

John Ali: TOPLEV



If Herbert Muhammad could be removed as successor to the leadership of the NOI, it would place out top-level NOI informants in a better position to neutralize the extremist cult.” - FBI Memo May 7, 1968

The FBI had multiple high-ranking paid human informants in the leadership of the Nation of Islam. Could it have been that FBI informants were actually involved in Malcolm’s murder? Almost certainly so. - David Garrow, in “Who Killed Malcolm X,” Netflix 2020. Episode 3

I had a meeting with J. Edgar Hoover – John Ali, Former National Secretary of the Nation of Islam, March 2021

I. Loyal Government Employee

In 1950 John Simmons was the first Black person to graduate from Bryant College in Rhode Island, graduating with an accounting and economics degree. His graduation commencement speaker was U.S. Secretary of Commerce Charles Sawyer. Secretary Sawyer and Bryant College President Dr. Henry Jacobs arranged for Simmons to travel to Washington D.C. and interview with various government departments such as the Treasury Department. This cabinet ranking member of the Harry Truman Administration wanted the “first Black” Simmons to work for the federal government. The Secretary of Commerce arranged a meeting for Simmons with J. Edgar Hoover, the Director of the FBI. John Ali (as his name will later become) tells us:

Well, I went to school in Rhode Island, Bryant University in Rhode Island. And so the graduating class of 1950, I was in that class. And they had the Secretary of Commerce Charles Sawyer as the commencement speaker. And Dr. Jacobs, who is the president of the university, he had arranged for me to go down to Washington to see Secretary Sawyer about employment. Because in the fifties, I graduated with an accounting and economics degree, but in those days, if you were the clerk at Woolworth, that was considered a big thing. They didn’t have no Black clerks, that was the same as being a doctor or a lawyer. Or at the post office. You wore your uniform to formals. That was considered a high position...[W]hen I came into The

Nation [of Islam], it did not have the popularity or acceptance that it had now. Or the term 'being Black'. So I accepted and I had been part of the Black hierarchy, the elite, you know, doctors, lawyers and all that. Not because I was smart, but they recognized my association with white...You know, I had gone to a white university in New England where most Blacks attended Howard, Fisk, you know, Tuskegee. So I was like a celebrity. I had gone to a white university and in New England, so this was unique. And I had told Malcolm [X] when I came [into the Nation], he was the minister in the temple, that when I graduated from the university, the president of the university, Dr. Jacobs, arranged for me to go to Washington to see Charles Sawyer who was Secretary of Commerce. They were trying to employ me because of the 750 graduates, those [who] graduate in my class, I was the only Black, in fact, I was the first Black to graduate from Bryant University in Rhode Island. So, I went down there and Charles Sawyer, the Secretary of Commerce, arranged for me to go to different departments of the United States, you know, Treasury [etc.]. The federal government. And at that time, the FBI, they only hired lawyers or accountants for ages at that time and all were being hired personally by J. Edgar Hoover. So it was Secretary Sawyer of Commerce. He arranged for me to have an interview with J. Edgar Hoover, which I was interviewed by him. But even though he was the head and did all the hiring of agents and senior positions in the FBI, they didn't hire me because the federal government had very few people in high position above what they call a GS4 civil service rating. And I had a civil service rating of a GS7.¹



At the Bryant College Commencement, August 4, 1950, from left to right: U.S. Attorney General James Howard McGrath was Governor of Rhode Island from 1940 until 1945; Dr. Henry L. Jacobs was President of Bryant College from 1916 until 1961; Charles S. Sawyer was United States Secretary of Commerce from 1948 to 1953, in the administration of President Harry Truman. These men arranged John Simmons meeting with FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover in 1950.

The "GS" or General Schedule was the pay scale within the U.S. Civil Service for federal employees. By the time the U.S. Secretary of Commerce arranged for John Simmons to meet and be interviewed by the FBI Director, Simmons was already a GS7 Civil Servant, where most FBI employees were only GS4. As a result, Simmons was a member of the "Black elite." He would later tell a reporter that his "career in civil service" as a budget clerk made him financially well off.² Civil servants are employed by the government in the public sector and answerable to the government.

