attendance at public lectures, has not emerged as a topic of open discussion and dialogue among other religious leaders or the movement's critics.
Louis Farrakhan's message to blacks in 1986 is that America is two distinct societies and, like Thurow, he contends that there seems to be little reason to assume that any significant steps towards redressing blacks' grievances will emerge from white America. Rather, he argues, the growing presence of white groups, the resurgence of Nazi Party and Ku Klux Klan activities are indications of a nation aggressively trying to free herself from the aftermath of an institution that was once one of its major domestic policies. Likewise, growing resentment and rebellion by black youth against law enforcement personnel, religious leaders, and educators points to a generation of blacks who are subsconsciously responding to a country that no longer needs them and has no idea of what to do with their growing number. Farrakhan, however, refers to this generation as the "generation of fulfillment."

Economic development and a spiritual awakening are the only route to success is the message being delivered to black Americans by Elijah Muhammad's Representative. Indeed, analysis of his public address reveals that blacks are being instructed that the answer has always rested in these two fields. He argues that America is no longer in a position to carry the weight of her millions of black men, women, and children, adding that Supreme Court decisions and evolving Presidential policies attest to a growing isolationist posture being imposed on the country's black citizenry. Few speeches today are without numerous statements regarding the imperativeness of blacks making rapid economic gains before 1990 arrives. Sources from within the movement have
reported that since June 1986, Farrakhan has met continuously with black professionals, intellectuals, and businesspersons. The move does appears to be one to create a separate black economy. Farrakhan's determination to concern himself with black economic development is revealed to the following words:

"White folks have told us get education, you'll make it. And then after we got education and didn't make it they said seek political power and you will make it. We went and we have black mayors. We have black this and black that...still powerless. Now we found out what the real deal is, what the real deal is. And the real deal and the real ball is economics, economics, economics, economics."37

An analysis of Farrakhan's principal audience which focused only on black intellectuals and professionals would be incomplete unless deliberate attention were paid to the black preacher. Indeed, few cases are easier to argue than the important role the Black Church and its Clergy have played in the lives of America's black masses. Investigation of Louis Farrakhan's rhetorical discourse shows that he has distinct rhetorical goals in mind for this segment of the black audience. Indeed, it may well be that the actual aim of Farrakhan's rhetoric is those who provide blacks with spiritual guidance and direction.

Farrakhan's contention that through slavery blacks were spiritually miseducated has already been discussed at length. However, his assertion takes on increased saliency when - through his public address - the reader comes to view the solution he proposes.

Examination of Louis Farrakhan's public discourse discloses that he addresses this segment of his audience from a three-sided
perspective. First, he has identified the black clergy as a rhetorical audience because out of all other segments of the black populace, it is the black preacher who has the most consistent access and exposure to the greatest numbers of other blacks. Second, the nature of the profession of pastor, preacher, etc., is that of an occupation held by one who has a natural desire and inclination to minister to or serve other people. As such, the black clergy class is, at least in theory, already predisposed to serve the masses of blacks. Third, the Black Church has historically been the most enduring and most highly organized institution within the black community. This being the case, the Church, through the black preacher, is potentially the vanguard as well as the anchor for a progressive and sustained mobilization of blacks toward spiritual and economic development.

Louis Farrakhan articulates a belief in the power of the black clergy rarely seen today in discourse which seeks to find solutions to problems confronting the black community. His evaluation of the black cleryperson's role and value is, however, not without a significant amount of concern and anxiety.

If a major rhetorical goal were to be identified for Louis Farrakhan's message to America's clergy is would be in the form of a question. That question would be, "Why did you not doubt and question your first teachers of religion like you did my teacher, the Honorable Elijah Muhammad?" Farrkahan's argument, then, is that the black clergy must be admonished for not taking a far more critical and analytical posture as students in America's and schools of divinity.
He argues that in the absence of proper understanding of scripture and in the presence of controls placed on the Black Church and Clergy by regional and national councils and boards, blacks en masse have continued to be fed religion in a way that pre-conditions them to be submissive, docile, and timid. His concern is traced to the days of slavery and the emergence of the first black preacher whose success was determined, not by his personal relationship with God or a precise understanding of the words he read, but by his ability to convincingly teach his fellow slaves the scriptures as the slavemaster interpreted them. (The first black preachers, as it is well known, were slaves themselves and neither read or wrote...by law).

Within Farrakhan's rhetorical discourse is also found strong warnings to black clergy about what their fate will be should they fail to adopt a more liberating and, indeed, revolutionary zeal in their religious instruction and guidance. He asserts that the plight of black people requires that the Church become the well from which far more than Sunday spiritual teachings spring forth. Many of his addresses have contained open admonishments of clergymen who express greater interest in building churches than in rebuilding lives. He, likewise, argues that the black church - in spite of having millions of dollars deposited into bank accounts across the United States have failed to use its resources for the economic development of the communities their membership comes from. He makes this point in the address, "What the Black Man Must Do for Self," saying:
"The church can become the backbone of the Black community and the Black preacher could be the leader of the 1980's... We could be eating First Baptist peas, Mother Bethel greens or Church of God in Christ beans (smile). The people must see that religion has a function which does not produce slaves, but serves as a tool for the mastery of self and condition."40

Farrakhan is adamant that the black clergy become politicized in its relationship with the financial institutions it does business with. He maintains that in the overwhelming number of instances the church's membership receives little, if any, financial assistance from the lending institutions holding their funds, while white businesses and industry have relative ease in securing loans.

Finally, as an audience the black clergy are vehemently warned that unless they are preparing their respective congregations for the world's judgment, they are failures to blacks and to their own professed purpose as religious men and women. Focusing his attention of the subject of preparing blacks for their own and the world's judgment Farrakhan stated to an audience at Bible Way Church in Washington, D.C.:

"So many people think that when Christ returns there's going to be joy all over everywhere. Not so. The song that the Christians sing, "Joy to the World. The Lord Is Come." No. No. No. No. No. There will be no joy to this world when he comes. For this is the world that put him to death. This is the world that put to death all of the prophets of God. And this is the world that is opposed to the new order. The Christ represents."41

Farrakhan's public address to the black preacher also includes gripping denunciations of what he views as wide-spread immorality within the
Church itself. Many of his speeches address such issues as preachers' failure to take firm positions against fornication, adultery, and homosexuality. (The movement's own Constitution calls for persons found guilty of fornication and adultery to be put out of the movement for specified periods of time). He contends further that black religious leaders are sealing their own fates by their failure to take strong stands against violations of biblical laws. On May 2, 1983, he addressed a mostly Christian audience in Washington, D.C., In part he said:

"If Christ came to Church tonight, who would rejoice at his coming? Many of the Christian pastors who preach Christ's return don't believe it themselves. Beloved, Reverend, listen. This is not a knock Reverend night. But, I want you to think pastor because the people can be no better than we are who are suppose to be their shepherd and if the shepherd is corrupt and crooked, how can you make a straight people?" 42

According to Louis Farrakhan the foremost duty of the black preacher is to issue the clearest and strongest warning about the results of violating God's tenets, rules, laws and commandments.

The Federal Government

One of the most remarkable discoveries found in the analysis of Louis Farrakhan's audience is the preponderance of admonitions and warnings to the President of the United States and the U.S. Government as a collective body. 43 Indeed, as Elijah Muhammad's National Representative Farrakhan is in the unique position of being compelled to address the officials of America's government in the most explicit
terms. Of course, this is only the case when viewed from the perspective that Farrakhan is representing, as he claims, the Messiah to the world.

When one takes into account Farrakhan's belief in the movement's foundational scripture, designating America as the second component of his and the movement's audience seems wholly logical. In other words, if blacks are the descendants of Abraham who became "strangers in a land that was not theirs," and he believes that they are, then it can reasonably be deduced that America is the "strange land." Analysis of Farrakhan's rhetoric reveals, then, that he maintains several specific beliefs relative to the United States...all of which bear directly on the construction of his public address.

It should be understood that Louis Farrakhan believes that Elijah Muhammad was given the keys to interpreting the symbolism and metaphors contained in the Bible. Likewise, he feels certain that at least ninety percent of what is written in scripture is prophetic and not historical. Having made these points, several observations can be articulated with greater facility.

Foremost among Louis Farrakhan's argument is that scriptural references to "Mystery Babylon" refer to the United States. He argues that America's separation from Great Britain and, subsequently, the formation of the thirteen colonies constituted the "birth" of a baby London on "Babylon." He asserts further that evidence that America is actually the nation called in scripture Babylon can be found in the names of many of her first colonies. Most often signaled out
are New York, New Hampshire, New Jersey and the cities of New Haven and New Brunswick in Connecticut. Having identified these states and cities Farrakhan points out that these localities had to be called "new" because the old or original areas were in Great Britain.

A significant part of this same argument is that scriptures which describe Babylon as being "a hold for every foul bird and unclean beast" means, symbolically, that the identity of "mystery babylon" could be discovered by looking at the way the suspected country was first settled. He makes the claim that few of England's aristocracy, educated or professional classes were particularly interested in being pioneers in the New World. Rather, he argues, the original Americans were made up of a significant number of England's outcasts and outlaw classes. He maintains that many of Britain's incarcerated were given freedom because they agreed to leave England for America.

A second argument found in Louis Farrakhan's public address is that America never intended nor believed that its African cargo would actually survive as slaves for any extended period of time. As such, the importation of Africans into the America was done at a feverish rate. A sense of the intensity of the slave trade can be seen in estimates that place the number of blacks who lost their lives enroute to the United States to be as high as 200 million. A belief in the early demise of large numbers of blacks would also account for America's seeming lack of interest in providing its slave population with basic survival skills prior to emancipation. He advances the argument that much of America's inability to solve her problems with
blacks in the 21st century is due, in large part, to her failure to plan for the presence of 30 million in 1986.  

The third major argument found in Louis Farrakhan's public address to America is that President Ronald Reagan is the last President of the present world order. As such, Farrakhan asserts that he is the most important white man ever to live. He contends that Ronald Reagan has, unwittingly, emerged as the President of the United States in the hour of her divine judgment. Farrakhan also takes the position that President Reagan should not take lightly that the total of each of his three names, Ronald Wilson Reagan, is 6 for a composite number of 666. Frequency of statements and comments directed specifically to President Reagan speaks directly to Louis Farrakhan's belief in on the crisis he sees in America and the world. Speaking of President Reagan's dilemma Farrakhan says:

"Abraham Lincoln was faced with the problem of saving this Union was his paramount concern. At the root of the problem was the question of slavery and what to do with the slaves...President Reagan, if he is honest, must too, admit that his number one priority is to save the life of the American people, not Black people. And central to the issue of perserving and saving the life of American white people is, "What are you going to do with thirty to forty million Black people whose labor you no longer need and whose presence you do not want?'"  

Farrakhan's rhetorical discourse also reveals that he has reached the conclusion that by virtue of President's Reagan's ready use of such biblical language as Armageddon, America's Chief Executive is, himself, a student of scripture and, more importantly, that he believes in a final judgment of the world. He further makes the claim that as a
man who seems to have a fundamental belief in prophecy, the President of the United States has included in his cadre of top advisers religious scholars. He believes that the President sincerely wants to avoid a collision with prophecy but adds that those who advise him are, themselves, spiritually blinded and, therefore ill-equipped to give him an accurate interpretation of either America or the world's events in spiritual terms. In one of many examples of advice to America's President, Louis Farrakhan directs:

"I would humbly request our President to read the history of Nebuchadnezzar, the King of Babylon and be instructed. For Babylon was the great city of her day. Her merchant ships carried her wares to the end of the world and those that traded with Babylon waxed rich because of her. But, she was immoral, corrupt, and decadent and in her midst were the Hebrews who she had captured and sold as slaves and defiled. But Nebuchadnezzar was given a dream, a vision, and he saw some handwriting on the wall in blood saying, 'Your kingdom has been weighed in the balance and found wanting.'\"52

As Elijah Muhammad's National Representative Louis Farrakhan sees as one of his duties to warn the American public about an approaching judgment. He argues that Americans are the unwitting victims of a foreign and domestic policy that has made the citizens of America hated by nations throughout the world. Acts of "terrorism" aimed specifically at Americans traveling and living outside of the United States are, claims Farrakhan, clear indicators that the peoples of the world have a distinctly different view and assessment of the United States than its own citizens possess. He argues that the foreign policy of America will plunge the American people into a Third World War...a war, he claims, God will not permit the United States to win. 54
Addressing the subject of America's relationship with various people in the world, he declares:

"America's domestic policies against the Blacks, the indigenous people of this hemisphere, the Arabs, the Asians, and the poor whites are atrocious. The government's insensitivity and callous disregard for the needs of her own citizenry is increasing the general spirit of dissatisfaction among the American people."\(^{55}\)

Specifically about her foreign policy he states:

"It is this horrid foreign policy that is bringing about revolution and war and what Mr. Reagan refers to as increased acts of terrorist activity in the world."\(^ {56}\)

Analysis of Farrakhan's media coverage reveals that the first official responses to his discourse were in support of the Jewish community's charges of anti-semitism. Presidential Spokesman, Larry Speaks' public pronouncement that "the President is not afraid to come out forthrightly against Farrakhan"\(^ {57}\) and Vice President George Bush's disclaimer that "There is no room in this society for hate and no place for the haters,"\(^ {58}\) are the two most prominent statements of support to date. Increased analysis of Government reaction to Elijah Muhammad's representative shows, however, that there is another issue of perhaps greater concern to the U.S. Government.

Analysis of the movement reveals that no issue has generated and sustained greater interest from the United States Government than Louis Farrakhan's friendship with Libyan leader, Muammar Al Qaddafi. It is a relationship that has been a thorn in the side of the Reagan Administration. While many Americans publicly express disdain for Qaddafi Louis Farrakhan refers to the Libyan leader as a freedom
fighter and a friend. Following a trip to Libya in the late Spring of 1985, Farrakhan said of Quaddafi:

"I am a Muslim. That is my Muslim brother...When you are a Muslim you have the friendship of the whole earth of Muslims behind you."  

