

HUCKSTERS OF HATE - NAZI STYLE

Joseph Wilson and Edward Harris

Malcolm K. Little

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have been unwilling to do so." The station executive noted that there was nothing in the option agreement giving the LBJ Company authority to police Capital Cable's programs.

The FCC took Kellam at his word. No documentary evidence was submitted to support the claim. And on December 11—two days after Kellam made his last reply—the Commission denied TV Cable's petition for a waiver. The majority opinion held that there were no special circumstances in the Austin case to warrant an exception to the no-waiver policy. The lone dissenter, Commissioner Lee Loevinger, said there had been no showing that the local Johnson station, KTBC-TV, was in need of protection from TV Cable through the blackout rule. Loevinger, the Commission's newest member, had only recently been imported from the Justice Department's anti-trust division, which he headed.

Meanwhile, as a result of the Bobby Baker case, Washington newsmen were already prowling through FCC records on the Johnson family broadcasting empire. And so the Austin case fluttered directly into the bright spotlight of public attention, hitting the national news media for the first time.

Emboldened by the publicity, TV Cable made one more assault on the blackout rule last January. It asked the FCC for reconsideration. Nearly four more months of deliberation passed, and finally last month the Commission announced it would stick to the earlier verdict. The grounds: TV Cable had not shown good faith but tried to change the rules in the middle of the game by accepting the restriction and then attempting to have it annulled.

Nevertheless, the FCC failed to address itself to the central issue of the dispute: why the government should use its power to insulate from competition a prosperous station like KTBC-TV, which had a big stake of its own in the success of a community antenna system. Because the question remains unanswered, and because Presidential family interests are substantially affected, the Austin case will continue to rattle in the political closet long into the year.

The Cult of MALCOLM X

by JAMES A. WECHSLER

"Doesn't Black Nationalism carry with it the notion of returning to Africa?" I asked.

"Yes!" he replied, "but this is our long-range goal . . ."

"In joining the civil rights struggle, are you not contradicting your previous position, that is, of not working with whites, and having given up on America?"

His answer was immediate;

"No! First I believe the black man must lead his own fight; in fact, the Black Nationalist must become more involved and force the white man out, for he is the most deceitful creature on earth. I intend to prove that you can't get civil rights in this country. Then I intend to elevate the idea of civil rights to the plane of human rights; this way, we can go to the United Nations and show the world what this country really is. . . . The black man is maturing, he is waking up. That is why I say that we will have real violence. I have found out that the black man in the street thinks like I think. Where they are unwilling to talk in front of others, they are willing to tell me what they really feel. . . ."

—FROM AN INTERVIEW WITH MALCOLM X, PUBLISHED IN *The Liberator* MAGAZINE.

I FIRST encountered Malcolm X some-
what over a year ago when we were participants on a radio forum. I had read a good deal about him and had a general notion of what he had been saying to increasingly large

audiences on Harlem street corners. I had been told that he was articulate, well-informed, quick and skillful in debate. I rather looked forward to the evening as a phase of my own education; it was on a program conducted by Barry Gray and I knew there would be an hour or more available for the discussion.

Malcolm is a tall, slender, graceful man with a highly intellectualized face that can alternately light up with anger and laughter; one might easily mistake him for a young academician; off the air, he is disarming and quiet-mannered. But when he is performing, bitter sarcasm becomes his favorite tone.

Two aspects of the discussion stand out in memory. One was an outgrowth of his harsh and by now familiar denunciations of the established Negro leadership. I suggested to him that there was a certain presumptuousness in his derisive dismissal of such figures as A. Philip Randolph who have rendered so many years of dedicated, selfless service to the struggle against oppression. Malcolm's answer was swift and disdainful: "Randolph fought Marcus Garvey"—a reference to an ancient episode in the history of the Negro liberation movement in which Garvey fought for a separatist, nationalist policy for Negroes. Malcolm rendered the verdict with the finality of a Stalinist of the early Thirties to whom someone had ventured some favorable comment about a leader of the Second International. One could hardly avoid wincing as one listened to this self-righteous, self-possessed, self-proclaimed young savior condemn a man whose life has been so rare a

blend of nobility and courage.

