

BOOK REVIEW

The Last Year of Malcolm X

The Evolution of a Revolutionary

BY GEORGE BREITMAN

The outgrowth of *Malcolm X Speaks* (CHOICE, June 1966), which Breitman helped prepare, and a reaction to *The Autobiography of Malcolm X* (CHOICE, Jan. 1966) by Malcolm and Haley, the ambiguities of which Breitman felt needed to be cleared up for a balanced judgment on Malcolm. He insists Malcolm cannot be understood unless his leadership phase be divided into three: the dependent period under Black Muslim Muhammad; the independent period (50 weeks), the first three months characterized by earnest gropings for what he stood; and the final period, June 1964 to February 1965, of growing into a mature leader. In Breitman's view, neither Negro leaders nor the American press were ready to recognize Malcolm for what he was in the end, a revolutionary Leftist, a greater threat to the status quo than a Black Muslim Malcolm –“increasingly anticapitalist and pro-socialist as well as anti-imperialist.” Well-documented and generally well-balanced, though the chapter on Malcolm's critics is an outright defense of Malcolm. An appendix includes the “Statement of Basic Aims and Objectives . . . of Afro-American unity,” statements by Malcolm's critics, and a bibliography. Recommended for all college libraries, especially useful for undergraduates interested in the Negro revolution.