What were the results of that 1950 meeting with J. Edgar Hoover? John Ali gives two different (and conflicting) answers to this question. He said on the 2020 Netflix docuseries "Who Killed Malcolm X?": "I went to Washington and they arranged for me to be interviewed by

¹ John Ali with Munir Muhammad on *Muhammad & Friends* November 5, 2017 Episode A526 @ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=36baX_H-ZH8. John Ali was interviewed by Munir Muhammad again on August 8 and August 13, 2018 Episodes A575 and A576.

² David Potter, "All Lies, Says Ali of Rap At Muslims," *Chicago Daily Defender* July 7, 1964.

Hoover. He turned me down. I was turned down directly by Hoover. He said, ‘Not at this time.’”³ According to this account, John Simmons left Washington D.C. with his answer given to him directly from Hoover: “No.” At least, “Not at this time.” However, in a 2021 interview John Ali says something significantly different. After Simmons returned from his meeting in D.C. the FBI sent him an official letter stating *the Bureau had him under consideration and will later inform him of his status*. “But I never heard from them again,” John Ali explained.⁴ These two accounts are irreconcilable: either Simmons got an explicit rejection from Hoover himself or he left D.C. with his employment status pending, subsequently received a letter from the FBI confirming that he was being considered by the FBI for employment and will be informed of his status later, and *later never came*. John Ali is hiding something here. In the 2021 interview John Ali is asked as a follow-up: “Upon getting that letter, was there any other interactions between you and J. Edgar Hoover and the FBI?” To which Ali replied: “No. Only that meeting and that letter. *And I never heard from them again.*”⁵ If by “them” Ali means he never heard from the FBI after that, this was a lie or it was at the very least a disingenuous answer. John Simmons had significant interactions with the FBI after that, as we shall see.

After his Washington D.C. meeting with J. Edgar Hoover, Simmons joined the military and had *very* interesting service. He “worked as a Signal Corps messenger [and] a trackman for the Navy Department”.⁶ The United States Army Signal Corps (USASC) is the branch responsible for military communications or *signals*. Signal Corps Laboratories were responsible for designing and developing much of the communications equipment used by American forces in World War II.⁷ During the war Signal Corps messengers engaged in the routine collection and delivery of coded messages.⁸ In addition to sending messages, the Signal Corps retained responsibility for the Army’s security and *intelligence* activity.⁹ The Signal Corps’ motto is: *Pro Patria Vigilans* “Watchful for the Country.” John Ali, by his own admission, was a Signal Corps messenger. He also served as Inspector with the Department of the Army in Philadelphia. This was before 1953.



In 1952 the FBI conducted “a full-field loyalty investigation” of John Simmons in connection with his position as an Army Inspector. As per a 1947 Executive Order of President Truman, the U.S. Civil Service Commission established a Loyalty Review Board. The FBI was charged with investigating certain civilians employed by the Federal Government or proposed for such employment, to make sure they were not Communist, subversive, or otherwise “disloyal to the government of the United States,” and then submit their findings to the Loyalty Review

³ *Who Killed Malcolm X?* (Netflix), Episode 3 @23.

⁴ John Ali Interview on Barbershop Conversations March 30, 2021 @ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=05azv5I2aPw>

⁵ John Ali Interview on Barbershop Conversations March 30, 2021 @ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=05azv5I2aPw>

⁶ David Potter, “All Lies, Says Ali of Rap At Muslims,” *Chicago Daily Defender* July 7, 1964.

⁷ Susan Thompson, “Signal Corps in World War II,” July 26, 2020 @ https://www.army.mil/article/236799/signal_corps_in_world_war_ii.

⁸ *Signal Corps Field Manual: Organizations and Operations in the Corps, Army, Theater of Operations, and GHQ* (Washington D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1940) 74; Marylynne Pitz, “Diary describes finest hour of Signal Corps messenger,” *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* June 30, 2013.

⁹ Susan Thompson, “Signal Corps in World War II,” July 26, 2020 @ https://www.army.mil/article/236799/signal_corps_in_world_war_ii.