The other exchange I recall most clearly occurred when Malcolm kept insisting that, as far as Negroes were concerned, there was literally no difference between New York and Mississippi; the terror and servitude were the same in both states. I argued that no good purpose was served by such misstatement; that one need not minimize the wrongs and injustices of New York to recognize that there was a difference of some consequence between a state in which a white tyranny used all the police power to maintain its rule and one in which the machinery of government, however fumbling and inadequate, accepted the moral premise of equality. Moreover, I contended, Malcolm's words would surely be used by the Southern racists to justify their system and to stifle criticism. If a Negro leader really believed New York and Mississippi were fundamentally the same, how dare the North condemn Mississippi's police state?

It was a futile, exasperating colloquy; I could not believe that Malcolm really believed what he was saying, but neither could I wrest from him—on the air—the admission that there were any real variations between the two states.

When the program had ended we conversed cordially for a few moments and Malcolm, with a mischievously amiable smile, said: "Look, you'll never get me to admit there's a difference between New York and Mississippi until we've won our revolution." What he was saying, of course, was that he fully got the point but that it did not suit his rhetorical purposes; he would continue to maintain that it was a distinction without a difference. I had a feeling that I had detected a cold cynicism in the firebrand, but his answer no doubt would have been that I could not understand.

It was about two months ago when I encountered Malcolm again. Many things had happened in the interim. The high hopes and spirits of last summer's Freedom March had been diminished by a series of anti-climaxes. There was growing talk of the white "backlash" in the North stirred by the rising militancy of Northern

Negroes; the battle of Birmingham had a seemingly different dimension to too many white citizens when it became the battle of Brooklyn. The Senate was bogged down in a filibuster. Factional conflict was scaring the civil rights groups.

Things had changed for Malcolm, too. He was no longer part of Elijah Muhammad's Black Muslim movement; he was operating his own black nationalist sect. The estrangement was apparently triggered by Malcolm's callous comments on the assassination of President Kennedy (he later claimed that he had not meant exactly what he said, or not said what he meant to say). Whatever the full cause of the rift, he was now more than ever committed to a hell-raising role in the civil rights battle. Since he remained a passionate advocate of separatism, there were obvious ambiguities and anomalies about his challenge to the civil rights leadership. It was partly because I was curious about how he was reconciling these views that I found myself attending an April rally at a midtown Manhattan meeting hall at which Malcolm was to speak under the sponsorship of The Militant Labor Forum, a unit of the Socialist Workers Party (the continuing modern manifestation of what old radicals define as "Trotskyism").

There was an intriguing aspect about the auspices of the meeting. It was hard to believe that Leon Trotsky had ever anticipated such an alliance would be welded in his memory; but those who wish to explore the detailed dialectics will find them elucidated at length, if not with precision, in the Trotskyist journal.

There was another, more dramatic circumstance which evoked my curiosity. Just twenty-four hours earlier, a Cleveland minister—the Reverend Bruce Klunder—had died under the wheels of a bulldozer during a CORE demonstration at a school construction site. I wondered whether Malcolm's meeting would offer some rec-

ognition to this "white liberal."

There were about 800 people in the hall. They ranged from elderly Trotskyists, veterans of the old factional left-wing wars, to young recruits, nearly all of them white; a small band of Malcolm's personal adherents was also on hand, but this was primarily an SWP show.



With mingled awe and pain, I watched Malcolm perform before this assemblage. It must be said for him that he made no visible alteration in his attitudes toward the white community. After offering a token tribute to those whites who had the wisdom to associate themselves with an organization that appreciated his message, he proceeded to deliver the same separatist speech that he has so often recited to Harlem rallies. Each time he baited those who had made the mistake of choosing white parents, there was general laughter, without regard to race; when he ventured a few poorly-veiled anti-Semitic thrusts (he was particularly sharp about Justice Arthur Goldberg's concern over the fate of Jews in the Soviet Union), he received equally non-sectarian approval. At times one had the feeling that he was playing his cosmic joke—that he knew much of the audience was so entrapped by doctrinaire shibboleth that it felt a special obligation to welcome his ridicule. (At times the spectacle evoked the revulsion one would experience if one watched a predominantly Negro audience respond warmly to a segregationist speech by a White Citizens Council spokesman).

In any case, he completed his remarks, and the dead Mr. Klunder remained unmentioned. As a journalist who suffers from a periodic inability to remain aloof from the event he is covering, I finally found myself taking the floor in the question period. My question was whether, in view of his assertion that he had met one "true white liberal," Malcolm would care to say anything about Cleveland's dead minister.