ADD:

"You call him a nut, but he's the kind of man in the Arab world that you're afraid to mistreat, because the love of Qaddafi goes beyond Libya's border." 

Most observers would point to the movement's 1984 annual convention as the beginning of the Farrakhan's relationship with the North African country. Such a conclusion would, however, be erroneous for within the movement's history are in public records with reports of a three million dollar loan made to Elijah Muhammad in 1973. Notwithstanding this fact, Farrakhan's invitation to Qaddafi to deliver an address to the closing assembly of the 1984 convention set off a new alarm. By satellite, the Libyan leader appeared on two massive viewing screens placed on the stage of the Richard L. Jones Armory in Chicago. During the course of his thirty minute address Qaddafi offered to supply the movement with weapons and training for the purpose of overthrowing the United States Government. The flurry generated by his offer is now well known. Moreover, so intense was the reaction from governmental leaders, politicians, and the leadership that Farrakhan a called press conference just two days after the address. Held at Howard University's Howard Inn on February 29, 1985, his opening statement contained the following words:

"Mr. Khadafy's offer to us of arms and his desire that the over 400,000 black men and women in the armed forces leave the armed forces to fight for justice is the only part of his 30 minute address
that was focused on by the press... I repeat, I cannot accept the carnal weapons of this world; for I have already been armed by Allah and the Honorable Elijah Muhammad. The arms that I carry are the arms that are spoken of in the Book of Exodus and the Book of Revelations and the Holy Quran. Moses and Aaron were forbidden to use the weapons of Egypt. The Lamb's weapon in the Book of Revelations was a two-edged sword of truth coming out of His mouth, sufficient to tear down; root out; destroy and built up."62

It is not clear what affect Farrakhan's words had on the United States Government. But two months later Farrakhan and Qaddafi were once again a news item. On May 1, 1985, during an address at the Washington Kennedy Center, Farrakhan announced that the movement had received a five million dollar interest free loan from the Libyan government. Inspite of Farrakhan's prior rejections of the use of arms, speculation arose once again about the possible purposes of the loan. In anticipation he stated within the same address:

"I am not a terrorist. And don't you say I've taken this money to make bombs. And I have never been a prostitute. I don't sell myself to any man, I am my own man or better yet I am God's man and I cannot be bought with five million or ten million or a hundred million or a hundred billion. There are no strings attached. It is a loan to be repaid."63

On January 7, 1986, President Reagan issued an Executive Order banning the travel of United States citizens to Libya and calling for withdrawal of all American companies and citizens from the African nation. The order followed attacks on airports in both Rome, Italy and Vienna, Austria about which the Administration said there was conclusive evidence of Libya's involvement. Charging that the President's Order was unconstitutional, Louis Farrakhan said that he would include a visit to Libya on an upcoming world tour. Following
news releases of Farrakhan's impending trip to Libya, Attorney General Edwin Meese declared that should the minister travel to Libya, he would personally prosecute him upon his return to the States. In preparation for the world tour and his plan to stop in the now off-limits African nation Farrakhan called another press conference. Explaining his decision to visit Libya inspite of the President's Executive Ban, he said:

"We are saying to the government of America and to our President that you took us from Africa without our consent, and we will not permit you to tell us that we cannot return to Africa whatever part of Africa we choose, whenever we choose or anywhere else in the world that we feel our interest lie. Our day of serving you as a slave is over and we say respectfully to the President that we cannot obey your Executive Order because you do not have the right to order the indigenous people. You have no right to order us if our 430 year sojourn under your cruel hand is up. You may request, but not order." 64

Five months after the press conference Louis Farrakhan returned to the United States. Not only had he visited Libya, but he delivered a diatribe against President Reagan from Tripoli, its capital during the time that he was there. Speculation among the movement's members that Attorney General Meese would carry out his threat and arrest Farrakhan was extremely high. While the writer is not aware of any official explanation coming from the movement's Headquarters, the late Spring emergence of a host of "Hands off Farrakhan" rallies in cities around the country might well have been a strategy to stay Meese's hand. Farrakhan arrived back into the United States during the last week of June. He was not arrested.

On June 28, 1986, Louis Farrakhan gave his first public lecture after being out of the country since February. Turning to the subject
of his visit to Libya and, his subsequent address while there he offered the following explanation:

"I didn't defy the President's ban. I respect the President's right to issue an Executive Order. He has that right...I am not a defiant one. The spirit of defiance is the spirit of rebellion of an inferior to a superior. I do not recognize Mr. Reagan as my superior. I do not recognize his moral right or his legal right to tell me, a son of Africa, where I can go and where I cannot go. I am not defying the President. I am saying to the President, I am a free Black man and I go where I please and I say what I please when I please as I please."66

About his address before the contingent of African countries attending the Tripoli conference, he stated:

"I was divinely guided to go to Libya to use the platform for the second Mathaba Conference to warn President Reagan and his advisers of the folly of their present course of actions...I knew that if I stood up in Tripoli, the capital of Libya at a conference that you called a conference of terrorists - I knew that President Reagan would hear what I had to say. I knew that Secretary of State Schultz would hear what I had to say. I knew that the Justice Department would hear what I had to say."67

One of the most best kept "secrets" and, to date one of the most intriguing developments involving Farrakhan's thorny relationship with the United States Government is that on June 25, 1986, his legal counsel, Ava Muhammad, filed a lawsuit with the United States District Court in Washington, D.C., Named as Defendants in the suit are President Reagan, Secretary of State Schultz, and Attorney General Meese. The lawsuit charges the Defendants with violating Farrakhan's constitutional rights of travel and freedom of speech. In spite of the litany of charges and predictions of doom found within Farrakhan's
public address to the U.S. Government and its leaders he advances the argument that "God's mercy takes precedence over chastisement." In other words, America's future is not sealed if she accepts Louis Farrakhan as a mercy for God. Farrakhan maintains that disaster for the United States can be averted if she uses her power and influence to redress the grievances of blacks inside of the United States and then becomes a champion for freedom and liberation struggles of the world's poor and oppressed. Contrary to what is generally held to be true about the movement's membership views regarding whites, Louis Farrakhan has extended an invitation to American whites to study Islam. Of course, he means the religion as it is taught by Elijah Muhammad. He has indicated that should whites do this that American can escape divine judgment. (Reportedly, at one time in 1985 there was a group of white professionals studying under the direction of the movement's Mid-Atlantic Regional Representative in Washington, D.C. The status of the group is, however, not known to the writer at this time). Farrakhan makes his offer to white America to join the religion saying:

"I'm telling you caucasian people, there's a door open for you. Prophet Muhammad is your door. You may reject him, but if you study this book - not in secret - in the open and carry into practice its principles we can turn, not only ourselves around and the future. We can turn the earth into a positive direction."70

Louis Farrakhan's message to American whites, in general, and to the U.S. Government in particular is that his admonitions and warnings represent America's final chance to escape God's punishment for her mistreatment of blacks and for building a country that consciously and openly violates divine laws and commands. He argues that previous
messengers and warners have come with messages especially for whites because they have been the rulers of the world for the last 6,000 years. And while he does not refer to himself as a prophet he has on many occasions said that he comes to blacks and whites in "the tradition of Jesus." As Elijah Muhammad's representative Farrakhan makes the claim that he is the only person that stands between America, Blacks and God's wrath. The extent of this conviction is made clearer in the following statement:

"In the sight of Allah I am worth more than all of America and as He has saved wicked people by the presence of one righteous person, he will kill all if they harm his servant. I say in humility, I am precious in the sight of Allah. And I would humbly advise Jews, and Caucasians, and Blacks, who don't like me, that it is better that you leave me alone."71

Analysis of Louis Farrakhan's rhetoric also discloses a number of predictions and prophetic-like pronouncements and statements. He predicts that unless President Reagan makes drastic changes in both domestic and foreign policy the following events will take place. First, Farrakhan claims that World War III will begin in the Middle East, adding that America's increasing support of Israel will play a large role in her initial entry into the war. He predicts that the Middle East war will escalate into a global conflict involving Russia. Farrakhan's predictions also include the nuclear bombing of Germany, the sinking of the seventh fleet, and the lost of 200 million lives in Europe alone. He has said the America's own borders will be severely weakened because of the demands for military personnel overseas. The result, he contends, is that large numbers of people, especially Mexican, will pour into the Southern part of the United States. The
prophetic picture painted by Louis Farrakhan also includes severe drought leading to famine. He predicts that the entire state of California will, as a result of a major earthquake, sink into the Pacific Ocean. While his prediction of a major earthquake in California is not new, the magnitude of the damage has not been described in such emphatic terms. California's sinking will not, he asserts, be due to its resting on a major fault line but, rather, because of Los Angeles and San Francisco, two cities he describes as modern day Sodom and Gomorrah.

Farrakhan's predictions also include vivid scenarios of tremendous social and racial strife. He argues that America's policy of Constructive Engagement with South Africa will lead to the death of millions of whites and a great many blacks in the African nation. The immediate affects, he contends, is that the climate for racial unrest in countries around the world - including the United States - will be quickened. The movement's membership has been instructed to store food, water and medical supplies for a long as six months in anticipation of what Farrakhan says in the inevitable. Finally, Louis Farrakhan predicts that a meeting will take place between President Reagan and himself where he will do two things. He will, as America's preeminent black leader, discuss methods for returning America back to a state of order as racial strife will have escalated to an alarming high and other black leaders will prove ineffective as peace brokers. Secondly, he will negotiate the conditions for redressing the 430 years of grievances blacks have lived with since 1555.

Needless to say, the increased visibility of Louis Farrakhan's rhetorical discourse also increases, proportionately, the rejection
factor. As the pool of potential supporters increase so does a like pool of detractors. It would not be inaccurate to say that by most accounts it has been the so-called grassroots among blacks who have responded to his rhetorical discourse favorably. It would not be inaccurate to say that, generally speaking, blacks who have come out against Farrakhan's public address are those who, on varying levels, are part of the the group's middle and upper classes. Opposition to his message has also emerged from a significant part of the leadership in the political and religious sector of the black community. There are some notable exceptions. However, black churches with the largest congregations and the most influential ministers and preachers have, to date, generally withheld their support. Many have openly denounced Farrakhan and encouraged their congregations to avoid attendance at his lectures.

Blacks who do attend Louis Farrakhan's lectures and those who have become actively involved in the movement's activities are, by and large, those who obviously see Elijah Muhammad's representative differently from much of the religious and secular leadership in their respective communities. The variety of persons in attendance at his speeches is enormous. It is common to see physicians sitting alongside the unemployed black. Likewise, single parent females come to the same speaking events as the professional football player or the well-known pop singer. It goes without saying that most persons in the audience are not members of the movement.

Discussions about Farrakhan's apparent success at reaching large numbers of blacks points away from curiosity and faddishness as
explantations which are either appropriate or adequate. Extensive print and broadcast exposure over the last two years reduce the significance of these factors considerably. At this juncture in the movement's development and in Farrakhan's efforts as its spokesperson, a distinctly different explanation is needed.

**Audience Image**

If the situation's controlling exigence is that through America's domestic policy of slavery blacks were religiously miseducated, then, the identification of both audience and desired change seems clear. The present population of offspring of those originally miseducated and the person that is currently in charge of America's domestic policy must, by deduction, be the focus of Louis Farrakhan's public address.

In light of the profusion and content of statements addressed specifically to blacks and the United States Government, the importance that Louis Farrakhan places on each as the rhetorical audience is undeniable. What is now needed is a general evaluation of how Farrakhan's audiences have responded to his public address as he attempts to realize his rhetorical goals.

It would be misleading to suggest that blacks have responded to Farrakhan's rhetorical discourse because they believe as he does in the long term destruction caused by slavery or that they are in full support of the Chosen People claim. Farrakhan's discourse of the divine status of America's blacks is met with thunderous applause. However, the emergence of his argument is so closely associated with
his controversy with the Jewish community that assessment of its general acceptability and, subsequent rhetorical value is difficult to gauge.

Farrakhan's view that blacks possess an untapped reservoir of spiritual and economic power is becoming increasingly known. It is also obvious from his rhetorical discourse that he considers blacks to be a group of people who have the potential to impact on America and, subsequently, other nations of the world in a major way. Much of his reasoning on this subject is based on estimates that place black purchasing power to be 204 billion dollars and on the large pool of black professionals and intellectuals potentially available to the movement. The extent to which these views are similarly shared by blacks remains uncertain. Frankly, in the absence of studies (a.g. polls, surveys, etc.) specifically designed to solicit answers to these questions from those in attendance at his lectures, such speculation would serve little in the advancement of knowledge about the movement. What is certain, however, is that by the thousands blacks turn out to hear Louis Farrakhan's public lectures. What is also certain is that Farrakhan has managed to strike a chord in the black community not seen since the days when Malcolm X spoke as Elijah Muhammad's National Spokesman.

Verbal responses to Louis Farrakhan's rhetoric which claim a neutral or uncertain position are rare, indeed. The message he has brought to blacks and the United States Government has served to draw a line over the field of ideas which is both distinct and bold.
Generally speaking, Farrakhan's greatest opposition from blacks has come from the black middle and upper classes. Black elected officials charge that his rhetoric is divisive and polarizing. Heads of major black organizations have, in most cases, described his rhetoric as extreme and threatening to Black-Jewish relations. Similar reactions have been echoed by officials from a variety of churches. While these have generally been the responses of the so-called "talented tenth" and upper class among blacks, there has been an altogether different response from America's working class.

The black working class of the United States have supported Louis Farrakhan through what some observers argue are situations and events that would turn away the truest of believers in other movements or organizations. In spite of repudiations and charges of anti-semitism blacks in this group as well as a growing number of those from the intellectual and professional class, continue to enthusiastically support his lectures by their attendance. (It should be noted also that as there have been increases of support of each segment of blacks, there has, likewise, been a number of "reconsiderations" and second-looks by persons originally supportive. The most notable example of this is Jesse Jackson, who after weeks of pressure to distance himself from Farrakhan and, then, to publicly denounce his statements, did so).

