

'I Saw the Murder'

By THOMAS SKINNER

They came early to the Audubon Ballroom, perhaps drawn by the expectation that Malcolm X would name the men who firebombed his home last Sunday, streaming from the bright afternoon sunlight into the darkness of the hall.

The crowd was larger than was usual for Malcolm's recent meetings, the 400 filling

three-quarters of the wooden folding seats, feet scuffing the worn floor as they waited impatiently, docilely obeying the orders of Malcolm's guards as they were directed to the seats.

I sat at the left in the 12th row and, as we waited, the man next to me spoke of Malcolm and his followers:

"Malcolm is our only hope," he said. "You

can depend on him to tell it like it is and to give Whitey hell."

Then a man was on the stage, saying: "... I now give you Brother Malcolm. I hope you will listen, hear, and understand."

There was a prolonged ovation as Malcolm walked to the rostrum past a piano and a set of drums waiting for an evening dance

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Malcolm and the Muslims, By Ted Poston, on Page 15—Also See Alvin Davis on Page 16

WEATHER

Windy &
cold, 30s.

Tuesday:
sunny &
cold, 30s.

SUNSET: 5:38 a.m.

SUNRISE:
7:04 a.m.

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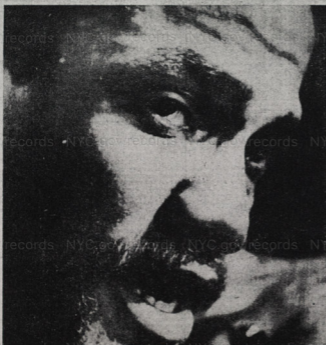
NEW YORK, MONDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 1965

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GUARD MUSLIM



Malcolm X: A Recent Photo

CHIEF

**Malcolm Men
Out to Kill
Muhammad,
FBI Says**

Stories on Pages 2 and 3

Muhammad Under Guard; Fear Reprisal

Chicago, Feb. 22 (CDN)—The mansion of Elijah Muhammad, prophet of the Black Muslim sect, was guarded today by police after the FBI reported that six Black Nationalist terrorists were reportedly on their way to Chicago.

They were alleged to be seeking revenge for the slaying of Malcolm X, one-time Muslim leader and candidate for Muhammad's job, who was assassinated yesterday in New York.

Earlier, police had feared that retaliation for the death of Malcolm X already had begun when the home of heavyweight champion Cassius Clay here was swept by fire a few hours after the assassination.

Police expressed the belief that Malcolm may have been killed by Muslims because of his split with the Chicago-based group.

Inside the three-story brick home at 6547 S. Woodlawn Ave. in the Kenwood neighborhood on the South Side, Elijah's bodyguards watched.

A two-man squad car was posted outside although the Muslims Muhammad some of whom call white men "devils," requested no aid.

Another squad car was parked near the sect's temple at 5339 S. Greenwood Ave. Other cars were cruising nearby, on call.

Meanwhile detectives watched passengers arriving at O'Hare Airport from the East.

It was not known whether the six Black Nationalists would try

to drive or take a bus or train to Chicago.

FBI agents in New York reported that one of the six believed to be en route to Chicago is Omar Abdellatif, another is named Donald Washington.

The apartment of Muhammad Clay—an ardent Black Muslim who calls himself Muhammad Ali—was ablaze only a few hours after Malcolm's assassination.

Both Clay and the police said they thought connection between the fire and the slaying was unlikely. But an investigation by the Fire Department continued today.

The fire at 7036 S. Cregier Ave. began in the second-floor apartment of Carl C. Elliott, 37, which is just below Clay's.

Elliott told police he left his apartment yesterday afternoon and when he returned just before 10 p.m., his mistress was smoldering.

He tried to put out the fire, then ran to a neighbor's home to call the fire department.

Sgt. John Grundman, of the police bomb and arson squad, and Fire Marshal William Foley said the fire may have been caused by a cigarette left on the bed.

But a detective, who asked not to be named, said that the fire is accidental. It's quite a coincidence coming at this time. Clay and his wife, Sonji, were in a restaurant when the fire broke out.

All of their furniture and clothes were destroyed, but Clay's trainer, Brewer (Bundin) Brown, rescued Clay's championship belt, presented to him after he defeated former champ Sonji Liston.

and stood in front of a mural as a language as ding, as the rest of the ballroom.

When, after more than a minute the crowd quivered, Malcolm looked up and said "A salama aleikun (Peace be unto you; and the audience replied "Wa aleikun salama (And unto you, peace).

Respectful and dapper in a dark suit, his sandy hair glinting in the light, Malcolm said: "Brothers and sisters . . . He was interrupted by two men in the center of the ballroom, about four rows in front and to the right of me who rose and, arguing with each other, moved forward. Then there was a scuffle in the back of the room, as I turned my head to see what was happening, I heard Malcolm X say his last words: "Now, new brothers, break it up," he said softly. "Be cool, be calm."

The all hell broke loose. There



Malcolm X with his wife, Betty, their three daughters and heavyweight champion Cassius Clay.