I think I really assumed that he would offer some words of regret and tribute, even if he had to accompany them with a reminder that such

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men were unique indeed. But he confounded me again. Instead of any remotely generous sentiment, he exploded contemptuously. "We're not going to stand up and applaud one white person when 22,000,000 American Negroes are being tortured," he cried.

Then suddenly he shouted "All right! Hurray! Hurray! Hurray!" but immediately proceeded to catalogue the list of crimes suffered by Negroes at the hands of white America. And when, a few moments later, a soft-spoken, gray-haired (white) citizen arose and implored Malcolm to let the audience observe one moment of silence in memory of Mr. Klunder, the answer was another tirade; he would never "use any energy applauding the sacrifice of a white man" in a world in which Negroes were systematically victimized.

It is many weeks since this occurred, but the image of the episode remains with me. One clings to the view that there can be certain communication in the world, and that both instinct and intelligence would have led Malcolm X to respond with a measure of common humanity—even if only to underline the sadness of the human condition—at that moment. One had the feeling instead that he believed his cause might somehow be undermined by such a display of "bourgeois sentimentality."

I have described these episodes in detail not because they were peculiarly historic but because they may help to illuminate the internal crisis confronting the Freedom Movement.

In *The Progressive* in March of this year I wrote of the moral crisis of the white liberals. It is no less serious now than it was then. Nothing written here is designed to suggest any diminution in my sense of the priority of that problem. There are innumerable half-truths in the thrush of Malcolm X.

But that is no excuse for silence about the real nature of his role, and the dead-end toward which he is leading many frustrated, alienated Negroes and some white camp-followers. Perhaps even more important is the prospect that imitators will spring

up—as they already have in some places—and that the civil rights battle will be poisoned by their presence.

Too many "militants"—white and Negro—have rationalized his performance with the claim that the threat he poses provides a certain weapon for those civil rights leaders still operating in the real world. There was a time when I found some validity in that view. But that time is past. His is an adventure in diversionary discord. It rests on acceptance of the segregationist premise that the cause of equal rights in America is essentially doomed; that Martin Luther King's dream was a delusion; that, to achieve self-respect, the Negro can do little more than take up arms to defend himself and await his deliverance to an African promised land. But the premise is false and the promise is demagoguery.

I am not pleading for patience and fortitude. I am saying only that the man who sneeringly refers to Eleanor Roosevelt as "supposedly a liberal," and who recklessly talks of substituting bullets for ballots, is inviting not liberation but disaster, and playing capriciously with human beings to whom he offers nothing but the prospect of futile violence and turmoil.

The answer to such criticism, offered by Malcolm and his more sophisticated apologists, is that the non-violence movement has proved a failure and a fraud; that the degradation of the Negro ghettos in the North grows worse rather than better; that the Southern landscape is still an unrelieved nightmare, brightened in no serious degree by scattered breakthroughs in schools and at lunch counters.

The indictment has much validity, but his alternative makes no serious sense. On that night in Manhattan, I heard Malcolm describe his vision of Harlem—a firmly-ruled black community in which "no white man will be able to set foot without a 'guide'." In his tortured dream, the black populace—during this period of transition before the ultimate return to Africa—will build Algerian-type walls around its own sectors, and thus achieve at least temporary escape from white persecution. One can only sadly observe that Georgia's

Senator Richard Russell would probably find this a satisfactory formula for settlement of the racial problem.

Its grotesque absurdity seems apparent; yet it would be self-deception to deny that, amid the stagnation and slow-motion that beset the quest for equal rights, such madness has achieved a growing appeal. It is reflected not merely in the formation of small terrorist gangs that draw spiritual inspiration, if not formal direction, from Malcolm and his agents, and who have embarked on sporadic forays of aimless violence against the "white enemy" (without regard to any specific offense allegedly committed by the victim). One also hears echoes of the same credo in conversations and correspondence with some intellectuals, Negro and white, who have joined in the revolt against non-violence.