It is probably safe to conclude that blacks who are responding to Louis Farrakhan's rhetorical discourse are those who, for various reasons, feel that traditional methods and/or leaders are ineffective as a means to redress their grievances. Blacks responding favorably to are also those who, while they may personally be better off financially
and socially, have maintained and/or developed a sense of duty and responsibility for blacks who have gotten lost in American society and culture. Finally, blacks responding to Farrakhan's message may well be those who feel that their talents, skills and expertise have been exploited or become atrophied within the work place of mainstream America.

Louis Farrakhan's public address consistently includes specific discussions of slavery and what he sees as the total mental, emotional, moral, and spiritual destruction of his people. He has determined that America and its domestic policies are the root cause of the present plight and condition of blacks in 1986. He has also advanced the claim that America is on the verge of total collapse unless she repents from her present activities and sincerely attempts to correct the damage perpetrated against its black citizenry.

According to the rhetorical discourse of Louis Farrakhan he is the last hope that blacks and America will receive before divine judgment descends on both of them. He has called himself a Warner, a witness of Elijah Muhammad and Master Fard Muhammad, and a mercy. He believes that he is all of these things. He is committed to his belief that the future and destiny of America and the rest of the world is inseparable from how blacks and the United States Government respond to him as Elijah Muhammad's representative. Finally, he is unwavering in the assertion that he will achieve all of his rhetorical goals because he is backed by God and Jesus, The Christ. In his words:

"I don't care what you think of me. It is irrelevant, immaterial, and baseless what you think of me. But, I must warn America, I must warn Black people of what is coming whether they hear or forebear."73
It remains now state only that the presence of a rhetoric with such an unqualifying stance and so demanding in its requirement of a response will, by it nature, raise the question of Contraints to a prominent position in the overall analysis of the movement. As such, the following chapter is devoted to a discussion of those Contraints which either have or will emerge as reasons for Farrakhan to modify his public address.
Chapter V

Notes


2 Perhaps the most provocative aspect of Farrakhan's many statements is that he argues that everything that is happening is "history." In other words, Louis Farrakhan maintains that history is written for nations and the people who inhabit them every 25,000 years and cover at least 25,000 year periods of time.

3 The rhetoric of the Chosen People is extremely attractive for blacks in that their experience within America and, indeed, through travel outside of her is that they are considered "second class" citizens of the United States. The sense of "nobodiness" which pervades much of the black community welcomes the movement's rhetoric.

4 Malcolm X comes closest to Farrakhan in style of delivery and, to a lesser extent, in content. While both men spoke from the same theological foundation provided them by Elijah Muhammad, Farrakhan's rhetoric is clearly more explanatory in its intent.

5 The movement contends that the presence of blacks within the United States as well as their enslavement is a part of "history" which was written 25,000 years ago. According to the movement there was no way for blacks to avoid being brought to America and put in servitude.

6 According to the movement's rhetoric the Bible is written in symbolism and parables. It argues that its discussion of God creating the world in 6 days and then resting on the 7th should be understood to mean that the world would be turned over for rulership to a certain people for 6,000 years and after that period - or the 7,000 year - would change hands. From the movement's perspective the rulership of the world is now in the process of changing over to blacks and other people of color in the world.


9 Farrakhan often points to the United States Constitution which, in its original drafting, described blacks as three-fifths human beings.

The phrase, "slave mentality," is used by Farrakhan to mean an orientation to life which is characterized by "waiting" on another person to make one's most important decisions and/or an attitude where one is content in non aggressive, undemanding positions and roles.

A major goal of the movement is to break down barriers, real and imagined, between blacks from various backgrounds and lifestyles. Farrakhan's position on the question of unity is much like Malcolm X's who made the observation that blacks don't "catch hell" because they are Baptist, Methodist, Catholic, etc. but they have problems in America because they are black.

Recent years have seen growing numbers of black historians, economists, social scientists, etc. Offer re-examinations of segregation. The emerging thought is that perhaps more was lost than was gained through integration.

The presence of Jewish, Korean, Arab and Asian businesspersons in the black community has been a consistent sore spot among black residents. Blacks are generally resentful of the presence of these groups and feel much like a "captive" consumer. Unfortunately, these feelings have not resulted in the emergence of significant numbers of viable black businesses.

There was a significant delay between the first mention of the Power Product line of products and their actual arrival. According to the movement, black manufacturers were frightened away from involvement in the manufacturing of the products. After more than two years, the products are moving through the black community with the first line consisting of shampoo, conditioner, liquid soap, location and deodorant.
Blacks are a consumer class of people. They have no major industry or market for which they supply goods and/or services. There are some exceptions with Johnson Publishing Company being the most notable. However, the presence of successful business operations within the black community and outside out it is rare—a particularly distressing situation considering their presence in American after more than 400 years.

The P.O.W.E.R. tour which began on January 18, 1984, in Detroit marked the beginning of some of Farrakhan's largest audiences to date. It is safe to say that the subject of economic development is important to blacks as it is to all other people.


The high population of 40 million is generally given by Farrakhan who maintains that conditions are unfavorable for both census takers and blacks who in the first instance are fearful of some of the environments they are required to enter in order to get their figures and, in the latter instance, blacks who oftentimes reside in homes where their presence is forbidden because of a social service or employment regulations.


The chief difference between conclusions drawn by the Kerner Commission and Farrakhan is that while the Commission predicted what the future would hold should not efforts get underway to redress the disparity and grievances of blacks, Farrakhan has already reached the conclusion that black white relations are at a standstill.

A drive through the inner city of any major city will present a stark reality. There are literally thousands of black youth idle in America's cities. They have given up hope of "escaping" their lot through education as job prospects grow dimmer with each day.

Farrakhan's vision of black America is rather dismal. In a speech given in the early 1980's he states, "By 1990 black people will either be free or they will be dead."

It is the movement's position that blacks have been diverted from the major source of growth and accomplishment - economic development. The P.O.W.E.R. program is designed to respond to this particular perception.


The movement has historically taken a hard line with the black clergy. Under Elijah Muhammad, the clergy were routinely admonished. Farrakhan's discourse has likewise addressed the subject of the clergy's role in the economic, social, and spiritual development of blacks. Because his approach is slightly different, he and his followers have been warmly greeted in several large black churches.

The history of the black preacher in America is worth studying for he emerged as the first member of a black upper class.

Louis Farrakhan, "What the Black Man Must Do For Self," address delivered in Chicago around 1982.


Louis Farrakhan, "Christ Eminent Return."

Farrakhan's public address stands out because of his treatment of audience. The ease with which he addresses the United States President is rare among even the most liberal black leaders and/or civil rights activists. Farrakhan's willingness to chide and warn President Reagan and other government officials is no doubt a part of his appeal. Blacks generally feel that they have been abandoned by the present Administration. Farrakhan says to the President what each of them would like to say.

Elijah Muhammad, The Fall of America (Chicago: Muhammad's Temple No. 2., 1973).


Franklin, From Slavery to Freedom.

Farrakhan charges that blacks were deliberately denied information on three areas of vital importance. Further, he maintains that it was impossible for a slave population to develop properly in the absence of such knowledge. The three areas are (1) the science of business or economics, (2) military science, and (3) the science of proper mate selection. Needless to say, the last area is not commonly thought of as a science.
For at least 5 years the birth rate has increased dramatically among black teenagers. In spite of blacks having the highest rates of major crimes within their own group, their numbers still rise. They have been America's largest minority almost since the country's founding. It has only been within the last 10 years that another minority seems to be moving into this position. This group is the Hispanics.

The number 666, is found in the Book of Revelations. A large segment of the black community seem somewhat captivated by its religious significance and have responded enthusiastically when Farrakhan addresses the subject of Babylon and its King within his public address.

According to Farrakhan, Presidents Ford, Carter, and Reagan have each used religious terminology which, he argues, points to their belief in a final battle between good and evil.

He has described himself as a "warner" to blacks, America, and the world.

Among his warnings to blacks is that mothers should not encourage their sons to enter the military because they are unable to find employment. In recent addresses he has declared that the decision has already been made against America and that youth by the thousands will be killed in war. Obviously, there is no way to gauge what affect this argument is having or has had on young blacks who have heard it.

The movement's ties with Arab countries spans at least thirty years. Farrakhan often explains how in his travels he meets with persons who, between 1935 and 1974, had been visited by Elijah Muhammad.


65 The movement's officials maintain that an assassination plot was uncovered sometime during the summer of 1986 to kill Farrakhan in Africa.


67 Louis Farrakhan, "The Triumphant Return of Farrakhan."

68 Louis Farrakhan, "Understanding Master Fard Muhammad."

69 The Mid-Atlantic Regional Representative for the movement is, himself, a physician. His report was met with interest though not excitement.

70 Louis Farrakhan, "Understanding Master Fard Muhammad."

71 Louis Farrakhan, "Power At Last Forever," Kennedy Center, Washington, D.C.

72 This is clearly one of the dimensions which makes the critical study interesting.

73 Louis Farrakhan, "Christ Eminent Return."
CHAPTER VI
Primary Constraints Farrakhan Faces

This author hopes that the analysis of Louis Farrakhan's rhetorical discourse to this point projects a significant understanding of the rhetor and the movement for which he speaks. Not only are Louis Farrakhan's declarations foreign to the minds of virtually all whites and many blacks, they are wholly believed by him. The conviction of his belief, his motives as Elijah Muhammad's National Representative, and his image and perceptions of people, places, events, and things account for both his rhetorical goals and his rhetorical problems. Likewise, they portend the Constraints which as a rhetor he is invariably confronted with.

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss the third constituent in the rhetorical situation: Constraints. The primary concern of Chapter Six is to consider the "persons, events, objects, and relations which are parts of the situation because they have the power to constrain decision and action needed to modify the exigence."¹ This chapter will seek, in other words, to identify major issues which have or will lead to rhetorical problems that require Louis Farrakhan to modify his public address. A result of analysis reveals three major constraints in the rhetorical situation faced by Farrakhan: (1) Charges of anti-Semitism, (2) Farrakhan's Arab world relations, and (3) Sexism within the movement.

Not since the assassination of Martin Luther King have the masses of blacks displayed greater unity of purpose or unrestrained emotional
commitment than in the 1984 Presidential Campaign of Jesse Jackson. Jackson's candidacy mobilized blacks into collective action not seen in America since the early days of the Civil Rights Movement. Almost from the beginning, his campaign took on the appearance of an evangelical crusade - the goal being the resurrection of a people who had all but given up on a political system many of their parents and grandparents fought and died for.

Jesse Jackson's entrance onto the political scene was not in the absence of a history of public service or the potential of widespread support from the black community. Detractors of his bid were hard pressed to charge that he was an outsider or unfamiliar with the civil rights struggle. That he had been one of King's youthful supporters, organizers, and aids was a well known fact. As founder and President of People United to Save Humanity (PUSH) Jackson's credibility and visibility had been enhanced even more. The identification he was able to achieve with great numbers of blacks as a member of its clergy class was easily a cause for a degree of concern and, even, envy among the other presidential candidates. Notwithstanding these undeniable advantages, Jackson was determined to expand on his support base as early in his campaign as possible. In the winter prior to the November primaries he asked Louis Farrakhan to take an active role in his bid for President of the United States. Farrakhan's affirmative response is the fountain from which the Farrakhan-Jewish controversy sprang forth.
The historical refusal of the Nation of Islam to participate in America's political process made the newly established Farrakhan-Jackson relationship an item of news interest at the outset. As such, Farrakhan's February 9, 1984, registration at the Chicago Board of Elections was not without the presence of reporters and cameras. Indeed, his endorsement of Jackson was not without some opposition from within the movement by persons who charged that he was deviating from Elijah Muhammad's instructions on Politics. At that time Farrakhan explained, "The Honorable Elijah Muhammad said if a politician arose among us who was fearless, who would stand up and plead our case and would not sell us out, that kind of politician deserved and should get the full backing and support of our entire people." Farrakhan's own registration, sent a signal to the movement's membership and supporters that Jesse Jackson was such a politician and they should follow suit. His registration also signified the non-traditional style and high level of commitment he planned to have in the months to come.

In the weeks which followed Louis Farrakhan's entrance into Jackson's campaign several developments occurred. Almost immediately the movement assumed responsibility for providing Jackson with personal security through its male and female followers. Once Secret Service personnel were assigned to Jackson the movement's security efforts became less evident.

Farrakhan's support of Jackson routinely took the form of warm-up speaker at various speaking engagements. Having prepared the audience Farrakhan would then introduce Jackson as the keynote speaker. Some
observers and analysts have suggested that on occasion Farrakhan's introductions of Jackson were more persuasive than Jackson's own presentation. Whether such was the case or not, the effect remains the same. Interest and excitement for Jackson's campaign increased sharply and reached segments of the black community that had not yet been tapped. Support for Jackson was not limited, however, to occasions and situations arranged by his campaign staff. Farrakhan also employed the use of his own platform as the movement's national spokesman and included vigorous statements of support within his weekly broadcasts on Chicago's WBEE radio station. Additional persuasive efforts were seen through various public lectures as major blocks of time were set aside to encourage blacks to rally their voting power behind Jackson and to denounce black leadership that didn't. There was, in the face of so many situations and events, little doubt that the Muslim minister was going to stand by his initial endorsement and words of commitment. About his initial decision to accept Jackson's request for help Farrakhan has said:

"Reverend Jackson has lifted the ceiling off the thinking of black people. When I saw he was doing something that could cost him his life, I could not stand idly by. I decided I would have to run with my brother through that valley of the shadow of death."

In the weeks which followed his endorsement of Jackson, Farrakhan delivered several forceful and, from all appearances, persuasive addresses - all intended to generate support for Jesse Jackson in the black community.
On March 11, 1984, however, the focus began to shift dramatically from Jackson to Louis Farrakhan.