For Malcolm's Widow, Only His Work Is Left

By CARL J. FELLECK

It was early in her grief, and for the widow of Malcolm X it was not yet time to begin her private mourning. First, she had to explain that her husband had not died in vain.

With a terrible finally, she also had always known that he "would be killed some day."

It was late last night, just hours after she and one of her four small children stood by helplessly as the wild shots rang out cutting husband and father forever out of their lives.

Malcolm's widow—known in her husband's movements as Mrs. Shabazz—sat next to her lawyer, Manhattan Democratic Assemblyman Percy Sutton, at a press conference in George's Supper Club, a Negro nightclub at 10364 Astoria Blvd., East Elmhurst. The club is less than a mile from the house she and Malcolm had lived in until they were burned out by fire bombs little more than a week ago.

"The magnitude of his work," will be felt around the world,"

she said, proudly.

She was dry-eyed as she spoke, her composure carefully intact. Occasionally the reserve cracked and the tears broke through.

Then her she could be heard above the silence that paid tribute to her loss.

He Was Killer

She tried to explain Malcolm's bitterness over the Black Muslim's charge that he tried to destroy his own home. "When that happened, he didn't fold up his arms and cry," she said.

And then she told of answering the phone in their room at the Hilton Hotel Saturday night and again yesterday morning when the caller warned that Malcolm "better wake up before it's too late."

The police escorted him to his room, she said, and others stood guard elsewhere around the hotel.

As Mrs. Shabazz adjusted her green cloth coat and sat down, Sutton spoke up.

"Malcolm X had nothing; Malcolm X died broke, without even an insurance policy," Sutton said. "Every penny that he received from books, magazine articles and so on, was assigned to the Black Muslims before he broke with them; and after that, to the Muslim Mosque Inc. (Malcolm's own group)."

Unarmed When Killed

Sutton explained that Malcolm occasionally had either owned or carried a .25 caliber pistol or a rifle but that "he was unarmed on the stage when he was killed." Malcolm's wife said the police had denied his request for a pistol permit.

A police spokesman, Capt. Paul Glaser, said the police had offered Malcolm protection several times, but that he had refused. Glaser said protection has since been offered to Mrs. Shabazz, but that she also declined the offer.

Throughout the conference, Sutton referred to her as Sister Betty. It is the name she used when the first met Malcolm in 1959, when both belonged to the Black Muslim Mosque Number 7, and Malcolm was the head. They married and took Shabazz for their family name. It means "The Wise One," or "The Great One," a Muslim source explained. Malcolm had been born Malcolm Little, but gave up his last name when he became a Muslim.

The press conference ended and Sister Betty—expecting her fifth child—was briefly questioned by police.

As they left the club with Sutton, some of Malcolm's faithful checked under the hood of the car, and they drove off with a police car trailing behind.

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Continued from Page 1

was a muffled sound of shots, and Malcolm, blood on his face and chest, fell limply back over the chairs behind him. The two men who had approached him ran to the exit on my side of the room, shooting wildly behind them as they ran.

I fell to the floor, got up, tried to find a way out of the room.

Malcolm's wife, Betty, was near the stage, screaming in a frenzy. "They're killing my husband," she cried. "They're killing my husband."

Groping my way through the first frightened, then enraged crowd, I heard people screaming. "Don't let them kill him." "Kill those bastards." "Don't let him get away." "Get him."

At an exit I saw some of Malcolm's men beating with their strength on two men. Police were trying to fight their way toward the two. The press of the crowd forced me back inside.

I saw a half-dozen of Malcolm's followers bending over his inert body on the stage, their clothes stained with their leader's blood. Then they put him on a litter while guards kept everyone off the platform. A woman bending over him said: "He's still alive. His head's beating."

Four policemen took the stretcher and carried Malcolm through the crowd and some of the women came out of their shock long enough to moan and one said: "I don't think he's going to make it. I hope he doesn't die, but I don't think he's going to make it."

I spotted a phone booth in the rear of the hall, furnished for a dinette, and called a photographer. Then I sat there, the surprise wearing off a bit, and died desperately to remember what had happened. One of my first thoughts was that this was the first day of National Brotherhood Week.

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3/9/5-
Thomas Shinner

880 Boynton Ave

Brnx 72,

712-680X

Arrived about 10 to 3

Saw in 12th Row. Man speaking.
Then Machine come on. Saluam
Alchem.

Scuffling in the back.
Looked to the back. Turned back.
Saw 2 men in middle like going toward
Stage, Rostrum. Close to the rostrum.
Group of Shars. Shars coming from
in front of w. Lost sight of men.

Hit the floor.

THOMAS SKINNER, called as a witness, having been first duly sworn, testified as follows:

THE FOREMAN: Please sit down.

BY MR. STERN:

Q What is your name, sir?

A Thomas Skinner.

Q And where do you reside, Mr. Skinner?

A 80 Boynton Avenue.

Q That is in the Bronx?

A Bronx 72.

Q And would you kindly remove your hand from the mouth so the grand jury can all hear you?

What do you do for a living, sir?