Board. The FBI's investigation of John Simmons resulted in the Board's conclusion that he was *loyal* to the U.S. Federal Government and thus eligible for employment.¹⁰

II. *FBI Asset John Ali Outed*

The FBI had key persons in the national staff, at least one or two maybe, they were preparing for the death of the Honorable Elijah Muhammad in terms of determining his successor. I believe that the members of The Nation of Islam were influenced to do the things that they were doing, not just by the national staff and my father, but also by the intelligence department. - Imam Warithudeen Muhammad, son of the Honorable Elijah Muhammad to James Douglas, August 2, 1999¹¹

We know from the FBI files that the bureau had at least one, possibly two, informants in the NOI's top leadership. One informant was close enough to Elijah Muhammad to share in very private, delicate matters. The other informant (assuming they are not the same) was placed in Temple #7. The top informant is described by the bureau as 'a highly sensitive source,' whose protection demanded that information furnished by this source must be paraphrased.¹²

According to Bureau files, on June 26, 1952, John Simmons appeared at the FBI Philadelphia Office and applied for the position of Special Agent Accountant and on August 27, 1952, he was administered the Bureau examination for that position. On October 2, 1952, Simmons was advised by letter that "his application was not being favorably acted upon as he failed to attain satisfactory ratings in the examination." The interviewing FBI Agent felt Simmons lacked "sufficient experience, intelligence, personality or ability to be favorably recommended for the position of Special Agent."¹³ So, Simmons did not get the job of Special Agent Accountant, but this did not end his association with the Bureau. In addition to revealing to Malcolm X that he met with J. Edgar Hoover in D.C., he apparently revealed some more: "John took FBI training, but he did not go to Quantico," Malcolm X said to his right-hand man James 67X.¹⁴ Quantico, of course, is the official FBI Training Academy in Virginia. Thus, when the FBI declared in a memo that "[John Simmons] has had no *official* connection with the Bureau in any way other than the above-mentioned application,"¹⁵ we understand that language perfectly well. Simmons was trained by the FBI in an *unofficial* way that ensured the Bureau's plausible deniability for operations that John Simmons, as John Ali, would engage in. This all proves that John Ali was *not* truthful when he said on Barbershop Conversations that he had no further contact with the FBI after his 1950 meeting with Hoover and the subsequent letter that the FBI sent to him.

In 1954 Simmons joined the Nation of Islam, eventually becoming John Ali. John Ali was appointed the National Secretary of the Nation of Islam in 1960 by the recommendation of his one-time friend and housemate Malcolm X. Thus, from budget clerk for the U.S. Government in the 1950s John Ali becomes National Secretary for the Nation of Islam during the 1960s.

¹⁰ FBI Memo Mr. F.J. Baumgardner to Mr. W.C. Sullivan Nation of Islam Internal Security – NOI March 23, 1964

¹¹ James W. Douglass, "The Murder and Martyrdom of Malcolm X," in *Probe Magazine on JFK, MLK, RFK & Malcolm X*, ed. James DiEugenio and Lisa Pease (Port Townsend, Washington: Feral House, 2003) 379.

¹² Gardell, *In The Name of Elijah*, 82-83.

¹³ FBI Memo Mr. F.J. Baumgardner to Mr. W.C. Sullivan Nation of Islam Internal Security – NOI March 23, 1964

¹⁴ Abdur-Razaq with May 5, 2012 "CEMOTAP "LIKE IT SHOULD BE": EPISODE 1-Malcolm X Eye Witness-Segment 2 of 2 @ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GEGQW1UD-u0>

¹⁵ FBI Memo Mr. F.J. Baumgardner to Mr. W.C. Sullivan Nation of Islam Internal Security – NOI March 23, 1964

In October 1963 Black journalist and Malcolm X associate Louis Lomax published *When The Word Is Given*, a “Report on Elijah Muhammad, Malcolm X and the Black Muslim World.” On page 82 Lomax casually writes:

It is now clear that Elijah has delegated to Chicago responsibility for turning out the movement’s publications and overall policy statements. It is equally clear that the finances and other administrative chores of the movement are carried out in Chicago...This decision by Muhammad was made possible because *John X [Ali], a former FBI agent* and perhaps the best administrative mind in the movement, was shifted from New York to Chicago.¹⁶

John Ali has now been publicly outed, and he was not happy. “John Ali had made public his anger towards me because I wrote...that Ali was once an FBI agent,” Lomax wrote later, but “John knew that my report of his FBI affiliation had not been maliciously written, that it was based upon persistent reports and information.”¹⁷ But Ali was not the only one disturbed by this public disclosure. “[The books] publication was of utmost to the bureau because it jeopardized the anonymity of a high-level informant, inside the Nation of Islam’s Chicago headquarters, whom the FBI was positioning to take control of the sect upon Elijah Muhammad’s death.”¹⁸ Hoover was thus immediately notified of the book’s publication. As Thomas Aiello explains further:

In October 1963, Lomax published *When the Word Is Given*...The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) in particular was concerned about the publication because it noted that John X Ali, formerly John Simmons, had worked with the FBI prior to joining the NOI...The Bureau was fearful that one of its plants would be exposed in the book. Though Lomax would not reveal his sources, internal agency memos made it clear that some of his information came from the FBI. Lomax was not alone in receiving information from the Bureau about the Nation, as the former sought to influence narratives about the latter to exacerbate its more radical elements by passing selective information to black press reporters. Lomax, however, had clearly discovered more than they were willing to give. Along with his Bureau sources, Lomax was also friends with Balm Leavell, publisher of the *New Crusader*, one of the first journalists to discover that FBI informants occupied high-level positions in the Nation of Islam. Leavell shared his information with Muhammad, who was disturbed by the news, and Lomax, who used it in his book. After publication, Ali confronted Lomax, asking him why he wrote about his FBI connection. Lomax told him that he had based his reporting on reliable sources.¹⁹



Malcolm X and Louis Lomax.

¹⁶ Louis Lomax, *When The Word Is Given* (New York: Signet, 1963) 82

¹⁷ Lomax, *To Kill A Black Man*, 198-199.

¹⁸ Evanxx, *Judas Factor*, 197-198.

¹⁹ Thomas Aiello, “Louis Lomax’s Relationship with Malcolm X and Its Role in the Evolution of the Nation of Islam’s Popularity and Lomax’s Philosophy,” *The Journal of African American History* (Fall 2019): 584-618 (603-604)

The February 1964 *printing* of the book ruffled the FBI's feathers anew. In March there was a "flurry of memorandums" among FBI offices over the statement found in Lomax's book. One FBI official wrote:

It is felt that the Seattle Office should be advised concerning the true status of [John X Ali] Simmons and his alleged connection with the Bureau and that the New York Office should be instructed to contact Lomax to advise him concerning the inaccurate statement contained in this book regarding Simmons and that he be instructed to have this statement removed from any future printing of the book." Hoover responded in a memo: "Ok."²⁰

Karl Evanzz instructively points out that this response is illuminating for a number of reasons:

First, it is indicated that someone in the FBI's Seattle field office had been one of Louis Lomax's sources about John Ali... Second, the memo wanted Lomax apprized of Ali's "true status" with the FBI, clearly conveying that there was indeed a relationship. The Memo didn't refer to the allegation as a lie or fabrication, or any other word indicating that it was totally untrue. The memo only stated that the allegation that he was a FBI agent was "inaccurate" or "incorrect," suggesting, that it was at least partially accurate or partially correct. Was the writer trying to suggest that Ali's status with the FBI was that of an informant instead of a full-fledged agent?²¹

In a March 23, 1964 memo from Mr. F.J. Baumgardner to COINTELPRO chief William Sullivan addressing the matter, the FBI reveals:

[Bureau Deleted] current National Secretary of the NOI, on 6/26/52 appeared at the Philadelphia Office and applied for position as Special Agent Accountant. He was afforded the Bureau examination on 8/27/52 at Philadelphia and was advised by letter dated 10/2/52 that his application was not being favorably acted upon as he failed to attain satisfactory ratings in the examination. Subsequent to the interview of this applicant by ASAC [Bureau Deleted] Hinze commented that he did not believe the applicant had sufficient experience, intelligence, personality or ability to be favorably recommended for the position of Special Agent. [Bureau Deleted] has had no official connection with the Bureau in any way other than the above-mentioned application. It is also noted that [Bureau Deleted] was the subject of a full-field loyalty investigation conducted in 1952 in connection with his former position as an inspector with the Department of the Army in Philadelphia. He was at that time listed as eligible on the basis of loyalty by the Civil Service Commission on conclusion of the investigation. In 1954 an investigation was initiated concerning [Bureau Deleted] in view of his membership in the NOI. He became National Secretary of the NOI having resided in New York and on 10/29/60 moved to Chicago where he has remained to the present time in his capacity as National Secretary.

²⁰ FBI file on Louis Lomax, quoted in Evanzz, *Judas Factor*, 198.

²¹ Evanzz, *Judas Factor*, 198-199.

Mr. W. C. Sullivan	3/23/64
Mr. F. J. Baumgardner	1 - Mr. Belmont 1 - Mr. Mohr 1 - Mr. DeLoach 1 - Mr. Sullivan 1 - Mr. E. W. Smith 1 - Mr. Bland 1 - Mr. Baumgardner 1 - Mr. Resack
NATION OF ISLAM INTERNAL SECURITY - NOI	

By airtel dated 3/20/64 the Seattle Office furnished a copy of "When the Word is Given..." by Louis E. Lomax concerning the Nation of Islam (NOI), which book on page 82 refers to [redacted] National Secretary of the NOI, as "a former FBI agent." This book was published in paperback by the New American Library of World Literature in February, 1964. b6 b7C

[redacted] current National Secretary of the NOI, on 6/26/52 appeared at the Philadelphia Office and applied for position as Special Agent Accountant. He was afforded the Bureau examination on 8/27/52 at Philadelphia and was advised by letter dated 10/2/52 that his application was not being favorably acted upon as he failed to attain satisfactory ratings in the examination. Subsequent to interview of this applicant by ASAC [redacted] Hinnse commented that he did not believe the applicant had sufficient experience, intelligence, personality or ability to be favorably recommended for the position of Special Agent. [redacted] has had no official connection with the Bureau in any way [redacted] than the above-mentioned application. It is also noted that [redacted] was the subject of a full-field loyalty investigation conducted in 1952 in connection with his former position as an inspector with the Department of the Army in Philadelphia. He was at that time listed as eligible on the basis of loyalty by the Civil Service Commission on conclusion of the investigation. b6 b7C

In 1954 an investigation was initiated concerning [redacted] in view of his membership in the NOI. He became National Secretary of the NOI having resided in New York and on 10/29/60 moved to Chicago where he has remained to the present time in his capacity as National Secretary. b6 b7C

Enc.
25-330971
1 - 62-102926 (Lomax)
1 - [redacted]
1 - [redacted]

CONFIDENTIAL

NOT RECORDED
47 MAR 1964

CLASSIFIED AND EXTENDED BY 9-2-TEX/eff 10-10-7C
REASON FOR EXTENSION FCIM, II, 1-2.4.2
DATE OF REVIEW FOR DECLASSIFICATION 3-23-84

TPR:rbm (12)
57 APR 1 1964
DUPLICATE YELLOW
3/30/99
62-102926

March 23, 1964 FBI Memo

John Simmons "interaction" with the FBI went beyond the 1950 "interview" with J. Edgar Hoover.

On March 24, 1964, Hoover sent a follow up memo to the New York and Seattle Field Offices:

New York should contact Lomax (unless files of that office indicate such contact should not be made) for the purpose of pointing out to him that the statement contained in his book is inaccurate. New York should also advise Lomax that this inaccurate misleading statement should be removed from any future printings of the book.