Jesse Jackson's naivete as a politician was revealed early in the 1984 Presidential campaign when, in what has generally come to be agreed was an "off the record statement" appeared in a Washington Post article. The source of the information, reporter Milton Coleman, disclosed that during an informal conversation with the presidential candidate Jackson referred to New York as "Hymietown" and Jews as "Hymies." The Jewish response, as could be expected, was immediate. Jackson was labeled anti-Semitic and Jewish leaders demanded that he retract his statements and issue a public apology. After first denying that he made the statements and, then, saying that he had no memory of making such remarks, Jackson apologized for his indiscretion. Louis Farrakhan who, by this time was well-established as Jackson's most ardent and vocal supporter, responded by coming to the defense of the candidate. Using his weekly radio program as the vehicle, Farrakhan vehemently denounced Coleman and Coleman's actions, describing him as as a Judas and a traitor to blacks. Included in Farrakhan's reprimand were statements which raised the minister's visibility and controversial status as a participant in the Jackson campaign considerably. During the March 11, 1984, address Farrakhan said of Coleman:

"But we're going to make an example of Mr. Coleman. I'm going to stay on his case until we make him a fit example for the rest of them (reporters). 'What do you intend to do to Milton Coleman?' At this point, no physical harm. But at this point we're going to keep going until we make it so that he cannot enter in on any black people. One day soon we will punish you with death."
You're saying, When is that? In sufficient time. We will come to power right inside this country one day soon. And the white man is not going to stop us from executing the law of God on all of you who fall under our jurisdiction." 

While it was expected that Farrakhan would speak out in Jackson's defense, few were prepared for the intensity of his remarks. Farrakhan's statements became the source of increased Jewish concern. His unqualified defense of Jackson netted him the label of Hitler. In response he charged Jewish leadership with deliberately taking his words out of context and, then, making the out-of-context statements the focus of media attention. Addressing the rapidly accelerating controversy Louis Farrakhan said:

"Here comes the Jews who don't like Farrakhan so they call me Hitler. Well, that's a good name. Hitler was a very great man. He wasn't great for me as a black man, but he was a great German. Now, I'm not proud of Hitler's evil against the Jewish people, but that's a matter of record. He rose Germany up from nothing. Well, in a sense you could say there's similarity in that we are rising our people up from nothing. But don't compare me with your wicked killers." 

The Jewish community responded to Farrakhan's statements with outrage. Its leaders immediately called for public condemnation of his statements and official repudiations. Any remaining credibility that Jackson had with the Jewish community was, at that point, to be determined only by his willingness to sever all ties with Louis Farrakhan. Jackson's response was to distance himself, but there was no public statement of repudiation. It was clear, however, that the relationship between the two men was moving in a different direction. The developing conflict between Louis Farrakhan and the Jewish community constituted a troubling predicament for Jesse Jackson.
Farrkahan's support had generated movement among a segment of blacks as yet unpersuaded to involve themselves in the 1984 political process. At the same time Jackson was concerned about losing support from liberal whites. Thomas Todd, a Chicago lawyer instrumental in laying the groundwork for the Jackson-Farrakhan political alliance spoke of Jackson's quandary in a April 9, 1984, New York Times article. Arguing that Jackson's concern with alienating whites was misplaced Todd said, "Why should he renounce someone who is registering and turning out the votes for him to curry favor with white America when white America is not going to vote for him anyway?"17 Notwithstanding Todd's assessment, Louis Farrakhan's comments gave birth to a situation complete with a variety of new and unwelcomed variables. In subsequent speeches Farrakhan attempted to clarify and explain his remarks about Hitler's "greatness." However, newspaper articles and television newscasts consistently included his earlier statements when reporting the latest developments in the controversy..18 Farrakhan's lecture, "Black Man's Fear" is one of several attempts made to provide a different view of his evaluation and perception of the Nazi leader:

"Very few references in my thirty years were made to Jews in particular. White people, yes. Jews in particular, no. In the thirty years of my ministry I never mentioned Hitler's name because he means nothing to me. I'm a black person. Hitler didn't like black people. If he had, had his way he would have removed us from the face of the earth. I understand that."19

There is probably no subject more important to Jews than their history in Germany from 1934 to 1944 and Israel. The state of Israel has repeatedly been the focus of controversy among the persons sympathetic to the Palestinians.
Moreover, analysts conclude that Middle East tensions and conflicts are inseparable from how the inhabitants of the area assess the Israeli and Palestinian conflict and the conclusions these people have reached on both. On June 24, 1984, three months after Farrakhan's statements about Hitler and in the presence of on-going combative rhetoric between himself and Jewish leaders, he said from his Chicago Headquarters:

"I say to the Jewish people and to the Government of the United States, the present state of Israel is a outlaw act. It was not done with the backing of God nor was it done by the guidance of the Messiah. It was your cold naked scheming, plotting, and planning against the lives of a people there in Palestine. Now you have taken the land and you called it Israel and you pushed out the original inhabitants, making them vagabonds on the earth. You have lied and said this was a promise by God to you."20

He added:

"Now that nation called Israel never has had any peace in forty years and she will never have any peace, because there can be no peace, structured on injustice, thievery, lying, and deceit and using the name of God to shield your dirty practices under his righteous and Holy name."21

At the time of Farrakhan's statements Jesse Jackson was in Cuba. Five days later he responded to Farrakhan's statements through his campaign adviser, Walter Fauntroy. Reportedly, Jackson was made aware of the newest controversy by way of a phone conversation. An official statement was prepared by his campaign staff and later read to him in a subsequent telephone conversation. Its contents were approved and on June 29, 1984 Fauntroy, acting on behalf of Jackson, issued a declaration of repudiation. The following points were included in the document which was reprinted in its entirety in the New York Times:
"I find such statements or comments to be reprehensible and morally indefensible. I disavow such comments and thoughts...Such statements and thoughts have no place in my own thinking or in this campaign, and I call upon all of my supporters to join me in speaking in support of my stand."22

After more than three months of heated controversy Jackson's official statement effectively severed his political ties with Farrakhan. At first, Farrakhan argued that Jackson had been misled by his own campaign staff who had themselves succumbed to Jewish pressures and threats to deny Jackson access to the Party's convention during the August convention. Shortly afterwards his response was one of resignation. He stated that he was interested more in seeing that Jackson had an opportunity to speak during the Democratic National Convention than in his continued involvement as a visible supporter. His position, at that time, was if Jackson's repudiation would ensure his chances of going before the convention's delegates, the statement was worth it. In any event, he maintained that he was not unduly concerned about this new development in their political and to a lesser extent, social relationship.

The controversy at this point was centered on whether Louis Farrakhan described Judaism as a "gutter" or "dirty" religion. He denied decribing the religion with either term, saying that he never used the word, Judaism at all. Reports that Farrakhan had condemned Judaism evoked a great many more reactions than that of Jackson's. Through White House Spokesman, Larry Speakes, President Reagan issued a statement expressing his personal condemnation of Farrakhan's comments. Vice President Bush called Farrakhan a hater and added that there was no room in America for such persons.
A special session of the Senate ended with a vote for censorship by a tally of 99 to 0. Statements of repudiation and denunciation also emerged from persons who, prior to Farrakhan's statement about Israel, had refrained public statements of censorship. One such person was Washington D.C., Mayor, Marion Berry. Black organizations followed suit by issuing "for the record" disclaimers of Farrakhan's newest remarks. Among the first organizations was the N.A.A.C.P. Speaking on behalf of the organization's administrators and membership Executive Director, Benjamin Hooks, issued a statement denouncing the June 24, remarks. In part, he said:

"The N.A.A.C.P. deplores the inflammatory statements that are being made by Black Muslim leader Louis Farrakhan that labeled Judaism a "gutter religion" and cast Israel as a criminal nation. The N.A.A.C.P. is on record as rejecting all forms of racism and anti-Semitism."  

The June 27, 1984, statement by the N.A.A.C.P. should represent an issue of grave importance in Louis Farrakhan's efforts to achieve his rhetorical goals. Open denunciation of Farrakhan's statements represent a major constraint and, indeed, this writer maintains that the final sentence of the previous quote is, today, one of the movement's greatest challenges.

As the single largest black organization in the United States, the membership ranks of the N.A.A.C.P. contain thousands of blacks. And while there is some disagreement over the organization's present status and effectiveness in the black community, the fact remains that it is America's major civil rights organization. The public repudiation of
Louis Farrakhan's words by Benjamin Hooks has the effect of removing thousands of potential hearers and sympathizers from an audience of blacks whose attention the movement is ever-seeking to get. Hook's labeling of Louis Farrakhan's public address as racist and anti-Semitic diminishes considerably any perceived attractiveness or merit in the movement's other arguments, ideas, claims, program, etc. Charges of racism and anti-Semitism have had the affect of short-circuiting Farrakhan's attempts at getting certain blacks to focus in on his primary rhetorical goals...a re-examination of Elijah Muhammad and an introduction to Master Fard Muhammad. Similar statements issued by officials of other organizations and religious leaders, obviously, have much the same affect.

Farrakhan's protestations that racist and anti-Semitic labels are incorrect have done little to persuade civil rights and religious leaders to take different positions in their evaluations. And to the extent that blacks believe such labeling to be true - the belief of a thing having the same effect as actual fact in most instances - Farrakhan is faced with a significant constraint. He will not be able to simply ignore these indictments. They have not gone away and, in the absence of concerted efforts to address their persistence through his public messages, they will most likely remain. Frankly, few blacks, regardless of their disillusionment, anger, and frustration over seemingly impenetrable walls of racism and prejudice, will knowingly or publicly choose to associate themselves with any organization believed to be racist and anti-Semitic. It almost goes...
without saying, that Farrakhan's efforts at modifying his rhetorical discourse to address his and the movement's current image must be sufficiently convincing to redress the damage done by more than two years of verbal warfare between himself and the Jewish community. His efforts must be far more deliberate and concerted than statements of explanation and defense found strewn throughout scores of lectures over a period of years. Understanding of his defense is simply an unreasonable expectation for any but the serious student of the movement of the person involved in a rhetorical criticism of his words. At this juncture, then, the following explanation and defense against charges of racism and anti-Semitism is found, upon analysis, of Louis Farrakhan's public address. It represents the most detailed analysis possible through lectures, speeches, and sermons available at this writing.

Farrakhan Defense

Analysis of Louis Farrakhan's public address reveals that since 1984, there has been a profusion of statements in his lectures, speeches, and sermons identifying blacks as God's Chosen People. When his statements are studied along with Jewish responses to his rhetorical discourse an interesting fact emerges. Jewish reactions, responses, refutations and condemnations of Louis Farrakhan's public address do not include counterclaims or counter arguments against his Chosen People claim. And while it might be argued that the absence of such claims and arguments point to their lack of relative importance when compared with Jewish concern with anti-Semitism, knowledge of the Judaism faith makes such a conclusion unreasonable.
According to Louis Farrakhan, the identity of the Chosen People is of paramount concern to Jewish people. Further, he maintains that charges of anti-Semitism are substantive only when the person so charged is, as in the case of Hitler, in a position to carry out the anti-Semitic attitude and prejudice in tangible ways. He asserts that charges of anti-Semitism are used by Jewish leaders as a strategy against any person who raises question or doubts about Israel and the role of Jewish people in world affairs. Speaking on May 1, 1985, at the Kennedy Center in Washington he presented this perspective:

"Why tonight am I, Louis Farrakhan, in trouble with the Jews? What did I do? What did I say? I have not stopped any Jewish person from making progress. I have not stopped them from doing anything of value that they wanted to do or that of no value. Why am I labeled as an anti-Semite?"29

On July 30, of the same year Farrakhan addressed reporters and journalists at the Washington Press Club and, elaborating on the reasons for the verbal war raging between himself and Jewish people, stated:

"There seems to be an unwritten law that Israel and Jews cannot be criticized particularly by blacks. Anyone who does so, must bear the burden of being called an anti-Semite."30

It has already been established that Louis Farrakhan holds firm to the belief that God has had a convenant with each of the world's major religions. In the case of Jews, Farrakhan maintains that Moses provided them with spiritual teachings and practical instruction for daily living that, intellectually, lifted them above the world's other people. The information they received, argues Farrakhan, was never
shared with the world's other races and nations - an act he asserts that was in direct violation of their convenant. Farrakhan's position, then, is that Jewish people, in not becoming the missionaries of Judaism and the keys for success contained in its doctrine, sat themselves up for divine punishment at a future time. About what he perceives as a violated duty and responsibility Farrakhan explains:

"The Jews were chosen by Jehovah through Moses to be a light to the gentile nation, but when God chooses a people He doesn't choose them just to say you are my choice. He chooses them for a duty, for a responsibility, for His glory. The Jews had the duty and responsibility to be a light to the gentile nation, but Jesus in coming among the Jews said to them, "What man having a light would hide it under a bushel basket?" 31

The fact that Judaism has not, in modern times been a proselytizing faith, is well known. What is new to the issue is Louis Farrakhan's charge that the absence of this practice is in direct conflict with Jewish claims that they are the Chosen People and at the root of hostilities and prejudices toward them as a people.

Farrakhan's argument that through Moses Jewish people were given knowledge of certain laws and principles for success is supplemented by his claim that evidence of this can be seen in their numbers among the world's successful businesspersons, professionals, and government officials. Within his public address he often explains that Jewish people fit well the biblical reference to "people of the Book" because, while six percent of the population, they have mastered the arts, sciences, business, technology, and industry. He adds that while their successes are admirable, their failure to include "outsiders" Judaism religion has removed them from God's protection and favor.
On more than one occasion Louis Farrakhan has advanced the claim that Hitler's hatred of the Jew was rooted in his own feelings of envy and jealousy over their success in Germany. Farrakhan maintains that the presence of Jews in Germany became the symbol of Hitler's unsupportable claims of Aryan supremacy. It became increasingly difficult for Hitler to declare the natural dominance of the blond haired, blue eyed, pure blooded Aryan in a country where business, industry, and the professions were almost completely in the hands of its Jewish citizenry.