A I am an employee of the New York Post, editorial assistant.

Q Now, I direct your attention to Sunday afternoon, February 21, 1964, on that date did there come a time that you went to the Audubon Ballroom here in New York County to hear Malcolm X speak?

A I did.

Q Do you recall what time it was, approximately, that you went to the ballroom and seated yourself?

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A The question is not quite clear, when did I arrive or when did I seat myself?

Q What time did you arrive, Mr. Skinner?

A I should think it was approximately two minutes to three or ten minutes to three, or something like that.

Q And then there came a time when you

seated yourself, is that right, sir?

A That's right.

Q And where did you seat yourself with

reference to the stage, was it to the left as you face the stage or to the right?

A According to my estimation, I was on the left in about the fourth row.

Q Now, at the time that you sat down

who was speaking on the stage?

A I have heard several reports that there was a speaker -- I have heard reports that his name was Benjamin, I did not confirm that.

Q But it wasn't Malcolm X, is that correct?

A No, it was not.

Q Did there come a time when Malcolm came

to the podium or to the rostrum and began to speak?

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A Yes, and began to speak.

Q What did he say?

A He uttered the customary greeting of the cult of which he's a member, "Salaam Aleikem", and there was a response from the audience.

In fact, there was a long ovation upon his coming to the rostrum.

Q Mr. Skinner, after you heard that, or salvation from Malcolm X, did anything occur?

A Not that I noticed, not immediately thereafter.

Q Did there come a time when you heard a scuffling in the back of the hall?

A Yes. ~~QxxYxxx~~

Q Did you turn to the back of the hall?

A Yes.

Q The direction of the sound?

A Yes, as far as I can gather there were several things happening at that particular time, but I specifically turned my attention to the scuffling in the back.

Q And after you turned towards the rear did something happen to turn your attention back to the

front?

A Yes.

Q What did you see?

A I saw two men approaching the rostrum.

Q And how were they approaching it, down

the center aisle or down the left aisle?

A No, they were coming out from the aisle of chairs, as though to come to the aisle.

Q Did you see them reach the aisle?

A Yes.

Q And did they reach the center aisle, did they begin to go downtowards the rostrum?

A I saw them go towards the rostrum, yes.

Q Did you hear any shooting, sir?

A Not at that point.

Q When was the first time you heard shots?

A I heard the shots as I hit the floor, which was sometime after the scuffling in the back.

Q Well, Mr. Skinner, what caused you to throw yourself to the floor?

A The shooting of course.

Q So you heard the shots before you threw

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yourself to the floor, isn't that right, sir?

A Yes, that's right. That's right, sir.

Q So that would be after you saw the men in the center aisle heading towards the rostrum.

Then you heard the shots and then you fell to the floor, is that right?

A Yes, right .

Q After you heard the shots, sir, did -- could you tell from which direction the shots were coming?

A As far as I could estimate they came from the direction of the two men approaching the rostrum.

Q Who were approaching the rostrum?

A Which would probably be the center of the ballroom.

Q They were ahead of you, is that right, sir?

A Yes.

Q And you were only in the twelfth row from the stage, is that correct?

A Yes.

Q And they were already in front of you and walking further away from you towards the rostrum; is that right, sir?

A Right.

Q You yourself weren't even seated in the center of the hall, is that right?

A That's right. I was on the left.

Q You were towards the front and on the left?

A Yes, I was on the left.

Q Now, after you heard the shots, you took cover on the floor, is that right?

A Not only I, but everyone else.

Q Well, there were quite a few that didn't, is that right?

A Yes.

Q Now, is that the last sight you had of these two men?

A Yes, sir.

Q And did you remain on the floor while that shooting occurred?

A I remained on the floor though I can't determine how long. I was at that point primarily interested in myself, other than that of being a reporter.

Q In other words there was also other

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shooting going on while you were on the floor?

A There was a series of shots, yes.

Q And when you finally got up you didn't see the two men again, is that right?

A No.

Q When you did get up did you see anybody with weapons in their hands?

A I heard firing, I saw nothing specifically, but I heard firing and I heard a -- I observed a mass stampede for the exit. This could have been anything, this was a frightened people.

Q And the firing you heard was that from the direction of the exit in back of you?

A It was as though those people were moving towards the exit, whoever was firing.

Q Now, the two men that you say you saw walking down the middle aisle towards the rostrum, did you see their faces?

A No.

Q I direct your attention to the four photographs in front of you, which are labeled Grand Jury Exhibits #1, #2, #3, #4, and I ask you to look

at the men portrayed in those photographs.

A I have seen them. I saw them when I walked in.

Q Now, since you did not see the faces of the two men who walked towards the rostrum, you have no opinion as to whether or not, of your own knowledge, any of the men portrayed in those photographs were the men that walked towards the stage?

A I have no knowledge of that.

Q You don't know if they were, or you don't know if they were not?

A Whatever that means, yes.

Q I mean you're not prepared to say that they're not the men?

A I have no knowledge of their identity.

MR. STERN: Are there any questions of Mr. Skinner?

Thank you very much.

(Witness excused.)