

First in a Series

# Islamic Faith Playing Important Part Behind African Nationalism

Editor's note: Following is the first of two dispatches by Louis Casseles, UPI religion editor, about the important role of the Islamic faith in Africa.

By LOUIS CASSELES  
UPI Correspondent

From the long view of history, the key figure in Africa's turbulent political equation may be neither Nasser nor Lumumba, nor even Nikita Khrushchev, but a camel driver named Mohammed who lived in the city of Mecca nearly 1,400 years ago.

Mohammed founded the religion of Islam. For centuries, Western Christians have regarded this religion as moribund. But in recent years it has undergone a dramatic renaissance. It is now on the march all over Africa. And it has become one of the most dynamic elements in the explosive mixture of anti-Western, anti-white emotions which is the driving force behind African nationalism.

**Westerners Know Little**  
Despite its growing importance as a factor in the African crisis, the average westerner knows little about the Islamic faith. He may, for example, refer to its adherents as "Mohammedans," which they intensely resent. The correct name is "Moslems."

There is also a widespread tendency to think of Islam as an Arab religion. It is true that nearly all Arabs are Moslems. But not all Moslems are Arabs by any means. Islam

has always been strong in such non-Arab nations as Turkey, Iran, Pakistan and India. In recent years, it has spread rapidly into "Black Africa" south of the Sahara. In many of the new African states, where Christian missionaries have been at work for more than a century, Islam is now winning four or five new converts for every one attracted to Christianity.

**Gain in United States**  
Islam has even begun sending missionaries to the United States. And they are winning some converts, particularly among American Negroes. There are now about 80,000 Moslems in the United States, and mosques can be found in 11 American cities, including Washington, New York, Chicago, Philadelphia, Detroit and Sacramento, Calif.

Worldwide, Islam has about 400 million adherents — or roughly half as many as Christianity. Although Buddhism is technically the world's second largest religion — with about 500 million nominal followers in Asia — it has not experienced a resurgence comparable to that which has taken place in Islam, and it has none of Islam's fierce missionary zeal. Islam today stands alone as a real challenger to Christianity — particularly in Africa.

Islam has at least two tremendous advantages in Africa. **"White Man's Export"**  
Africans are inclined to look upon Christianity as a "white man's export." They associate it with colonial rule which they are so violently rejecting. And they connect

it with the racial discrimination that takes place in some Christian nations.

Islam, on the other hand, can present itself as a faith "native" to Africa — and one which has never had any color line. Racial equality has always been a major emphasis of Islam. As virtually every African knows, one of Mohammed's four wives was a Negro.

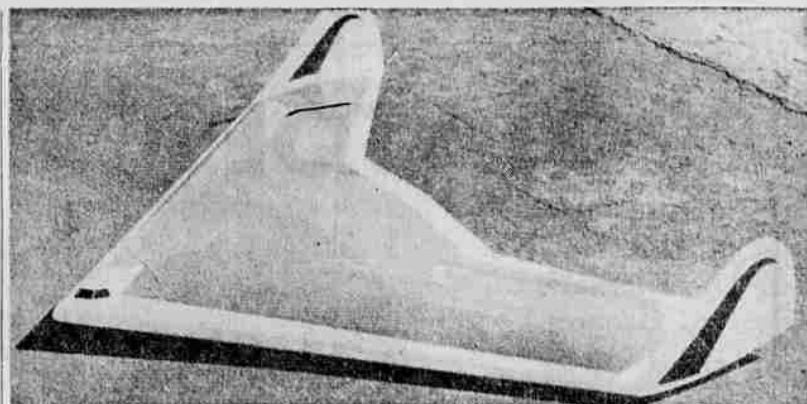
The emotional appeal which Islam has for Negroes smarting under the stigma of segregation has been reflected in the growth of the so-called "Black Muslim" sect. This sect is not truly Moslem in its religious doctrines. Its main teaching is an implacable hatred of all white men. But its adherents take Arab names, wear fezzes and otherwise identify themselves with Moslem customs.

Some of the American Negroes who participated in last week's pro-Lumumba demonstration at the United Nations described themselves as Moslems.

**Islam Demands Less**  
Islam's second great advantage in Africa is that it makes lighter demands on its converts than Christianity does. For example, an African who becomes a Christian must also become a monogamist. But if he becomes a Moslem, he can have four wives. This is no small consideration in African countries where polygamy is widely practiced.

Islam has also been willing to let its African converts continue to practice many of the rituals of their old tribal religions, including black mag-

ic, which Christian missionaries cannot condone. In fact, the available evidence indicates that no great effort is being made to get newly-converted Negro Moslems to observe the detailed precepts of Islamic faith, as they are practiced in ancient Islamic countries like Egypt or Iran. They are simply being asked to consider themselves Moslems, and to embrace the one-line Islamic creed: "There is no god but Allah, and Mohammed is his prophet."