Jewish refusal to share knowledge received under Moses' instruction is not the sole reason Louis Farrakhan contends that they are no longer God's Elect. In fact, Farrakhan asserts that there is an issue of even greater proportions which must be evaluated by observers who charge him with anti-Semitism. According to Farrakhan the Jewish peoples' rejection of Jesus has effectively taken them out of consideration as a special people. Farrakhan argues that God's convenant with them did not preclude the Jew from accepting the divine instruction which Jesus brought. He adds there was to be no division between Jew and Gentile in the practice of religion or the worship of God. Farrakhan's public address on the Jews' relationship with Jesus has rarely been introduced as a factor in the controversy. Yet his controversy, argues Louis Farrakhan, is germane to understanding the present conflict between the Jewish community and himself.

Within Farrakhan's rhetorical discourse is the claim that biblical scripture contains statements describing Jesus relationship with the Jews of his day. These statements, according to Louis Farrakhan, prove
that Jews do not have any special connection with the Supreme Being and, more importantly, are in 1986 not the people that God intends to use as his helpers.

Farrakhan believes that the Jewish leadership opposes him because he represents the Messiah that they have been waiting for, but refuse to believe that Elijah Muhammad could be. He is convinced that the vigorousness of his warnings and exhortations to the Jewish community are absolutely necessary and that he represents their final opportunity to escape punishment because of their covenant violations.

In chapter three of the study it was revealed that the movement's religious beliefs include the claim that the name, Jesus, is a title which refers to the action of five separate entities. Louis Farrakhan was identified as one of the five. He maintains that the Jewish response to him can only be properly understood if he is seen in the role of one of the five Jesus. Further, he argues that biblical accounts of the Jew of that time hated Jesus and sought to kill him are both historical and prophetic. These disclosures, he claims, are a picture of the type of relationship he would have with the Jews in his own role and function as Jesus. Turning to scripture to explain his contention, Chapter 8 of the Book of John, verses 39-40, are most often referred to. They read:

"If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham. But now ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told ye the truth, which I have heard of God, this did not Abraham. Ye do the work of your father."33

Farrakhan explains that the above scripture contains a conversation between Jesus and the Jews of that day and maintains that it is symbolic, historical, and prophetic of the present controversy.
Louis Farrakhan sees himself as a warner to the Jews. He described himself as a mercy to them and as their last hope. These and similar expressions directed toward the Jewish community are direct outgrowths of Farrakhan's belief that Master Fard Muhammad is God and that Elijah Muhammad is the Messiah or Jesus, The Christ.

It is interesting to note that within Farrakhan's public address are claims that the Jews are in open conflict with him because they not only object to the idea of Elijah Muhammad's being the Messiah, but the thought causes them to be afraid. Farrakhan's contention is that his rhetorical discourse represents considerable anxiety for Jewish leadership because Judaism, as a faith, is both concerned with the coming of the Messiah and also with his purpose for coming. According to religious writings the Messiah's appearance represents each person's individual judgment. His appearance also ushers in the judgment of entire nations and groups of people.

A major argument contained in Farrakhan's public address is that Jewish efforts to censor his words or influence others to do so stems from their concern with arousing critical interest in Israel and Black-Jewish relations. Farrakhan has also maintained throughout his verbal battle with the Jewish community that their determination to silence him is based more on their not wanting the masses of whites to begin taking a critical look at Jewish power in America and Jewish relationships with the world's peoples, than with any efforts to put a stop to anti-Semitic remarks. He may not be altogether wrong in his evaluation of Jewish concerns at this particular level. In the British
periodical, New Statesman Colgate University Professor, Manning
Marable, writes:

"And while he remains questionably anti-Semitic, Farrakhan has nevertheless elevated two basic issues which have been skirted and avoided by the American liberal left: the influential role of Israel in American foreign policy and the ambiguous financial and political relationship between American Zionists and Afro-American middle class leaders." 34

It should be pointed out that included in Farrakhan's statements before the National Press Club five months earlier were admonitions to the United States Government about what he termed the "abnormal" influence of the Jewish citizenry in the United States. He said:

"This abnormal show of the power of Jewish leadership demonstrates that the American people are losing - or have lost - a grip over their political process and over their elected officials for when a powerful lobby can force an emergency session of the Senate just to repudiate me -- something is gravely wrong." 35

Finally, on this point Farrakhan maintains that American whites, generally, are disturbed about what seems to be inordinate influence and power among six percent of their population. He adds that incidents like Bitburg resulted in a flurry of public statements designed to "explain" President Reagan's decision to visit a German cemetery (without first conferring with Jewish leadership in the United States) leaves white America with an unarticulated uneasiness. 36  Seeing himself as divinely prepared to communicate such concerns he directs, at times, specific statements to whites generally. On one occasion he said of his own statements about Jews:

"Now others know this but they don't have the courage to say. I know it and am born, to go to the mountaintop and tell it. Whether it means my life, it means your freedom." 37
Two additional arguments against the Jews' claim as Chosen People are revealed in Farrakhan's public address. The first of these arguments is that the Jewish people's belief that the Messiah would come to them precluded the formation of the state of Israel. According to Louis Farrakhan, Judaism teaches that upon the Messiah's return he would bless the Jews with a homeland. The blessing, maintains Farrakhan, was contingent on whether they had remained loyal to the covenant. Farrakhan's argument is that based on Jewish religious doctrine he is wholly justified in his reprimand of them for taking land from the Palestinians for use as their homeland. He argues further that his description of Israel as a criminal nation must be understood to refer to its formation in the absence of the Messiah God said would establish their home upon his return. Additionally, Louis Farrakhan contends that the existence of Israel before its time is at the root of Middle East tensions that will lead to global war. In response to Jewish reactions and the long list of repudiations which followed his June 24, 1984, Chicago sermon Farrakhan stated:

"I said that the setting up of the state of Israel is a criminal conspiracy. I did say that. But, then, don't call me anti-Semitic because I said that, because your Bible teaches you that the Jews were to wait for the Messiah. You got nearly a million Hosetic Jews that do not believe that Israel is legitimate because it didn't come from the Messiah. Nearly one million Jews. Are they anti-Semitic? They marched on the United Nations when Shimon Peres spoke there. And you didn't see that in the newspapers. But they had big picket signs saying, "You should have waited for the Messiah."

38

Farrakhan maintains that the Israel mentioned in the Bible must be understood as a sign or symbol of people living at a future time. Its
description of people held in bondage, lost, despised, and rejected, he asserts, is a prototype of America's blacks.

The second, and last, argument found in Farrakhan's rhetoric of refutation relates specifically to the status of Black-Jewish relations. It is ingenuous to think that blacks will ever have the relationship with Jews they had prior to Louis Farrakhan's entry onto the political scene. Indeed, a significant amount of concern surrounding his public speeches is that they contain statements, assertions, and claims which have severely strained historically strong relationships between the two people. And while many observers have speculated about the ability of blacks to rebuild ties with the Jewish community in the presence of language that alienates the two peoples, Farrakhan argues that the relationship that blacks have historically had with Jewish people was never intended to advance black causes but, rather to facilitate Jewish access into mainstream America. He further argues that much of the combative rhetoric from the Jewish community is a direct response to his determination to have blacks take a critical look at that historical relationship.

Louis Farrakhan's public address on the re-evaluation of Black-Jewish relations takes his audiences back to America's slave trade which he contends marks the beginning of Jews relationship with America's black masses. According to Louis Farrakhan Jews were financial pioneers in the trading to African blacks. He tells his audiences that the earliest slave expeditions were financed by wealthy Jewish merchants and businessmen.
While these particular arguments have not surfaced in printed or reports of Farrakhan's speaking events, there is some research which supports this claim. Writing in Blacks and Jews, William H. Prichard says:

"The history of Jews in colonial America from 1654-1880 is mainly the history of Jewish Shephardism. These were the Spanish, Portuguese or Oriental Jews who helped settle the Americas and were instrumental in the early colonial slave and triangular trade. The story of slavery in America began with Christopher Columbus. His voyage to America was not financed by Queen Isabella, but by Luis de Santangelo, a Sephardic Jew."39

He added:

"Let it be perfectly clear that there existed no harmonious relations between Jews and Blacks during this period."40

It would not be inaccurate to say that the present critical eye on Black-Jewish relations, resulting in panels, seminars, and symposia, is a direct outgrowth of Louis Farrakhan's claims and assertions. Not since the early seventies have the two groups been so interested in arriving at a proper analysis of their relationship-past, present and future.

Relationships among blacks and Jews had their greatest visibility during the civil rights struggles of the 1950s. Alliances with black organizations were laid during this period that, on varying levels, still exist thirty years later. During this time both groups felt sure that through joint efforts each could accomplish the task of being recognized as full American citizens. While Farrakhan does not deny the legitimacy of Jewish aspirations and goals to gain access into the
American society he does, however, argue that even though Blacks and Jews are involved in open and public discussions of method and strategy, Jewish application resulted in very different outcomes for the two groups. He maintains that Jewish leadership concluded early in the relationship that their interest could be best served by giving financial support to the growing movement's organizations and leaders. By default, he asserts, blacks were used as cannon fodder."

The question of Jewish participation in the civil rights movement is not without other investigators. The question of Black-Jewish relations has been a subject of some re-evaluation by more than a few social and political analysts. Some critics have suggested a gulf between the two groups began to publicly emerge in the 1970s with the Baake case. Recent observations suggest that strain comes from several areas. Reports that South African companies are among Israel's financial backers in its development of the fighter plane, the Lavi, has given blacks significant reason to rethink Jewish commitment to their struggles. As recently as 1983 relations were tested and strained when Jewish organizations refused to collectively support the 20th anniversary of the March on Washington. Claiming that the march was 'too pro-Third World and anti-American, the Anti-Defamation League of B'na'i B'rith refused to lend its support.

Louis Farrakhan maintains that in his role as National Representative of Elijah Muhammad he must warn blacks that in their new freedom they are not to remain in the past through their thinking, actions, or relationships. From his perspective the benefits blacks have received
in their relationship with America's Jewish citizenry have been less than beneficial to them. Moreover, he contends that the relationship has served to perpetuate a slave and slave master scenario. He describes what he sees as an accurate picture of the relationship that has existed between the two peoples in the following manner:

"I ask you in truth. What kind of relationship do we have? A relationship of a master to a slave. You are the tenant and they are the landlord. They own the house, you clean it. They are the merchant and you are the consumer. You are the talent, they are the agent. You are the actor, they are the producers and the owner. Break up that relationship and let's begin a new one."45

The future of Jewish-Black relations is uncertain. What seems patently clear is that the rhetorical discourse which has emerged from the Nation of Islam over the past three years will figure prominently in whatever emerges from the two peoples. It is difficult to assess the recent efforts at dialogue on issues raised through the movement's rhetoric for both groups are deeply involved in their respective problems and priorities.

Two years ago the Anti-Defamation League of the B'nai B'rith published its Facts report on Louis Farrakhan. Reportedly the document was distributed to reporters and journalists throughout the United States.46 Contained in the report are numerous descriptions of Elijah Muhammad's representative as "racist and anti-Semitic."47 The report concluded that "his violent rhetoric represented the most serious injection of anti-Semitism into a national American political campaign in recent memory."48 There was concern for what the authors of the report called, "Farrakhan's continued and increasingly shrill expression of anti-Semitic bigotry."49
Whether Louis Farrakhan is anti-Semitic constitutes a constraint of enormous proportions. Evidence suggest that a significant number of people believe that he is. To the extent of Farrakhan's desired audience is among those persons his ability to accomplish his stated rhetorical goals are deeply diminished. Farrakhan's statements regarding Hitler and Israel are seldom omitted from even the briefest report of his current activities and recent speeches. The label has even followed him outside of the United States and was cited by officials in Bermuda and London for their decision to prohibit him from addressing the various audiences in those countries.

Louis Farrakhan's belief that his verbal conflict with America's Jewish leaders is spiritual and directly related to alarm over his statements that Master Fard Muhammad is God, Elijah Muhammad is the Messiah, and blacks in America are the Chosen People, frankly, means little to blacks and whites who have not heard the argument. As such, his failure to articulate the preceding defense in a complete manner stands as an integral factor in the constraint. Jewish access to broadcasting and print through ownership of newspapers, televisions, or sympathetic friends and associates make it quite unlikely that Farrakhan will be able to alter the movement's perception as anti-Semitic through these particular channels. Nevertheless, the rhetorical goal is clear even if its method of resolution is not.

Middle East

Few eyes are not focused on the Middle East, a part of the world many observers describe as a potential flashpoint for World War III.
The presence in the region of the Iranian-Iraqi war, daily reports of increased car bombings in Christian and Muslim Beirut, attacks and counter attacks between Israel and various Arab groups, and kidnappings and hijackings of ships and planes by individuals and groups protesting American or Israeli policies have all created an environment of extreme frustration and anxiety for millions of American and European citizens. Middle East tensions and turmoil also constitute the source of Louis Farrakhan's second major constraint. Farrakhan's ties to this part of the world may well present a significant rhetorical problem and as such prove to be the reason for modification of his rhetoric on this subject.

Notwithstanding United States Government repudiations and denunciations of Louis Farrakhan's public address about Jews and Israel, he is probably the one American who has relatively unrestrained access to the Middle East in general and Arab nations in particular. His statements about Libya and other Arab states have made plain the view that his religious beliefs superseded national patriotism and federal commitments. Such a position is not, however, shared by the American Government who, while it articulates freedom from religious persecution has, since its founding, argued for the separation of church and state. It would not be incorrect to say that Louis Farrakhan believes in no such division. Moreover, it is his position that his loyalties belong first and foremost to the religion and God he has chosen. This marked difference of perceptions and attitudes between the views of the United States Government and the movement will
undoubtedly lead to the emergence of new rhetorical goals and rhetorical problems proportionate to Middle East developments.

