

## **Khalifa Uthman bin Affan - Reflections of His Caliphate**

### ***Dilemma of democracy***

We have next to ask ourselves the question whether Uthman is to be blamed in any way for this relaxation of control, and the degeneration of the democratic urges of the people into licence? We cannot impute any blame to Uthman in this behalf for the simple reason that this issue has not been satisfactorily resolved during the last fourteen hundred years, and the dilemma of democracy continues to be as serious and grave today as it was in the time of Uthman.

The dilemma of democracy is that while at individual level the Muslims are the most democratic people in the world, at the collective level democracy has practically failed in almost all the Muslim countries in the world. In the course of Islamic history when there was a strong ruler he maintained law and order and kept the democratic urges of the people under control. This evoked reaction and the people led the struggle for the restoration of liberties. - With the restoration of liberties, democratic urges of the people once again degenerated into licence. Things have thus moved in a vicious circle, and history has witnessed a succession of dictatorships, and loose democratic rule creating problems of law and order.

It is unfortunate that we have so far not evolved a political system "hereunder a proper balance could be maintained between the democratic urges of the people, and the requirements of law and order. This unsatisfactory state of affairs is not peculiar to Islam; it applies to secular orders as well. As a matter of fact the so called democracy of the western pattern is a spent force. The need of the day is to evolve a new political system based on the principles of Islam. In the Holy Quran, Allah has referred to the Muslim community as the best community among mankind. The lesson that is brought out by the life story of Uthman is that we should create a new political order "hereunder proper balance is maintained between liberty and authority according to the principles of Islam. I visualize that the day is not far when the Muslims would once again assume the leadership of the world, and sponsor a political system which is a happy synthesis of liberty and authority. May God help us in our mission!

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Source : *Alim.org-Uthman History*