

Khalifa Uthman bin Affan - Governors of Uthman

Administration of Egypt under Uthman

In his testament, Umar had instructed his successor not to make any change in the administrative set up for one year after his death. True to these instructions, Uthman maintained the status quo in the administrative set up of Egypt.

'Amr b Al 'Aas smarted under the loss of power, and felt dissatisfied at the partition of the province. Soon after the death of Umar, 'Amr b Al 'Aas came to Madina, and apprised Uthman of the state of affairs in Egypt. He pointed out that Egypt was a unity, and its division into two provinces was undesirable politically as well as economically. He pressed Uthman to rescind the orders of partition, depose Abdullah b Sa'ad, and make him ('Amr) the Governor of United Egypt once again.

Uthman listened to the demands of 'Amr b Al 'Aas patiently. He said that in principle he agreed with him that the provinces of Upper Egypt and Lower Egypt should be reintegrated into one province. He said that because of the testament of Umar he was committed not to make any change in the administrative set up for one year. He wanted 'Amr to wait till one year was over, and he was free to act according to his own discretion and judgement. He also observed that Abdullah b Sa'ad was his foster brother and he could not dispose him without cause.

'Amr b Al 'Aas said that he was the conqueror of Egypt and in order to maintain proper hold on the province it was necessary that all power was concentrated in his hands. 'Amr b Al 'Aas also complained bitterly against Abdullah b Sa'ad. Uthman pointed out that he was related both to him 'Amr as well as Abdullah b Sa'ad, and he should be given some time to resolve the dispute to the satisfaction of all concerned. 'Amr b Al 'Aas was married to a step-sister of Uthman while Abdullah was his foster brother. Uthman wanted to evolve some way whereby 'Amr b Al 'Aas and Abdullah b Sa'ad could be reconciled.

'Amr b Al 'Aas precipitated the crisis by giving the challenge that unless his demand was accepted, he would not return to Egypt. No argument availed with him, and in view of his refusal to return to Egypt unless his demand was accepted, Uthman had no option but to pass the order that 'Amr b Al 'Aas was not willing to carry on his responsibilities under the existence set up he was deposed, and Abdullah b Sa'ad would hold the charge of both the provinces.

'Amr b Al 'Aas made this order of deposition a cause of personal grievance. In a fit of anger he divorced the step sister of Uthman. He also declared that as his demand had not been accepted, and due regard had not been paid to his services as the Conqueror of Egypt, he would inflame the people against Uthman

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