It seems likely that if the United States were drawn into a full scale Middle Eastern conflict on the side of Israel over the Arab nations, the presence of Louis Farrakhan inside of the United States will emerge as a considerable concern. A part of the movement's own rhetoric on this subject is that the United States Government will, at some point, outlaw the Nation of Islam, that the federal government will impose a ban on the sale of the movement's literature and that the movement will be prohibited from meeting publicly. Whether these things will take place because the movement represents the physical presence of Muslims within the boundaries of America is unclear. It is also unclear whether other Muslim groups would be included in the ban. Needless to say, the safe-guarding of religious freedom by the United States Constitution adds an important variable to the above speculation.

Louis Farrakhan is faced with an additional concern relative to his religious faith. He has publicly stated that Islam is a religion that seeks to redress the grievances of oppressed people throughout the world. This particular point was, in fact, argued from the stage of the Kennedy Center on May 1, 1985. At that time Farrakhan said:

"Islam has never been a sanctimonious religion. Islam has never been a religion where men and women pray and go to the mosques and have no bearing on the society. Islam has always been a force that dispels tyrants and tyranny, oppression, and exploitation. Islam has always been a force that militates for justice."
If Farrakhan believes these words, and we can assume that he does, then the question becomes, What form will his fight against tyranny take within the United States? The most obvious answer is the movement's P.O.W.E.R. program as he has been lucid in his belief that blacks can exercise great leverage on America through amassing economic strength. He has said of the proper strategy, "We handle America by organizing effectively. We handle America by looking at the strength that we have in our hands and using our strength; you are rich not poor." Louis Farrakhan also reports that Arab leaders and, in particular, Muammar Qaddafi as the movement's first Arab world supporter agrees with his economic strategy. The movement's members, he maintains, have been instructed "not to carry so much as a pen knife."

Should the Middle East erupt as Farrakhan himself contends it will, the rhetorical problem he faces seems evident. Several questions would come on the heels of a full scale Middle East conflict. What will Louis Farrakhan say, should Arab nations go under seige from an attack from America or Israel? How will Muslims in the East expect him to respond to such an attack? What will the movement's members require of him? How will statements, following attacks on a Muslim nation in the Middle East impact on the masses of America's blacks, Muslims within the United States, and white America? It is plain to see Louis Farrakhan's rhetorical problems are potentially numerous. Likewise, the potential for modifying his rhetorical discourse is assured as tensions increase among America, Israel and the Arab nations of the world.
Several final observations need to be made at this juncture regarding the Arab world and the Nation of Islam. First, Louis Farrakhan argues that the Muslims who live in the East are plagued, today, with internal disunity and outside aggression because they have violated the instruction and warnings of the prophet God sent specifically to them, Prophet Muhammad of Arabia. He maintains that Arab nations have allowed themselves to be beguiled by Westerners and, in particular by, the United States' offers of aid and friendship. It is this reaching outside of the religious teachings, he asserts, that resulted in the fall of the Shah of Iran and the assassination of Egyptian President, Anwar Sadat.

Farrkahan maintains, of the Arab states, that their interest in American blacks is based principally on their belief in the propagation of their religion and has said regarding the potential of receiving financial support from various Muslim countries, "We expect, by the Grace of Allah, large sums of money to come from the Arab world...If I were not a Muslim I don't know whether they would be as eager to help me because what they're interested in is really the propagation of Islam."

Farrakhan also contends that the Arabs' decision to use arms to fight against their enemies will prove to be incorrect. He argues that, through economic development, the movement's P.O.W.E.R. program is a divinely ordered strategy which will have great success.

Finally, Louis Farrakhan is under no delusion that Muslims in the East hold fast to their belief in Prophet Muhammad as "the seal of the
prophets." According to them the Arab prophet was the final Warner/messenger to the world. As such, Farrakhan's argument that Elijah Muhammad is the last Warner runs contrary to the beliefs of those he seeks to persuade through his public address. On this issue he takes the position that support from the Arab nations is more important than whether or not they accept Master Fard Muhammad as God and Elijah Muhammad as the Mahdi. He maintains that the movement's success within the United States will prove the true identities of both men.

Analysis of social, business, and interpersonal relationships among the movement's membership and Louis Farrakhan's public address reveal the movement's final major Constraint. This same analysis also discloses, what the writer maintains, is, the most visible example of internal opposition to Farrakhan's leadership position, imperatives, and directives. Contrary to Farrakhan's public discourse about the importance of the woman, the movement has emerged in the 1980s as an organization suffering from its own brand of sexism. And while it is not a problem new to the movement, to the extent that the rhetorical discourse of the movement fails to address such perceptions, the movement's persuasibility and, hence, growth will be sorely jeopardized.

**Farrakhan and Sexism**

Charges of sexism are particularly disturbing when one considers that the woman was prominent in the movement from its very beginning. The Ministry was largely female from 1934 to 1939. After 1939, however, few females held the position. As evidenced in the title of
Elijah Muhammad's book, *Message to the Blackman in America*, the black male was considered the primary focus of Muhammad's work. The movement has maintained, since its founding, that white America, like Pharoah, concentrated on the destruction of the males among the black masses. Because the movement functioned principally from the premise that there was more work to be done with the black male, every opportunity to lead, command and administrate was given to him.

The development of the movement in its first two decades witnessed, with few exceptions, a steady decline in female participation at levels of decision making and temple leadership. Though their numbers were continuously growing, their roles in the movement seldom extended beyond that of wife and mother. Temple duties and activities consisted of giving dinners, holding bake sales, and making garments suitable for life as Muslim women. There were a small number of females who worked as secretaries within the various temples. However, in the majority of instances they were the assistants to males. When the movement's history is placed alongside media reports of life for Muslim women in such countries as Iran and Saudi Arabia, any perceived attractiveness or virtues of the religion are quickly dispelled.

As a result of these same media portrayals and through the practices of individual Islamic sects within the United States black women have come to believe several things about the woman in Islam. First, they believe that if they enter the movement unmarried, they are expected to marry soon after joining. They also believe that should they marry they will possibly become one of several wives, a
proposition most black women are vehemently opposed to. Black women believe that as a female in the Islamic faith they are expected to have several children and that their duties as wives and mothers supersedes their desires and aspirations for higher education and a career outside the home. Generally speaking, black women also believe that the religion means they will become second class citizens to all of the movement's males.

Analysis of the movement reveals through Louis Farrakhan's public address that none of these beliefs is true. The investigation also discloses that Farrakhan is also aware that women outside and inside are anxious and uncertain about their status and role in the Nation of Islam under his direction. Lectures such as "The Black Woman: Genesis of a New Black Man," "The Black Woman: Who is She," and his series, "Black Male and Female Relations" reveal clearly Farrakhan's concern with this particular issue. The most recent indicator of Farrakhan's determination to dispel certain fears and doubts existing among black women about the movement's perceptions of them is his October 7, 1985 Madison Square Garden address. On this occasion, he said to an audience estimated to be 25,000 plus, "The woman must play an important part in the development of the nation or the nation will go to hell." Needless to say, his statement was received with a standing ovation and thunderous applause...providing confirmation that he had, indeed, hit an area of deep concern and anxiety.

A second striking example of Louis Farrakhan's recognition that the question of the woman's status in the movement represents a serious constraint was seen during his address at Madison Square Garden. While
traditionally Farrakhan is flanked by male security persons during his public lectures, on this occasion his security team was female. At least three of them were his daughters. Louis Farrakhan's appointment of Ava Muhammad as the movement's first female minister also was to serve as a sign to women within the movement and those watching from a distance that there was unlimited opportunities for the female believer. Since that time ministry classes have included a number of females among its students.

One final indication that Louis Farrakhan is aware of the potentially damaging effects charges of internal sexism could have on the movement is visible in the construction of the movement's new Constitution. In its more than fifty years as an organization in the United States, the Nation of Islam has not operated with a Constitution. The closest thing to a governing document is most probably the movement's listing of Beliefs and Wants found within each copy of The Final Call newspaper and in Elijah Muhammad's Message to the Blackman in America. In the winter of 1985, a draft of an official Constitution was submitted to the members of the Nation of Islam for review and eventual ratification. Article Seven reads:

"A woman shall rise as high as her God-given gifts and talents allow her in her own interest and in the interest of her Nation within the framework of the Laws of Islam.

Any action, inaction or course of conduct on the part of any Registered Muslim, which impedes or opposes the provisions of this Article shall be considered a offense against the purposes of THE MUHAMMAD MOSQUE."63
There is little reason to suspect that Louis Farrakhan is in any way sexist in his thinking or his actions. Ever-evolving events consistently point to the opposite conclusion. And while the minister has within his own history severe criticisms of statements made in a 1975, Essence Magazine article concerning the role of the black woman in the movement, deliberate efforts seem to be underway to address any residue of backlash. Notwithstanding Louis Farrakhan's various statements of support, this writer has observed what can only be interpreted as a flagrant disregard for all statements of support and for Constitutional rights created for the movement's females. In the overwhelming number of instances this opposition to Farrakhan's instructions and directions have emerged from the movement's male members and, in particular, its officials.

Outside of the movement's Chicago Headquarters female members are not generally encouraged to aspire to leadership positions. Nor have conditions been created by local temple ministers to raise the woman's individual or collective standing within the mosque. In spite of Farrakhan's appointment of a female to the ministry in Chicago, few, if any, local mosques are seen encouraging their own female membership to work toward this goal. By and large opportunities for the women to address their male counterparts and vistors and guests are rare unless the women have, themselves planned a special program for doing so. It appears, also, that those occasions where the woman is provided with opportunities to display the faith through her own eyes and words are
frequently attempts to smooth out some specific tension between the ministerial staff and the female members. For the most part such efforts at conciliation and appeasement passification are viewed as just that and, as such, frustration and anxiety remain among the women. By no means are these observations intended to be a blanket indictment. There are exceptions. However, in view of Louis Farrakhan's public address they are far too rare.

The presence of the movement's Constitution guaranteeing its females autonomy and self-direction within the restrictions of the movement's religious doctrine seems, likewise, to have failed to be interpreted by the movement's male leadership to mean autonomy and self-direction. Women in the movement still appear to be locked into demonstrating the extent and depth of their spiritual growth and understanding through bake sales, dinners, and the occasional fashion review.

The effect that the appearance of sexism and proventialism within the movement will have on women outside of the Nation of Islam is much like that of an albatross. If Louis Farrakhan hopes to attract the female professional and intellectual, his rhetorical discourse must be modified in order to dispel these women's fears, concerns and reservations. If the movement is to be benefit from the talents and skills of women already within its ranks, Farrakhan's discourse must address emphatically all attitudes and actions which emerge from the movement's administrators which are contrary to his own vision for the female member of the Nation of Islam.
This discussion would be sorely off balanced if it did not include a few observations about the responsibility of the movement's women in addressing this constraint. Obviously, they cannot logically abnegate responsibility for their own growth and accomplishment within the Nation of Islam. In spite of Farrakhan's clearly articulated support for the movement's female membership far too many remain passive and seem resigned to be on the receiving end of orders and directives -even in situations where they are more qualified academically or professionally to assume greater leadership and participation.

It would not be hasty or short sighted to argue, at this point, that the movement's female members are their own worst enemy. Those who would interfere with their aspirations toward greater participation and visibility are hindrances only to the extent that the movement's women permit them to constitute such. It seems that what has happened within the movement and, hence what now has developed into a major rhetorical problem for Louis Farrakhan, is that the movement's women have failed to take advantage of the opportunities and openings given them through the words of Farrakhan's public address. The overall effect has been the emergence of a black movement that in 1986, has the appearance of being restrictive, repressive and atrophying to the intellectual and creative faculties of the black female. In consequence, the very women that Louis Farrakhan says he wants to attract to the movement at this stage in its development are precisely the women who turn from the movement to other organizations.
Finally, the greatest single damage that the movement has done to itself may well be that it has not sufficiently exploited its own wealth among its female constituents. Visibility of women who are mothers of 3 or 4 children in the absence of the woman who has deliberately postponed pregnancy for a career; black women who master the preparation of the movement's specialty desert - the bean pie - in the absence of females who prepare legal briefs; women who have developed skills and techniques of security enviable by law enforcement officials in the absence of others who spend their working hours as physicians have created a problem of significant proportions. If there are female scholars within the ranks of the movement's members Farrakhan must now make them increasingly more visible. Women scholars outside of the movement need to know that they are there. If there are female lawyers in the movement - and Ava Muhammad is one of several - it means nothing to female lawyers outside of the movement seeking some level of identification. If the movement claims among its female members educators their ideas need to be shared with the larger black community. The Final Call, the movement's principal publication must now be employed as a vehicle through which the visibility and, ultimately, worth of its female believers becomes a certainty and not a source for continued doubt and speculation. Continued absence of rhetorical discourse which modifies this constraint will only create an unwelcomed tinder box.

The goal of chapter six was to identify and discuss the major constraints in Louis Farrakhan's public address. This goal was pursued through an analysis of three specific issues. The writer maintained
that the first major constraint is that Louis Farrakhan and the movement are perceived by a significant number of blacks to be racist and anti-Semitic. If this claim is accurate, Farrakhan's rhetorical discourse must be modified to address this perception. The second constraint which was discussed was that of Farrakhan's relationship with Arab countries. It was concluded that as tensions increase— as they are predicted to do—they will need to re-examine his public address relative to the East. The third major constraint was identified as Sexism within the movement. It was stated that Farrakhan is faced with a short-fused explosive in this area which requires an immediate modification of his public address.
Chapter VI

Notes


3There is some speculation as to how Farrakhan actually become involved in Jackson campaign. Some critics suggest that he used Jackson's candidacy as a vehicle for increased visibility. Farrakhan maintains that he was content with teaching from his Chicago headquarters and that it was only at Jackson's request that he became involved in the campaign.

