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SYRIA
LEBANON

RELIGION
Orthodox

Political Alliances In The Patriarchate Of ANTIOCH

SOURCE ISTANBUL: Confidential

DATE OF OBSERVATION: Current

EVAL. COMMENT: Chief reason for publication of this item is the increasing ties which the MOSCOW Patriarchate is establishing with its fellow churches outside of the Soviet Union. The collaboration affected thereby represents a new and hitherto unchallenged Soviet penetration.

The Patriarchate of ANTIOCH today has eleven Metropolitans of which six reside in LEBANON and five in SYRIA.

The Metropolitans residing in LEBANON ARE:

1. Metropolitan of TRIPOLI, Theodosios AMBOURJELI, former student in the Theological School of Halki of the Oecumenical Patriarchate.
2. Metropolitan of HELIOPOLIS, Nephon SVVA, College graduate. He has some education and good manners. He lived for years in America.
3. Metropolitan of TYRUS and SIDON, Paul HOURI, graduate of the Theological School of ATHENS University.
4. Metropolitan of LEBANON, Elijah KARAM, graduate of primary school. He has been promoted through the influence of the French.
5. Metropolitan of BEIRUT, Elijah SALIBY. He does not have much education.
6. Metropolitan of ARCADIA, Epiphanius ZAYED.

The Metropolitans residing in SYRIA are:

1. Metropolitan of VOSTRA, Athanasios KLEILA, graduate of the Russian Academy.

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2. Metropolitan of EMESA, Alexander YEHA, graduate of the Russian Academy.
3. Metropolitan of EPIPHANY, Ignatios HOUREIK, former student of the Theological School of Halki of the Oecumenical Patriarchate.
4. Metropolitan of LAODICIA, Tryphon GRAB, former student of the Theological School of Halki.
5. Metropolitan of HALEP, Elijah MUAWAT, who graduated in 1940 from the Theological School in Halki.

These Metropolitans are divided into many parties. The reason for their division is mainly the question of succession to the throne since the present Patriarch is above eighty years of age. A secondary reason for discord is political ideology towards which, however, the Arabs do not feel a great fanaticism. Candidates for the Patriarchal throne are Metropolitan of EPIPHANY, IGNATIOS, and Metropolitan of TRIPOLI, Theodosios. It is rumored that the former is supported by Elijah, Metropolitan of HALEP, Tryphon, Metropolitan of LAODICIA, Epiphanius, Metropolitan of ARCADIA and Paul, Metropolitan of TYRUS and CIDON. The Metropolitan of TRIPOLI is supported by Elijah, Metropolitan of BEIRUT and Nephon, Metropolitan of HELIOPOLIS.

Elijah, Metropolitan of LEBANON and Athanasios, Metropolitan of VOSTRA, have not declared their preference but are constantly at the side of the Patriarch.

Elijah KARAM, Metropolitan of LEBANON, and Alexander, Metropolitan of EMESA are known for their pro-Russian sentiments. These two Bishops went to MOSCOW in 1948.

The others have not expressed any political preference. The Metropolitan of EPIPHANY is the most conservative and this is why he realizes the greatest chances for a future election as a Patriarch.

Theodosios, Metropolitan of TRIPOLI, and Elijah of BEIRUT, have some ability but always try to profit by every occasion. Lately the Metropolitan of BEIRUT has become pro-Greek and has been influenced by Mr. SEFERIADIS, charge d'affaires of Greece. It seems that this Bishop has been definitely won over to the Western bloc. He is expected to come to ISTANBUL towards the middle of May.

Elijah, Metropolitan of HALEP, who has good sentiments towards the Oecumenical Patriarchate and who is not pro-Russian, is expected to come to ISTANBUL in June.