Evanzz again correctly notes: “Again, not once is the statement regarding Lomax’s allegation described as a fabrication, falsehood, or outright lie, and the memo conveys the sense that the charge was at least partially true.”²² This is because John Ali, as John Simmons, *was* an FBI asset - *contra* Zak Kondo.²³ Karl Evanzz told Black journalist Tony Brown in 1992 that an FBI agent telephonically confirmed to him (Evanzz) on two occasions that John Ali was in fact the FBI’s man close to the Honorable Elijah Muhammad.²⁴ In 1970 John Ali was removed from his post as National Secretary and put out of the Nation of Islam (F-Time) by the Honorable Elijah Muhammad.²⁵ According to what Minister Akbar Muhammad, the Nation of Islam’s International Representative (formerly Larry 4X Prescot), reportedly told Evanzz, “The Messenger thought he was an FBI informant.”²⁶ Louis Lomax was thus right.

After the assassination of Malcolm X Lomax investigated it and that of Dr. Martin Luther King. Lomax was convinced that the U.S. government was involved. Lomax’s investigation got close to the truth in both cases. One FBI memo pointed out:

Lomax indicates that Malcolm X, after breaking with the NOI, lived in fear of his life because of reprisals from the NOI. Lomax claims that Malcolm X was assassinated by hired killers who were affiliated with Elijah Muhammad, NOI chieftain, and that the American Government, particularly the CIA, was deeply involved in Malcolm X’s death. He claims King was assassinated by an individual who carried out the will of an extremely well-financed and rigidly organized group of Southern white businessmen.²⁷

In 1968 Lomax entered a contract with Twentieth Century Fox to make a movie of Malcom X which had as a central theme the fact that the U.S. intelligence community played a role in the assassination. This greatly disturbed the FBI, who demanded from the production company a copy of the script. The *Washington Post* reported:

Director J. Edgar Hoover ordered the FBI’s Los Angeles office to obtain advance copies of two movie scripts on Malcolm X, the black nationalist leader who was slain in 1965, to determine whether they were critical of the bureau, according to recently released files. In a memo dated March 27, 1968, Hoover instructed the office to “discreetly contact sources” at Columbia Pictures in order to obtain a copy of a script by James Baldwin, and at 20th Century-Fox for a script written by Louis E. Lomax, another prominent black writer. “Los Angeles should be particularly alert for indications that the bureau will be portrayed or mentioned in either movie,” Hoover wrote. “Los Angeles should obtain advance copies of these script in order that the interest of the bureau may be protected...”

After Malcolm X’s death, Baldwin and Lomax said they believed U.S. intelligence agencies played a role in his murder. Baldwin and Lomax were under FBI surveillance at various times throughout the 1960s. Throughout this period, FBI agents were ordered to obtain copies of every book on Malcolm X in order to determine whether “any mention is made of the FBI.” Each book was reviewed in a memo to the FBI director, then placed in the bureau’s library, according to FBI files.²⁸

²² Evanzz, *Judas Factor*, 199.

²³ Kondo seems to go out of his way to argue that John Ali “probably was not an asset.” *Conspiracys*, 175.

²⁴ “Malcolm X and Judas,” 1992 *Tony Brown’s Journal* @ <https://www.tonybrownsjournal.com/malcolm-x-and-judas>

²⁵ John Ali with Munir Muhammad on *Muhammad & Friends* November 5, 2017 Episode A526 @ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=36baX_H-ZH8. John Ali was interviewed by Munir Muhammad again on August 8 and August 13, 2018 Episodes A575 and A576.

²⁶ Evanzz, *Messenger*, 363.

²⁷ FBI Memo From G.C. Moore to Mr. W.C. Sullivan Re: Book Review “To Kill A Black Man” By Louis E. Lomax *Racial Matters* February 25, 1969, pp. 1-3 (3)

²⁸ Karl Anderson, “Movie Scripts On Malcolm X Interested FBI,” *The Washington Post* November 5, 1979.

Lomax got too close to the truth too soon after the assassination and he paid for it. In August 1970 he mysteriously died in a single-car accident near Santa Rosa, New Mexico. His brakes failed (were cut?), causing his car to overturn on the highway three times, throwing Lomax out of his car. He suffered head and internal injuries.²⁹ This is similar to the case of William “Joe” Cooper in the JFK operation.