4The social and interpersonal history of Farrakhan and Jackson was seldom the focus of media attention. Yet, and still, it was this history of mutual respect and support which, in large measure, accounts for Jackson's initial unwillingness to distance himself from Farrakhan.


6Security on these occasions was primarily provided by seeing the movement's followers standing on the stage area and placed throughout the various audiences. The body and purse checking procedure which is characteristically a part of all of the movement's public events was not employed on the vast number of these occasions.

7The black community was noticeably distressed in the first weeks of Jackson's campaign because government officials had not determined that his candidacy was viable enough to warrant Secret Service protection.

8The day after Farrakhan's February 9, 1984 registration at the Chicago Election Board he spent more than one hour encouraging a Washington, D.C. audience to support Jackson through registration and votes. See "Black Youth address, Howard University January 10, 1984.


11There was little rapport between Jackson and the Jewish community going into the campaign. Jackson's overtures to Arabs at home and abroad had already classified him as anti-semetic. He entered the campaign having to "prove himself" to potential Jewish supporters.
Jackson's "uncertainty" about whether he made the comments or not only added to the appearance of having been caught in an indiscretion.


The movement consistently maintained that Farrakhan was used by Jewish leaders to weaken Jackson's already uncertain image and credibility within their community.


Jackson's unwillingness to repudiate was, for the most part, a politically expedient decision. It was Farrakhan to the presidential candidate the Farrakhan's verbal support had generated a response from a segment of blacks who had -prior to his participation- not responded to Jackson.


Louis Farrakhan, "Black Man's Fear," address delivered in Chicago on October 7, 1983.

Louis Farrakhan, "Get Up and Do God's Will," address delivered in Chicago.

Louis Farrakhan, "Get Up and Do God's Will."


In spite of speculation that Jackson's public repudiation had severed all ties between Farrakhan and himself, Farrakhan maintains that the two men continued to give each other support through regular telephone communication.

The movement argues that the Senate vote is misleading because it does not reflect the position of the one hundredth member. There is among the movement's literature a study guide dated April 5, 1983, which argues that there is a governmental official who believes that Farrakhan has God's power behind him. The argument continues that the absence of the hundredth vote supports the existence of such a person.
The Washington, D.C. mayor's open support of Farrakhan added to the movement's overall credibility and receptivity within the city. The movement considered Barry's Proclamation of February 10, 1983 as Louis Farrakhan and the Nation of Islam Day a personal and collective victory.


The recent move by the organization of its national headquarters from New York to Baltimore was made as a financial decision. However, the writer suspects that a part of the decision to move related to earlier tensions between Hooks and the National President of the organization, Enolia McMillan, who resides in Baltimore.

An additional factor which Farrakhan must consider is that in spite of his present distinction, the overwhelming number of blacks have not heard his March 11, 1984 or June 24, 1984 lectures were remarks were made about Hitler and Israel. Few blacks do not own televisions sets and radios. The movement simply does not reach the numbers of people it must reach in order to address the constraint. Concerted efforts are needed.


Louis Farrakhan, "Power At Last Forever," address delivered in Convention Center in Washington.

The Old Testament is commonly referred to as "The Book" among religious scholars and some lay persons. In this instance, however, the term is intended by Farrakhan to denote the study of various fields and disciplines.


Louis Farrakhan, "National Press Club."

Reagan's decision to visit a German cemetery was met with heated debate because of claims that he would be paying homage to the very persons who had persecuted Jewish people during the second world war. It was impossible to ignore the effect of Jewish pressure as the controversial decision became the cover story for Newsweek magazine.
Louis Farrakhan, "Madison Square Garden" address.

Louis Farrakhan, "Fairness in the Media Day" address delivered in Chicago during Summer 1984. No exact date given.


Prichard, Blacks and Jews.

The movement maintains that black organizations have historically not been able to establish their own priorities and strategies without considerable influence from their financial supporters, who in the vast number of instances have not been black.


Marable, "In The Business," 25.


Louis Farrakhan, "Power At Last Forever," Kennedy Center.


Bakst, 1.

Bakst, 1.

Bakst, 8.

Farrakhan's response to being prohibited from speaking in London, Bermuda, and Nigeria is that such actions have only added to him credibility in the eyes of persons who have been denied access to him.

The movement has reported that attempts by Farrakhan to purchase television time for the purpose of introducing the movement's P.O.W.E.R. (People Organized and Working for Economic Rebirth) program were aborted because network affiliates in Chicago refused to accept his check of 5,000 dollars.

This writer is of the considered opinion that the significance of Islam in the lives of Arab nations has been grossly under-estimated by the Western Powers. An attack on one Muslim/Moslem country will invariably result in other Arab countries coming to its aid. Even in instances where Arab nations have known points of disagreement, their shared religion will take precedence over such differences in time of conflict and, most certainly, war.
There is little reason to doubt that Farrakhan will be one of, if not, the most vocal and vehement opposers to such a conflict.


Interestingly, Farrakhan's admonition to the movement's followers about the carrying of weapons is so generally known among blacks that the likelihood of incidents occurring between them and law enforcement officials would be immediately suspect. The movement's well-known check and search procedure is, likewise, intended to prevent the incidence of violence from happening during their public meetings.

Louis Farrakhan, "Power At Last Forever," Kennedy Center Washington, D.C.

Farrakhan often relates his strategy of refusing to use weapons to the biblical account of David's fight with the giant, Goliath. Farrakhan's position that he, like David, has been divinely guided not to rely on various types of weapons to accomplish the movement's goal.

The phrase "seal of the prophets" is understood to mean the final Messenger that God would send into the world. The Arab world believes that their prophet, Muhammad Ibn Abdullah, is this person. Farrakhan agrees with their claim on one level, but he takes issue with it on another level. The difference may make the difference between the future development of relations between the movement and its Muslim/Moslem "brothers and sisters" in the East.

The female in the movement is instructed in the training of seven basic units. These units are (1) cooking, (2) sewing, (3) raising her children, (4) taking care of her husband, (5) proper behavior at home, (6) care of the home, and (7) proper behavior outside of the home. The female member of the movement is told that she may excel in any area of interest as long as it is not in conflict with "her true nature." She is taught to view the home as the proper base of her activities.

The early days of the movement were characterized by what appeared an "epidemic" of women with several children - all of them of the most young ages. This is much less the case today though there are still instances where very young couples have 4 and 5 children.

Under the movement's new structure, each city must become a charter "member" by obtaining the signatures of 40 of its "registered" believers. As such, the Constitution is actually ratified city-by-city.
Muhammad's Holly Mosque of Islam, Constitution Draft, Article 7, (Winter 1985). It should be noted that the movement's name officially changes in 1985 to Muhammad's Holly Mosque of Islam. The reason given for the change was that its new name distinguished the organization as a group inside of North America. Farrakhan maintains that if properly understood the Nation of Islam refers to the entire world of Muslims wherever they are found.
CHAPTER VII

Summary and Conclusions

Chapter one of the dissertation represented a proposal for studying the Nation of Islam through the rhetoric of Louis Farrakhan. I maintained that a rhetorical criticism of Farrakhan's religious claims, arguments and assertions was the means by which a better knowledge and understanding of the movement could be achieved. I gave several reasons why the present study was timely and, from my view, justified. Among the reasons given were 1) Farrakhan's "distinction" was one of the most widely and publicly repudiated public figures in American history, 2) the significant amount of controversy surrounding his public address, and 3) his growing attraction, support, and influence within the black community. The overview of literature identified Farrakhan's public lectures, sermons, and press conferences from the years 1978-1986 as the primary sources of data to be analyzed in the study. Secondary sources included the movement's literature and, in particular, the writings of B. Jabril Muhammad as well as written and taped materials from significant others within the movement. Secondary sources were not limited to these materials.

The presentation of the pluralistic methodological perspective was contained in chapter two. I selected the rhetorical situation model as the primary perspective from which to approach study of Farrakan's rhetoric. Herbert Simons' perspective for studying the multiplicity of problems and responsibilities confronting the leader of movements is the second approach used in the study, while Makay and Brown's perspective on Audience Image is the third methodological tool. Audience Image is an important theoretical approach for the present
study because of its focus on the rhetorical problems which invariably confront movement leaders. Finally, the method included the use of Participant Observation. This research activity was selected in order that the writer's data base could be expanded significantly and to reduce the distance between herself and the movement's membership.

Chapter three provided a detailed discussion of what Louis Farrakhan believes the principal problem confronting the masses of black people in America is. Analysis of Farrakhan's public address revealed that he maintains that the present day problems confronting the black man and woman of America cannot be separated from their history as "slaves" to America. In other words, Farrakhan's position is that blacks in 1986 are a direct product of a remaking process begun in 1555. He further concludes that America's slave masters and slave makers perverted Christianity for their personnel desires and used it principally as a method to control their growing populations of slaves. The result is that in 1986 blacks in mass must be re-educated spiritually.

Chapter four argued that Farrakhan's primary goal is to give blacks spiritual re-education in three areas. First, and foremost, his purpose is to reeducate them about Elijah Muhammad, the person for whom he is functioning as National Representative. His second goal is to introduce blacks to Elijah Muhammad's teacher, Master Fard Muhammad, who Farrakhan maintains is God. The third area in which Farrakhan's rhetorical discourse is intended is Jesus, the biblical prophet of 2,000 years ago. It is Farrakhan's position that proper understanding
of Jesus necessitates viewing the word, Jesus, as a title and not as a name of any specific person. Moreover, Jesus should be understood to be a term which applies to five entities rather than one individual each of whom lived at different times in history. Each entity is a "type" of Jesus who was missioned to carry out specific duties leading to a general resurrection of the world's peoples. The five Jesus types were identified as 1) the biblical Jesus of 2,000 years ago, 2) Master Fard Muhammad, 3) Elijah Muhammad, 4) Louis Farrakhan, and 5) the movement's membership.

Chapter five identified two specific audiences for which Farrakhan's rhetorical discourse is intended. They are, first, America's population of blacks. The second audience is the United States Government. Blacks are considered the Chosen People of God, a position promised to the biblical prophet, Abraham, of whom America's blacks are reported to be descendents. Farrakhan's discourse to blacks is intended to bring them from what he describes as "emotional, moral, psychological, and spiritual death" caused by slavery. Finally, the movement's followers are to be the spiritual teachers missioned to bring in an earthly kingdom based on the teachings of Islam as they have learned them from Elijah Muhammad and Louis Farrakhan.

Finally, chapter six identified three major constraints for which some modification of Louis Farrakhan's rhetoric is or will in the future be in order. The three areas cited were 1) Farrakhan and anti-semitism, 2) Farrakhan and Arab relations, and 3) sexism in the movement. The writer concluded that Farrakhan's arguments countering charges of anti-semitism have been largely ineffective for a
significant portion of the American public and that concerted efforts are needed through his public address to alter the movement's appearance of being racist and anti-Semitic. It was also noted that increased American military activity in the Middle East will most likely lead to a situation where Farrakhan's discourse will have to reflect the events of the area. As a Muslim who has already publicly identified with Muslims in the East, military attacks on any Arab nation should result in an immediate response from Farrakhan. The third area where significant modification of Farrakhan's public address is needed is in the role and function of the movement's female membership. The lack of visibility and rank in the movement must be addressed. Farrakhan's efforts must be intensified to demonstrate the movement's commitment to raise the status of its female membership. He must remove any doubts among his officials that he will permit or tolerate sexist attitudes or repressive actions among the movement's males.

Conclusions

It is difficult to articulate the enormity of the task which remains at this point in the study. The necessity of arriving at conclusions in any research venture is a given. The psychological and emotional weight which is an inherent part of this stage in the writing is not. Moreover, the presence of these factors, along with the writer's duty to master them, is one of the best kept secrets of scholarly work and perhaps its least respected dimension. In actuality, the obligation and responsibility which confronts the rhetorical critic is not a little bit arresting for not only are we writing about human beings, but attempts are made to make assements
about their choices, their choices, their perceptions, their images and their visions. In this case, not only is a movement's leader and membership at issue where conclusions are reached and significance determined, but the nature of Farrakhan's rhetoric compels us to accept the uncomfortable reality that only guesswork can be made of the actual influence of his discourse and presence on others. Needless to say, the writer will probably never know how her claims will affect these individuals or groups. The final task, then, besetting the writer is to answer the question, What does it all mean? The undertaking is humbling and uniquely lonely.

Former analysis of the Nation of Islam and its leaders and spokesmen have arrived at conclusions that, at best, have been only partially correct. Some writers have offered final evaluations of the movement which are simply erroneous when viewed from the movement's own literature and public address. What accurate statements are included in their assessments, are more times than not overshadowed by the enormity of hastily drawn conclusions and unjustifiable generalizations. Let it be known at the outset that no final conclusion is possible where the Nation of Islam is concerned. Persons who purport to have the "last word" on the movement are quite literally whistling in the dark. A far more prudent approach is to offer "at-this-time" evaluations and assessments. The following is such.

If one major claim can be advanced as a result of this study it is that the key to understanding Louis Farrakhan and his rhetoric is found in the movement's religious ideology. Stated more emphatically, there can be no precise understanding of what the movement represents or of
Louis Farrakhan's role in it outside of its elaborate and detailed body of religious beliefs and perceptions. Indeed, over the course of its more than fifty years on the American scene, the only thing which can be said to have remained unchanged is the movement's theological foundation.

A second claim which can now be made about the Nation of Islam is that it is a movement-in-constant motion. Change resulting from its perpetual movement has prompted some critics to suggest that the movement in 1986 is not the same Nation of Islam as that of the early 1930s. In one respect this is correct. On another level, however, this is incorrect. The truth of this matter is that the movement has always been ever-evolving and its form, shape, and emphasis in 1986 should be understood as part and parcel of its natural evolution.