A column that I wrote describing Malcolm's meeting, with particular reference to his scornful remarks about the Reverend Mr. Klunder, elicited a long, well-phrased letter from a Negro woman in which she said, in part:

"I know . . . I'm expected to . . . flatly denounce Malcolm X's callous reaction to the young minister's death. And I'm almost crying inside because I can't. My first thought was 'How tragic,' but before that thought was cold I was thinking 'But they started it.' Years ago after an explosion in the Gary steel mills one of my girl friends told me how her shock upon hearing of the accident changed to relieved laughter because only white men were killed. I was shocked at the coldness of it. But when that plane from Atlanta crashed in Paris it was sensitive little me who said, aloud, 'Good! It serves them right!' Isn't it still a matter of allowing color to govern your feelings for people—a mental process we learn mainly through dealing with you?"

"You are a compassionate man. This leaves you unequipped to see people as they are. I assure you that most other people, including many of mine, are not like you. You think that beneath the acquired hatred

each man has something akin to a soul, that each man, like you, is capable of love and forgiveness. But it ain't so. What did you expect Malcolm X to say in response to your question? A public response at that. You did not honestly expect a show of tenderness and sympathy, did you? I was not there but I would have expected the type of answer that you got.

"In fact, I wouldn't have asked the question. When you are dealing with conscienceless beings, anything you allow yourself to feel for them will be used to hurt you. And I suppose that goes for your dealings with us, too. I don't think Mr. X is completely without soul. After all, he seems to love us well enough.

"You speak of 'better dreams' and the 'real world.' My world is one of white domination with a white foot eternally on my neck. Ask some of your friends if they think we will ever be free in this country. Bear in mind that you are white and we habitually lie to whites. White liberals somehow expect us to be nobler while being treated like animals than white men are while being respected as men. . . . I see liberals as men with lamps, searching for gratitude, after all you have done for us. I suspect the hardest lesson liberals will learn is that you can pick Presidents and Cabinet members and solve the problems in Algeria, but you must not pick our leaders. While we accept, and at times even welcome, white help, we are not unmindful of why we need help in the first place, and that for some reason we are always being asked to commiserate with our helpers. Or go slow.

" . . . Civil rights is not an intellectual issue with us and some of us are not about to take the long view. Mr. X is saying this and telling us that if push comes to shove, and it has, we must try to free ourselves with no regard for the feelings of people who don't like us and aren't going to. It's foolish to speak of arousing animosity in people who already hate us. He is saying that it's not going to be cream and honey in a few years, and that we must build respect for ourselves, and he is touching people that other leaders have



Mauldin in The Chicago Sun-Times

Samson X

not been able to touch. And he voices the deep distrust that experience has taught us to have for white liberals—and in spite of the contention of the white press that Muslims and Mr. X's followers are an amazing combination of ignorance and stupidity, this suspicion does not lie solely in untutored breasts.

"Malcolm's tragedy is the tragedy of most blacks and a few whites—that of intellectual energy, talent, lives, and yes, compassion, being spent to prove that black men are really men, when these lovely gifts could be better used in the building and discovery of beautiful things that are not so elemental. But then, compassion is elemental, and mine is gone. Like innocence, once it's gone, it can never return. This is not a pleasant feeling. You certainly shouldn't change, I surely can't, and your people simply won't. It is rather sad, and very painful, and now I wonder who has given up on who?"

In response to her letter I wrote, among other things:

"Let me make one more attempt to cut through this stalemate. I happen to be Jewish; six million Jews were murdered in Germany because they chose the wrong parents. That is a lot of people. I also know there were Germans who participated in the underground anti-Nazi movement. A brother of a close friend of

mine was executed when he was caught. Now let's suppose I was addressing an anti-Nazi meeting in which I indiscriminately denounced the German people, and someone asked me whether I would agree to a moment of silence in memory of a young German who had been executed by a Nazi firing squad. I cannot believe that I would have responded by saying that I did not give a damn about the life of any German because 'they started it.'

"I suppose the only other point I have to make is that neither Malcolm nor you has the right to say that those of us who were born white (or so we think) have no real right to speak or to be heard in this crisis. The simple truth is that inequality is a burden for the oppressor as well as the victim, and the civil rights movement is as much a struggle for white liberation as anything else. I do not claim any originality in this thought, but I believe it is still the most valid point.

"Obviously, I have no quarrel with Malcolm's militancy. What I object to is his alienation from reality and his attempt to lead people down a dead-end road. James Farmer was fighting this battle long before Malcolm discovered it; yet Malcolm's derisive remarks about Farmer were more hostile than his reference to the white Cleveland minister."



