

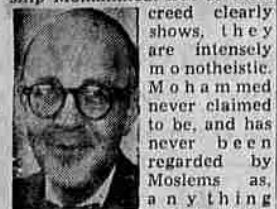
Last in a Series

Moslems, Communists Have Some Common Goals in Religious Beliefs

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

By LOUIS CASSELES
UPI Correspondent

Many Westerners have the false idea that Moslems worship Mohammed. But as their creed clearly shows, they are intensely monotheistic. Mohammed never claimed to be, and has never been regarded by Moslems as, anything more than a human prophet.



Casseles
A human prophet.

The founder of Islam was born in the Arabic city of Mecca about 570 A.D. As a driver with a camel caravan, he made several trips to Jerusalem, where he became familiar with Judaism and Christianity. Mohammed drew freely on these older faiths in formulating his own teaching. He taught that Jesus was a great human prophet but that his life was cut short before he could complete all his work, so God called forth another prophet—Mohammed—to finish the job of revelation.

The new revelations which Mohammed said were given to him in a cave near Mecca were written down in a book called the Koran. Moslems accord this book the same reverence that Christians accord to the Bible. They regard it as the word of God.

Changed Arab Belief
The principal religious insight of the Koran—that there is one God, who is a compassionate father to all mankind—will hardly sound like a new discovery to those raised in the Judeo-Christian tradition. But it was an exciting new thought to the Arabs of Mohammed's day, whose religion was a primitive polytheism in which the one moderately benign god—Allah—was outnumbered by a horde of malevolent "jinns" and demons.

The Koran spells out a Moslem's religious and moral obligations in explicit detail. The religious duties are primarily these:

1. To face Mecca and pray five times each day—at sunrise, at noon, in the early afternoon, at sunset and at the fall of darkness.

2. To give 2½ per cent of one's wealth to the poor each year.

This is not 2½ per cent of annual income, but of all the property that a Moslem owns.

3. To fast during the holy month of Ramadan, ninth month of the year on the Arabic calendar. Fasting means going without any food or

drink—not even a sip of water—from sunrise to sunset.

4. To make a pilgrimage to Mecca at least once in a lifetime. This requirement is binding only on Moslems who are physically and economically able to undertake the trip.

In the past, devout Moslems were forbidden to gamble, drink alcoholic beverages, eat pork, or charge interest on loans, but these restrictions have been relaxed considerably among liberal Moslems today, and are widely ignored in Africa.

Moslems, who believe in God, and Communists, who do not, would appear to be divided by a basic and irreconcilable ideological difference. But as Nasser has proved in the United Arab Republic, and as events in the new Negro republics like the Congo are now demonstrating, this difference does not necessarily preclude a certain amount of mutual co-operation.

Moslems and Communists have this in common—each is convinced that his ideology will eventually triumph throughout the world. Therefore each is willing to enter into a temporary accommodation with any body that seems likely to further its long-run objectives.

Islam and international communism also have in common an historically demonstrated willingness to use violence, if necessary, to advance their causes.

More than a thousand years ago, during the first "golden era" of Islam, Moslem caliphs spread their faith at sword's point across the entire reach of North Africa and into Spain.

Threatened Western Europe
Until Charles Martel defeated their invasion of France at Tours in 732 A.D., it seemed that all of Western Europe was destined to become a province of Islam.

Today Islam is no longer winning converts as it did in the 8th Century by confronting them with the choice of proclaiming their faith in Allah or having their throats cut. It is winning them throughout Africa by doing more zealously the same kind of missionary work that Christians are doing on a feeble scale, and by approaching the task with a more acceptable record on the all-important racial issue.

But there is no reason to believe that Islam has fore-sworn violence. The Koran does not say anything about turning the other cheek. It specifically condones vengeance against those who have inflicted a wrong or injury.

And it says that any Moslem who dies in a holy war is assured of immediate entry into heaven. Thus a holy war conducted by Moslems can be more fanatical than warfare for or against almost any other cause.

Provides Penalties
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I got up and went outside and hit him a couple of times with Life magazine. Then I noticed that my old regiment was drilling by ranks and

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I went back to bed and turned up the electric blanket. The dog began barking. This time it was the Rudolph role from "La Boheme" where Mimmi is dying of consumption. I tried humming the Mimmi part, but it always sets me to coughing.

I got up and went outside and sat in the patio to give the dog a sense of security. It dawned on me gradually that my wife was entertaining the PTA ladies in the patio. They were barbecuing the principal. I realized I was only wearing house slippers.

I went back to bed and woke my wife up.

"Can't you sleep?" she said.

"I am sleeping," I told her.

"I took a couple of aspirin."

"You couldn't have," she said.

"We're out of aspirin."

"I took something," I said.

sitting up in alarm. "What do you suppose it was, for the Lord's sake?"

"It must have been the sleeping pills," she said.

"I'll die!" I cried. "I didn't know we had any."

"You bought them last summer," she said. "You planned to put them in the dog's food so he would sleep through the night and not bark."

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