III. *John Ali vs. Malcolm X*

John Ali is described by one writer as one of the “NOI hawks” that called for retaliation against Malcolm X.³⁰ Another writer has gone so far as to describe him as the “architect of the Malcolm X assassination.”³¹ This latter claim is extreme and cannot be countenanced. The evidence does not bear it out. John Ali, once a friend, certainly became a leading antagonist toward Malcolm X. Malcolm said to Louis Lomax in early 1963: “The rumors are true. Somebody in the Chicago office is out to get me.” “Who is it?” Lomax asked. “It’s John.” Lomax said, “The word ‘John’ was uttered in a forced and pained whisper.”³² While Lomax was outing John Ali as a FBI asset since October of 1963, it was only on June 4, 1964 that Malcolm first publicly claimed John Ali was an FBI informant.³³ Ali allegedly returned fire that same month on a Chicago radio program called *Hotline* on WVON with Wesley South. When a telephone caller asked if it was true that the Black Muslims were trying to kill Malcolm X, John Ali is said to have replied:



Malcolm X probably fears for his safety because he is the one who opposes the Honorable Elijah Muhammad. The Holy Qur'an, the book of the Muslims, says 'seek out the hypocrites and wherever you find them, weed them out'...You'll find people who love the Honorable Elijah Muhammad the same as there were people who loved President Kennedy. There were people who hated Kennedy so much that they assassinated him-white people. And there were white people who loved him so much they would have killed for him. You will find the same true of the Honorable Elijah Muhammad...I predict that anyone who opposes the Honorable Elijah Muhammad puts their life in jeopardy.³⁴

While it cannot be said that John Ali was the “architect” of the plot to kill Malcolm X, he certainly beat the drums of war against him and apparently did indeed try to inspire an assassination. Khalil Islam (Thomas 15X Johnson) recalls the National Secretary visiting New York sometime before the murder and gathering five lieutenants from Temple No. 7 (including Thomas 15X) and two investigators at the Muhammad Speaks office on 199th Street. Captain Joseph was not invited to this meeting. John Ali tried to “play background music” to get them to kill Malcolm X but he failed, according to Islam - despite the fact that 15X and “everybody else” were enflamed by Malcolm and thought Malcolm was “the most despicable human being on the

²⁹ “Louis Lomax, 47, Dies in Car Crash,” *The New York Times* August 1, 1970.

³⁰ Gardell, *In The Name of Elijah*, 83.

³¹ Paul Bitakaramire, “The Return of John Ali,” *Better Call Paul* Mar 13, 2015

³² Lomax, *To Kill A Black Man* 105.

³³ Marable, *Malcolm X*, 338.

³⁴ According to Evanzz, *Judas Factor*, 247-248; FBI Memo June 15, 1964 Nation of Islam Internal Security – NOI, p. 6.

planet earth.” Nevertheless, the Brothers already knew that Malcolm could not be touched. As Khalil Islam recounts: “We all sort of, uh, discarded what he (John Ali) was saying. In other words, it didn’t touch me, and from what I understand it didn’t touch the rest of them either. Because after the meeting we just left, and he knew that he didn’t sell a bill of goods that day.”³⁵ Then, according to what Islam told Manning Marable,

Several weeks later new instructions came down from Chicago: “Elijah Muhammad sent specific orders. He said, ‘Don’t touch [Malcolm].’” Consequently, Johnson and his crew beat up and harassed Malcolm’s people, but no active plan was set in motion to murder him. Johnson claimed, “I used to see Malcolm every day in the Theresa Hotel.” Malcolm would walk over and say, “How you doing?” That his intended victim maintained a degree of civility impressed Johnson.³⁶