A third claim which can be made about the movement is that it should be understood as essentially a process designed to "remake" a people it contends have been destroyed as a result of slavery. At the core of the movement's rhetoric is that the experience of slavery effectively destroyed the minds of the first slaves and, in doing so, set up a dynamic whereby larger and larger segments of each successive generation of blacks had fewer and fewer chances of maintaining any semblance of emotionally, psychologically, morally, or spiritually healthy people. As a process, the movement should be viewed as three distinct though not necessarily separate operations. The three operations in question are Retrieval, Resurrection, and Reconnection. The rescue or retrieval of blacks is the first operation of the process and began in 1930 with the movement's birth. Though coming at the
beginning of the process, retrieval functions throughout the movement's 
structure and design. As an operation resurrection is implemented 
through the movement's religious re-education efforts. As a stage in 
the overall process, resurrection must be understood to be progressive 
and ongoing.

A general purpose of resurrection is to reawaken in blacks certain 
values and to instill additional values not "previously" identified. 
Two specific goals are present. The first is to create a positive self-
image and, secondly, to instruct blacks into a new way of life with the 
religion of Islam as the model and guideline.

The last operation in the process is that of Reconnection. 
Emphasis at this stage is placed on the maturation of Islamic religious 
principles within American blacks in order to "reconnect" them with the 
world's larger Islamic community. As the movement contends that blacks 
are "Muslim by nature," its goal has always been the development of an 
Islamic community or state within the United States or "elsewhere." 
The accomplishment of this goal marks the completion of the process 
and, in fact, is an important reason for the movement's existence.

A fourth conclusion which the writer has reached about the Nation 
of Islam is that it can be best understood when viewed according to 
stages of development. The first stage is that of mobilization of 
blacks into the area of producers and manufacturers within the American 
economy. The primary goal at this stage of its development was to 
increase the level of self-respect and self-worth within the blacks 
and to prove to them and white America that blacks were capable of 
being more than a consumer class of people.
The second stage in the movement's development has a starting year of 1978 and can be said to have been officially introduced to the movement's membership with a directive that persons desiring to support Farrakhan's work as Elijah Muhammad's National Representative should immediately establish religious study groups within their respective cities. This second stage continues to this day. Close study of Louis Farrakhan's rhetoric between the years of 1978 and 1986 as well as on-site assessments reveal clearly that the second stage of the movement's development has, for all intents and purposes, been a dismal failure. Inspite of Farrakhan's directive, the movement's membership has resisted the intense religious study which he as urged. The result is that, with the expection of only a handful of followers, the movement's religious ideology has not been internalized. The most tangible result is that after ten years Louis Farrakhan leads a movement whose members seem generally unable to create an attraction to the movement that Farrakhan so easily does with each public address. Still another result of failure at this second stage is that great numbers of peoples have been left with impressions of Louis Farrakhan and the movement which the writer's research simply does not confirm. The following discussion provides a concise overview of what continues to be generally held perceptions of Farrakhan and what this closer investigation has revealed. It should be noted that views of Farrakhan still vary markedly in blacks and whites.

Several impressions presently exist within the general American populace concerning Louis Farrakhan. Elijah Muhammad's National
Representative is viewed as a man who openly voices a hatred of whites. While Farrakhan is without question a very open and straightforward communicator, examination of his rhetoric does not support the contention that he hates whites. The view that Farrakhan hates whites collectively is particularly meritless when examined from his own speeches and lectures which give tribute to the white woman who gave birth to the man he believes to be God, Master Fard Muhammad. Additionally, Farrakhan's rhetoric disclosed that he is prepared to champion the cause of lower class and oppressed whites should they seek his help.

A second perception of Louis Farrakhan is that he is anti-semitic. This perception is, likewise, not borne out from the extensive examination of his rhetoric and the movement's literature. Analysis of Farrakhan's public address as well as many of his public actions openly refute this charge. First, Farrakhan's fraternity with Libya and other Arab countries and leaders dismiss the charge once it is understood that Arab peoples are semitic in their own historical and geographical origins. Inspection of Farrakhan's public address reveals that the anti-semitism label has been incorrectly applied for the controversy between himself and some members of the Jewish community. The controversy is patently over a point of religion and not about either historical or geographical origins.

A third perception of Louis Farrakhan is that his rhetoric constitutes a message of black supremacy. This argument is much like that of how to best view the Contra fighters in Nicaragua. From the perception of some viewers these persons are freedom fighters. The
second view is that they are terrorists. What the examination of Farrakhan's rhetoric reveals is that he is shamelessly and highly vocal about his love and commitment to his own people before any willingness to expend energies attempting to solve the problems of other peoples. Charges of black supremacy often come on the heels of statements which are readily supported by scientific data and research.

A great many Americans consider Louis Farrakhan to be anti-American. On the contrary, within his own public discourse he states that he loves America but hates her domestic and foreign policies. Study of his rhetoric discloses that Farrakhan sees himself as a model American because his protests against what he views as improper or unjust governmental policies as consistent with the founding fathers' attitudes toward England. Farrakhan's rhetoric reveals that he considers himself to be America's best American citizen. It is his view that his stern rebuke and warnings to government officials are designed to save the country of his birth from unnecessary death and destruction.

A significant number of Americans consider Farrakhan's relationship with Libyan leader, Qaddafi, as bordering on treason. Study of the movement and Farrakhan's public address supplies at least two responses for this relationship. It is imperative to understand that Louis Farrakhan is first, and foremost, a man who places the tenets of his religion above all else. It is now general knowledge that he is a believer in the religion of Islam. Close study of the movement's literature and of the religion itself discloses that the "brotherhood" achieved through faith takes priority over the desires of
the state. Farrakhan's rhetoric includes numerous warnings to the movement's followers that as Muslims they are to obey all forms of authority.... as long as obedience does not conflict with their religion. Farrakhan's continued relationship with Muammar Qaddafi speaks directly to the significance of the movement's religious ideology as the means by which greater understanding of the Nation of Islam and, in particular, Louis Farrakhan can be facilitated.

A final perception of Louis Farrakhan is that he takes pleasure in lambasting and disrespecting persons in leadership position within and outside of the American government. Examination of Farrakhan's rhetoric shows that he uses as his criteria for all actions and responses to persons and situations the theological belief system of the movement. While the system does not call for disrespect of authority, it does state that the only duly recognized authority is God. As such, policies and positions which are deemed to be contrary to the will of God are open for criticism regardless of source.

With the exception of whites assigned by television stations and newspapers to cover his major addresses and those who elect to attend addresses sponsored by Black Student Government Associations at predominantly white colleges and universities, few of America's 200 million whites have ever seen Louis Farrakhan. This being the case, it would not be incorrect to state that the perceptions held by the overwhelming number of these individuals have been acquired through exposure to television reports and printed articles. And while broadcast and print media provide valuable services to the public generally, their inherent nature, their structure, their design, and
goals preclude the distribution of either detailed or significant amounts of information on any one individual topic or subject. Stated another way, it is fallacious to conclude that public figures can be sufficiently analyzed and understanding acquired within the limits and limitations of evening news reports, special reports, and written articles. Indeed, it is far more likely that built in limitations and restraints of these media will do more to increase levels of uncertainly, apprehension, and anxiety. This is especially the case where such reports and/or articles are about persons already considered controversial. Having made these points, an additional claim can be made as a part of the conclusion for this study. This claim is that close examination of the rhetoric of Louis Farrakhan reveals that in the case of the Muslim minister, the media's portrayal has been myopic, deceptive, and misleading. Moreover, examination of Farrakhan's public address discloses that both editing and excerpting practices have been arbitrary and conspicuous. Moreover, this practice has resulted in increased controversy in instances where understanding might have been achieved.

Admittedly, it is not the responsibility of the media to print the complete text of Louis Farrakhan's or anyone else's public lectures. However, the creation of saliency which is an inherent part of any editing process carries with it both unavoidable and undeniable accountability.

The present study of the rhetoric of Louis Farrakhan and the Nation of Islam has employed as its primary theoretical perspective the rhetorical situation model. Suggestion that the model is il-suited as
a critical tool for movement study has, without question, been disproved through the analysis of the preceding pages. Indeed, the model's design has permitted the writer the room so vitally needed in exploring subjects containing the complexity of movements. Analysis of Louis Farrakhan's rhetoric confirmed the selection of the rhetorical situation as the approach needed to generate the most comprehensive results. The specific division of the model's three constituents facilitated the systematic development of the analysis which has resulted in a composite picture of the movement and Farrakhan as its principal spokesman. Bitzer's definition of rhetoric as a mode of changing reality through the creation of discourse bears directly on Louis Farrakhan's work as Elijah Muhammad's National Representative and, more specifically, on his public address. Concern for a critical method that would facilitate the investigation of Farrakhan's rhetoric over a span of several years as well as take into account the movement's lifespan were removed as the application of the three constituents is not restricted by time considerations. The use of the rhetorical situation model should, as a result of this study, renew interest in its use and increase the number and areas of focus considerably.

The need for a critical perspective which allowed for discussion and analysis of both Louis Farrakhan's perceptions of his audience and his audience's perceptions of Farrakhan has been achieved through the inclusion of Makay and Brown's concept of "Audience Image." Through the study of his rhetoric, the writer determined that Louis Farrakhan's response to audience predispositions is to meet them head on. This particular critical method has also advanced our knowledge of the ways
in which Farrakhan's audience responds to his discourse. The diversity of reactions seen between whites and blacks is evidence of the employment of the processes of filtering, refracting, and interfacing. The presence of large audiences following public denunciations or rebuke of Farrakhan's statement, likewise, points to the use of these processes as ways in which audience adjust themselves to his messages.

The controversy which surrounded Louis Farrakhan at the onset of the actual writing of the study made it clear that formulation of the critical method would be incomplete without the inclusion of a tool which would speak specifically to his position and responsibilities as the movement's central figure. Simon's leader-centered approach to analyzing movements provided the theoretical perspective needed. Interestingly, inspection of Farrakhan's public address showed a variety of concerns he is faced with as the movement's spokesman. Further, his rhetoric contains numerous examples of discourse intended as direct responses to problems within the movement and outside of the movement. The discourse, on occasion, revealed specific strategies employed to address both outside opposition and internal difficulties. This critical perspective was invaluable to the present study and has resulted in greater depth in the overall research effort.

As a critical method, Participant Observation carried with it its own set of constraints. First among them was, of course, the extreme caution which had to be used in order to retain the critical posture. Constant awareness of the duality of roles proved to be an unreasonable expectation. As such, consistent review and analysis of conversation, events, and situations does much more to advance our knowledge than
conversations, events, and circumstances themselves. As daring as it may sound, perhaps the best way to understand the nature of a controversy is to become a part of it. The insider position as a participant of movements provides the unique benefits of observing at the closest of ranges- genuine responses to controversy surrounding a group's leadership and, of course, the group itself. Needless to say, from the close vantage point reactions to leadership's handling of both internal and external problems and situations are readily observable. The identification of sexism within the movement would not have been made as confidently without the use of this critical method in the research design. Moreover, the variety of experiences necessary before so serious a charge can or should be made require access to a movement's membership as well as its activities- something possible only through participant observation.

The merits of participation observation were also borne out through the writer's analysis of the movement's audience. In particular, this critical method made possible an enlarged study of persons attending Farrakhan's public lectures. The movement's policy of searching each guest brought audience members (females) to the researcher. Not only was it possible to assess reactions to this particular policy but a significant amount of information about new perceptions and changing perceptions of Louis Farrakhan flowed freely in most "check" rooms.

It is the firm view of this writer that if the present study has accomplished the goal of advancing our knowledge of the Nation of Islam and Louis Farrakhan - and the writer contends that it has - then
we must look to the critical method as the primary vehicle by which this achievement has been made. It has been only through this decidedly broad perspective that the numerous variables and considerations attending the investigation of movements and peoples could have been given the necessary attention and care. The pluralistic approach has proven itself to be of merit if for no other reason than it has served as a test of its own soundness.

Critical assessments of Louis Farrakhan have missed their respective marks. They have been unsuccessful in advancing our knowledge of this public figure. Instead, past evaluations have supplied only labels and categories for Farrakhan's words and actions. In large measure, this failure must be attributable to an unwillingness to view Farrakhan as a man who has been fashioned, shaped, and molded by perhaps the most unique system of theological beliefs, claims, and arguments to emerge in America. Efforts to understand "what makes Farrakhan tick" have consistently been separated from the religious foundation he stands on - an enormous flaw in our collective investigative efforts. Finally, it should be noted that Louis Farrakhan along with the present population of 30 million blacks are distinctly American-made products. Indeed, it is this common experience which runs through the hearts and minds of America's blacks that best explains Farrakhan's attraction and appeal among growing numbers of black men and women. It would not be incorrect to suggest that the black response to Louis Farrakhan's rhetoric is attractive and appealing to blacks because of his ability to identify and verbalize what Ernest Bormann describes as "fantasies and rhetorical visions."
"According to Bormann,

"When a speaker selects and slants the interpretation of people's actions, he or she begins to shape and organize experiences. When they attribute motives to the people in the story, they further slant, organize, and interpret. Because fantasy themes are always slanted, ordered, and interpreted, they provide a rhetorical means for people to account for and explain the same experiences or the same events in different ways."

Louis Farrakhan's rhetoric, then, is a rhetoric of shaping and organizing the black man and woman's experiences in America through the selection, slanting, and interpreting of human actions. From all appearances this particular talent and/or ability is serving him well as he pursues his rhetorical goals as Elijah Muhammad's National Representative.

This study has presented a perspective for analyzing the Nation of Islam heretofore not employed by researchers of the movement and its leaders. The result has been the emergence of what might well be called a new school of thought on one of America's most controversial movements and public figures.

Obviously, I cannot be the final judge of what has been written. That will come from others far removed from the intimacy of this study. It does seem clear, however, that the movement and Louis Farrakhan deserve serious attention. As is generally true of qualitative studies, this work has most likely raised several questions. And that is just as it should be.
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