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By KENNETT LOVESpecial to The New York Times.
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MOSLEM BROTHERS FAITHFUL TO CHIEF

Bar Successor to El-Hodeiby, Jailed for Life in Egypt—Movement Lacks Force

By KENNETT LOVE
Special to The New York Times.

DAMASCUS, Syria, Feb. 19—Sheikh Hassan el-Hodeiby, now serving a life sentence in an Egyptian prison, is still regarded as the Supreme Guide of the Moslem Brotherhood. Members in a dozen countries, reaching from Syria and the Sudan to Indonesia, so regard him.

In none of the countries, however, with the possible exception of Syria, is the Brotherhood a significantly effective force and in several it amounts to little more than a name and a few semi-clandestine meeting places. The potential collective influence of the Brotherhood has been weakened by the break-up of the once-powerful Egyptian organization, which served as a source of common policy. The refusal to recognize a successor to Sheikh el-Hodeiby will probably contribute toward further weakening.

Nevertheless, the Moslem Brotherhood throughout the world will continue to look to Sheikh el-Hodeiby as Supreme Guide until his death, according to Sheikh Mustafa el-Sebaii, leader of the organization in Syria. Sheikh el-Sebaii, dean of the Sharia (Islamic Law) College of the Syrian University, emphatically denied today reports that he had been elected to succeed Sheikh el-Hodeiby.

Sheikh el-Hodeiby was confirmed as Supreme Guide for life by the Egyptian Brotherhood last year as an expression of defiance against Premier Gamal Abdel Nasser.

Death Sentence Commuted

Egypt's ruling military junta outlawed and crushed the organization there last fall after an abortive Brotherhood attempt on Premier Nasser's life. Sheikh el-Hodeiby and six of his top lieutenants were condemned to death but the Sheikh's sentence was commuted to life in prison.

About fifteen of the Egyptian Brothers escaped arrest and took refuge here. Among them are Abdel Hakim Abdin, secretary general and a member of the twelve-man Supreme Guidance Council who has subsequently been condemned in absentia, and three secondary leaders.

It was believed for a time that they would attempt to use the Syrian organization, estimated at 10,000 to 12,000 members, as a basis for a sort of "government-in-exile." No effective measures have been taken in this direction and Sheikh el-Sebaii said there were no administrative links between Brotherhood groups in any two countries.

Sheikh el-Sebaii said the Moslem Brotherhood had organizations in Jordan, the Sudan, Iraq, Pakistan, northern Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Indonesia, Ceylon and Burma.

So far as can be determined the main vehicle for the Jordanian Brotherhood is the Boy Scouts, who often sing the martial Brotherhood anthem as they march. Sheikh el-Sebaii said the Brotherhood had no links with the purely emotional and far more fanatical Fedayan al Islam in Iran, headed by Navab Safavi.

Mr. Safavi has been easily bullied into silence in the past fourteen months by both the Iranian Premier Fazlollah Zahedi and, on a visit to Egypt, by Premier Nasser.

Suppressed by Shishekly

Sheikh el-Sebaii said the Syrian Moslem Brotherhood was founded in 1936 at the Syrian University Law School by himself and a group of other students. It was suppressed for a time during the dictatorship of Brig. Gen. Adib Shishekly and Sheikh el-Sebaii was jailed for three months in 1952.

The organization is supported by members' dues and contributions. On a small and poorly organized scale, it operates night schools, weaving establishments, village clinics, sports clubs and Boy Scout troops. It expects to begin publishing its own magazine next month.

The Syrian Moslem leader said that the Brotherhood's program was based on trying to revive Islam from its present widespread "petrifaction," which, he said, resulted from the failure of the theologians and ulema to maintain contact with the people. Its other principles, he said, were social reform and the liberation of the Arab and Islamic peoples from foreign domination.

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