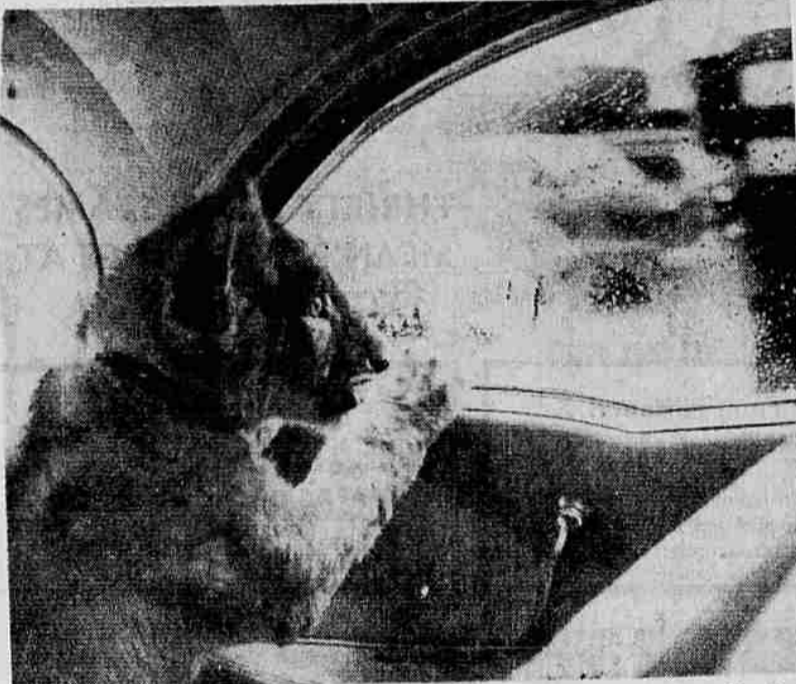
**SUBSONIC AIRLINER**—This is a model for a proposed 300-seat all-wing subsonic airliner which could—according to its designers, Hadley-Page Ltd. of Britain—reduce transatlantic fares to \$31. Named the HP117, the craft has a luminar-flow wing.



(UPI Telephoto)

## MEDFORD MAIL TRIBUNE

SECTION B MEDFORD, OREGON, THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 1961 PAGES 1 to 8



**TIRED OF RAIN** — Even Gus, a 4-month-old lion from the Portland zoo, is getting tired of the rain in Portland. He enjoys car

### B70 Test Pilot Needs To Be Engineer and Flier

Los Angeles (UPI)—A new type of test pilot is emerging from the world of the wild blue yonder. He's mature and well educated, a flier turned engineer. Like his predecessor, he loves to fly, but his compelling interest is in solving difficult aeronautical problems. There are only a few of his breed.

One of them is Alvin S. White, engineering and test pilot for North American Aviation, Inc. A pilot since 1941 and an engineer since 1947, he looks like many another 41-year-old businessman. Sometime late in 1962, however, Al White will shed his coat of conformity and will be thrust into the limelight as pilot of the B70, an intercontinental super bomber designed to conquer the so-called thermal barrier and cruise 70,000 feet high at 2,000 miles an hour.

Other pilots, flying rocket-powered experimental planes, will have encountered the heat barrier for brief moments prior to the first flights of the B70. But the big bomber will be the first airplane capable of continuous flight at triple sonic speeds where friction heats a plane's skin to more than 600 degrees Fahrenheit, enough to melt today's aluminum aircraft.

White must know more about the B70 than any test pilot ever has known about his plane on a first flight. To give him the information he needs, North American designers and engineers are logging thousands of hours of "ground flight" in a variety of ways—in computers, wind tunnels, environmental test cells and in simulators.

rides but rainy weather obstructs his view of the city. It has rained 11.17 inches in Portland since Jan. 1. (UPI Telephoto)

Although White believes today's test pilot should be an engineer, he also is convinced there still is a measure of "heat of the pants" flying in testing supersonic planes. "A human pilot who understands his aircraft can do something that gauges and meters cannot," he said. "He can anticipate. His sixth sense gives him the extra second he may need."

The B70 will be able to reach any military target on earth in a matter of a few hours. During a recent congressional study of the B70 program it was pointed out: "Should an invasion fleet set out from China toward Formosa, some 100 miles from the Chinese mainland, traveling at a speed of 10 knots, and should word reach the U.S. military headquarters one hour after the invasion fleet had departed, B70's scrambled from San Francisco could reach this fleet (about 6,000 miles distant) before it arrived at the halfway point on its journey to Formosa."

**"Do People Listen When You Talk?"**

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