

Chapter 13: ‘Ammar during the Reign of ‘Uthman

The physician said; "Which beverage do you like most?" ‘Umar replied: "I prefer nabiz (wine of date)."

Nabiz was brought and he took a few draughts. The beverage came out immediately from the place of wound. When the beverage came, out the appearance of the physician changed, and there were signs of despair on his face. However, those present around him did not lose hope.

One of those present said to the physician: "You are mistaken in imagining that nabiz has come out of the wound. What has come out is contaminated blood and its colour has misled you,"

As directed by the physician some milk was brought and the Caliph drank it. Soon afterwards the milk also flowed out of the wound.

Keeping this state in view the physician said to the Caliph with confidence and in decisive terms; "I don't think you will survive this night. Now you can do whatever you like."

Ka'b al-Ahbar said: "O Commander of the faithful! Did I not tell you in advance that you would be killed?"¹

‘Umar said: "What kind of martyrdom is this when I am in the Arabian Peninsula!"

Sometime earlier ‘Umar had prepared a plan which he was determined to implement and was awaiting an opportunity to do so, now the time of his death had arrived and it was feared that the opportunity might be lost. In the circumstances it was no longer proper that he should delay its implementation for fear of excessive bloodshed or losing hope of life. Furthermore, fear and despair could on no account ensure his deliverance. In the circumstances he decided that in the last moment of his life he should, before implementing the plan, assess the standard of his influence, and find out whether anything out of

that influence still remained, so that he might enforce his orders and make the people obedient and humble for the third and the last time.

'Umar had decided since long to retain authority in his hands during his life time as well as after his death. However, he knew that a number of persons who coveted the Caliphate were not well-disposed towards him. He had also no doubt that his assassination at the hands of Abu Lu'lu, was the result of a preconceived deep conspiracy. Or else how could a man like Abu Lu'lu, without the support of one of the internal powers of Madina and without the instigation of one of the enemies (if we don't say the enemies) of 'Umar, dare stab the man ('Umar), who had humiliated the Kaisers and the Kisras, when all these enemies were wise men among the Muslims and had influence in the organization of the Islamic State?

In any case the real inciter or inciters of this crime were known to 'Umar (whether on the basis of correct knowledge and information or on that of guess and conjecture), but he had no means of retaliation or revenge. Furthermore; he did not have enough time at his disposal to pursue this object. In the circumstances it was necessary for him to implement, during the last moments of his life, the plan which he had already in view, although the real culprit might not be identified and might profit from this absence of prosecution.

The only difficulty which already existed was that he should have used his previous influence and adapted it to the enforcement of the plan which he had in mind, and give up the hard task of the prosecution of the culprit. At that moment the condition of 'Umar was such that as a result of the blows of Abu Lu'lu's sword blood was gushing out of his body in torrents. The question, therefore, was as to how he could act in those circumstances to solve his difficulty.

Evidently the danger which attended upon 'Umar's influence at instigation of the real culprit (or culprits) was something which had not taken place except with the consent and approbation of all the leaders and the persons at the helm of affairs and the prevailing conditions also showed that this occurrence was supported by public thinking as well. And if this influence was lost it would amount to condemnation of his policies and destruction of his intellectual influence.

Now if the matter had ended at that the public opinion had approved his assassination and 'Umar himself might have departed from the scene but his intellectual influence had not perished and was not treated as condemned, the position could have been tolerable for him. But if his influence had not perished and his policies had continued and history and the course of history had been humble before his policies, it would have amounted to his having achieved his object.

All these thoughts crossed 'Umar's mind at a great speed and in order that he might put these thoughts to test he ordered Abdullah bin Abbas, who was one of his associates and advisers, to go out of the house, make enquiries regarding the views of the people about his assassination, and ascertain whether

the people approved of this occurrence, or whether they had received it as an unexpected event. Abdullah began investigations outside the house and concluded that the people had not approved of the occurrence.

‘Umar was contented with this and did not need anything more. After having been satisfied that his awe and influence had not been lost he felt relieved and did not worry about anyone having dared to assassinate him.

The people wondered within themselves at ‘Umar's way of doing things because in these last moments of his life he began remembering, for nomination of the next ruler, persons who were already dead; and ignored the ability and competence of the suitable persons who were still alive and were much superior to those who were dead!