The exchange continued for a while; yet I had a sense that this was a dialogue of the deaf—that a fatal barrier to any real discourse had been created, and that no words could alter the mood.

Malcolm X, of course, is not alone responsible for this condition. Other voices in other places are saying similar things, and each day of delay and indecision in combating the sickness of oppression and inequity strengthens these appeals to unreason. But to recognize the roots of this desperate despair does not require the abdication of our own senses. Those who tell us all is lost because too little has been won, and who see the nation—and eventually the universe—doomed to some final conflict be-

tween races are in fact merely indulging themselves.

For the simple truth, as James Farmer and Roy Wilkins and others continue to proclaim amid the pressures of the so-called "militants," is that the Negro cannot go it alone; those who tell him that he can are cheating him. Those who cannot differentiate between Jim Farmer and Jim Crow, who lightly hurl the epithet of "Uncle Tom" at leaders who see both the moral and practical imperative of preserving and extending the Negro-white coalition, those who insist the "white liberal" must be banished from the Freedom Movement or reduced to the role of water boy, those who, in effect, affirm a reverse segregationism because "the white man can never understand what it means to be black" are strengthening every vile impulse in our national life, and obstructing perhaps our last best chance to achieve a national solution, too long postponed, of our racial agony.

I am not wistfully projecting some sudden, serene "revolution by consent." The white resistance, South and North, remains bitter and entrenched; if Congress enacts the civil rights bill, there will still be a long struggle ahead, in the courts and in the streets. The question is not whether the Negro has legitimate cause for impatience and outcry; it is whether his anger will be unleashed, without discipline or direction, at something called the "white world," or whether it will find purposeful expression in a concerted alliance with many thousands of other Americans who have not deserted the March on Washington.

We are, I think, at a fateful moment of transition. White defections from the civil rights cause is a tragic fact of life; but it is not the whole story. The Interfaith assemblage in Washington in April was a remarkable occurrence; perhaps the most important words spoken there were those of the Reverend Dr. Eugene Carson Blake, speaking for all the Protestant denominations. Warning against excessive preoccupation with the "legality of demonstrations," he declared:

"Unless we quickly understand that

standing insults in our society . . . make peaceful men turn violent, and patient men lose their self-control, we understand neither the first level of morals nor the depth of the crisis that race discrimination has brought to our once proud nation."

Such words were spoken by a leading white clergyman; such men do exist, and they appeared in great numbers. To deprecate their role is to assert that there has been no moral advance in our lifetime, and that Medgar Evers—and the Reverend Mr. Klunder—died in vain.

I do not know whether the battle for equality—not merely the legislative fight but the search for an authentic national community—can be won decisively in a foreseeable future. We do know that a new white generation is growing up which has, in many instances, rebelled against the folklore of its fathers. We do know that the white supremacists are on the defensive, no matter how small the evidences of progress may

be. But most of all it must be clear that this is a disastrous time for discord within the civil rights movement, and for diversionary gospels of "black separatism" that can only disrupt the Freedom legions.

Those who live in islands of white tranquility fool themselves if they believe there can be any ultimate escape—for themselves or the country—from the Negro upheaval of our time. But Malcolm X and his disciples are equally removed from reality when they advertise salvation in autonomous ghettos, and incite total war against the white community. Radical sects that encourage this delusion prove anew how little Marxism has to do with the American experience.

What gave the Freedom Movement its initial impetus was its deeply indigenous quality, its remarkable self-discipline, its inner strength. Those who divide that movement will not conquer; they can only manufacture debris and disorder.

The High Price of the Cold War

by SENATOR WILLIAM FULBRIGHT

THE CONSTITUTION of the United States, in the words of its preamble, was established, among other reasons, in order to "provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty . . ." In the past generation the emphasis of our public policy has been heavily weighted on measures for the common defense to the considerable neglect of programs for promoting the liberty and welfare of our people. The reason for this, of course, has been the exacting demands of two world wars and an intractable cold war, which have wrought vast changes in the character of American life.

Of all the changes in American life wrought by the cold war, the most important by far, in my opinion, has been the massive diversion of energy and resources from the creative pursuits of civilized society to the conduct of a costly and interminable struggle for world power. We have been compelled, or have felt ourselves compelled, to reverse the traditional order of our national priorities, relegating individual and community life to places on the scale below the enormously expensive military and space activities that constitute our program of national security.

This, I think, is the real meaning