John Ali himself confirms that any efforts on his part to inspire the murder of Malcolm X was him *going against* the express instructions of the Honorable Elijah Muhammad. Ali said later: “The Messenger was keeping [Malcolm] alive. He told all the ministers, captains and secretaries, all the Believers, ‘Leave him alone’.”³⁷ This is important. Any involvement of John Ali in the murder of Malcolm X was *not* on behalf of the Honorable Elijah Muhammad; it was *despite of* and *in disobedience to* the clear instructions of the Honorable Elijah Muhammad. On whose behalf, then, was John Ali working? When Khalil Islam regretted lying during his 1966 murder trial in order to protect John Ali, he shook his head and lamented: “I screwed myself lying to protect an [FBI] informer.”³⁸ In 2007, two years before he died, Khalil Islam told *The Voice* that the command to kill Malcolm X *did not come from Chicago* or the Honorable Elijah Muhammad. Rather, Malcolm’s killers were five men from New Jersey who “were not true followers [of the Nation of Islam]” but were “known criminals” who were organized by the FBI to kill Malcolm X.³⁹

³⁵ Khalil Islam to Tony Brown on “The Charge is Murder,” *Tony Brown’s Journal* <https://www.tonybrownsjournal.com/the-charge-is-murder>

³⁶ Marable, *A Life of Reinvention*, 426.

³⁷ John Ali with Munir Muhammad on *Muhammad & Friends* November 5, 2017 Episode A526 @ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=36baX_H-ZH8. John Ali was interviewed by Munir Muhammad again on August 8 and August 13, 2018 Episodes A575 and A576.

³⁸ Mark Jacobson, “The Man Who Didn’t Shoot Malcolm X,” *New York Magazine* September 28, 2007.

³⁹ Janelle Oswald, “Who Really Did Kill Malcolm X?” *The Voice* December 19, 2007.

The Case is Closed: John Ali *WAS* an FBI Asset

What we know:

- **1950** – U.S. Secretary of Commerce Charles Sawyer arranged for John Simmons to meet with F.B.I. Director J. Edgar Hoover in Washington D.C.
- **1950s** – John Simmons was a GS7 Civil Servant as a budget clerk
- **Before 1953** – In the military John Simmons served in the capacity of Navy Department trackman, U.S. Army Signal Corps messenger, and U.S. Army Inspector
- **1952** – The FBI conducted a Full-field loyalty investigation of John Simmons and reported to the U.S. Civil Service Commission that he was loyal to the United States Government and not subversive.
- **1952** – John Simmons applied at the FBI Philadelphia Office for the position of Special Agent Accountant and took the examination. The FBI did not give him *that* job. He would, however, receive unofficial training by the FBI outside of its Quantico academy, in preparation for *another* job.
- **1954** – John Simmons joins the Nation of Islam, ultimately receiving the name John Ali.
- **1960** – From budget clerk for the U.S. Government in the 1950s John Ali becomes National Secretary for the Nation of Islam during the 1960s.
- **1963** – Based on sources in the FBI Seattle Office and information from Balm Leavell, publisher of the *New Crusader*, journalist Louis Lomax publicly revealed John Ali's past association with the Bureau. Lomax got the language wrong, though, describing Ali as a "former FBI agent." This upset both Ali and the FBI, who wanted Lomax to retract his "inaccurate statement." Lomax's statement was inaccurate: Simmons was not an actual Agent. But Lomax was not totally *wrong*. John Simmons did apply to be an official FBI Special Agent, but he had to settle for being an unofficial FBI *asset* with FBI training.
- **June 1964** – Malcolm X for the first time publicly identified John Ali as an FBI informant.
- **June 1964** – Director Hoover issues his command to his FBI soldiers: "*Do* something about Malcolm X."
- **Summer 1964** – John Ali attempts to inspire New York lieutenants to murder Malcolm X, despite the fact that the Honorable Elijah Muhammad gave *him* and all members of the Nation of Islam orders of his own: "Leave Malcolm X alone" and do him no harm. FBI asset John Ali was following his employer FBI Director Hoover's order over his Teacher the Most Honorable Elijah Muhammad's order.
- **March 1970** – Suspecting John Ali was an FBI Informant the Honorable Elijah Muhammad removed him from his post as National Secretary and put him out of the Nation of Islam.

