

Khalifa Uthman bin Affan - Facing the Challenge of the Seditious

The political atmosphere in Madina

'Aamir b Abdullah Tamimi in pressing the demand for the abdication of Uthman had advanced no arguments. Uthman had turned down the demand for cogent reasons. Nevertheless these altercations poisoned the political atmosphere in Madina. Barring a few persons who espoused the cause of Uthman strongly, the other companions were either critical or preferred to remain indifferent.

Uthman discussed the matter with Ali. Ali talked in cautious and diplomatic terms. He neither came forward to support Uthman through thick or thin; nor did he support the rebels. He was however critical of the leniency of Uthman. He said that because of such leniency on the part of Uthman, the Governors in the provinces had become headstrong, and they were following policies which were not approved by the people. Ali was also critical that under Uthman high office under the State had been monopolized by the Umayyads to the great dissatisfaction of the other sections of the people. Uthman gave his defense, but this did not make Ali change his views. On the other hand Uthman stuck to the view that he had done no wrong, and he had become a victim of false propaganda.

The differences between Uthman and Ali pointed to the fact that something had gone wrong with the Muslim polity, and that the Muslims were no longer a united community. Such disruption in the ranks of the Muslims forebode some catastrophe. That set Uthman thinking, and in order to overcome the crisis Uthman decided to summon a council of his Governors.

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