‘Umar was saying at that time: "I wish that Salim the slave of Abu Huzayfa had not been dead so that I could nominate him as my successor." And according to another narration he began remembering persons like Mu'az bin Jabal and Khalid bin Walid as well as some non Qurayshites, and mentioned the names of persons from amongst the petty slaves, and uttered the names of even those of his opponents and enemies who were all dead. In short he did not nominate any living person to the Caliphate although he knew well that none of the dead was superior to those who were alive, and perhaps also knew very well that there was one among the contemporaries who was much superior to all the dead ones.

The thing which was very surprising for the people was that ‘Umar did not nominate his son to this office and did not wish that he should assume responsibility for his deeds after his death. However, at the same time he indirectly entrusted the responsibility to another person and nominated him to Caliphate with great insistence!

Another interesting point which became the cause of surprise of the people was that for the interval of a few days which ‘Umar had taken into account for purposes of consultations, he nominated Sohayb for leading the congregational prayers. It means that he believed there was a difference between leadership in the matter of congregational prayers and leadership for the administration of public affairs! And what surprised the people all the more was that on the day of Abu Bakr's selection ‘Umar had put forward his Imamate (leadership) of congregational prayers as an argument for fitness for caliphate and leadership of public affairs.

Besides all this the surprise which people expressed about ‘Umar's action was that they saw that ‘Umar testified that the Holy Prophet (S) had breathed his last and was satisfied with a council of six men. However, when he analysed the personality of each one of those persons one by one he testified that the Holy Prophet (S) breathed his last while he was angry with some of them, but his anger was buried with his death! And this anger was clearly sensed by the people and none denied it.

In any case the people were very much surprised on account of these apparently contradictory things and mentioned these contradictions to one another. However, none of them said: "The Caliph has been overcome by pain and torture." It was because they saw that the Caliph had a plan and these very surprising acts were its requisites or the preliminary requisites of its enforcement so that it might go through its stages.

Furthermore, as the people were divided into parties and groups they could not oppose his plan and every party and group was anxious to achieve its own object. The people who were faced with all these prolonged surprises and speculations and wished that these surprises should end, and a bright path should be shown to them went to 'Umar and, in order to put an end to these differences, requested him to nominate a particular person for the Caliphate.

In the end 'Umar once said to those who approached him: "After all this talk I have decided to appoint as your ruler a person who is superior to all others so far as truthfulness and guidance to the right path is concerned." And in this connection he mentioned the name of 'Ali. However, in the meantime a thought crossed his mind which did not permit him to hand over the reins of office to 'Ali either during his ('Umar's) own life or after his death. He, therefore, went back on his word with regard to the nomination of 'Ali and consequently appointed six persons from amongst Quraysh to the Caliphate. These six persons were 'Ali bin Abu Talib, Zubayr bin 'Awwam, 'Uthman bin Affan, Abdur Rahman bin 'Awf, Sa'd bin Abi Waqqis and Talha bin Abdullah with whom the Holy Prophet (S) was pleased.

Then he directed those present to ask these six persons to see him. Soon afterwards the six persons arrived there. Then 'Umar said to them: "After me all of you are candidates for the Caliphate!" As against this question the hearers had no alternative except to keep quiet on account of excessive anger and not to say anything.

'Umar, however, repeated his proposal so that the said persons might break the silence and he might also hear a reply. Eventually Zubayr said: "What is the harm if we be the candidates for the Caliphate? In these circumstances I wish that you had remained alive and continued to shoulder this responsibility. However, amongst Quraysh, none of us is inferior to you from the viewpoint of our antecedents and affinity."

Zubayr's reply was not liked by 'Umar; it stirred him, and it is evident that if he was capable he would have seized a scourge and struck it on Zubayr's head. However, he did not possess enough strength to do so and the question of revenge ceased to exist.

At this moment, when 'Umar was journeying in another world, he contented himself with one other biting remark and addressing all the six persons said: "Do you like that I should introduce all the six of you to

you as you actually are?" They replied: "Speak. If we spare you, you won't spare us."

'Umar said: "As regards you, O Zubayr! You are satisfied with something small and then get annoyed soon. You are a human being on one day and a devil on another! If I hand over the Caliphate to you, you will destroy the city of Batha for ten seers of barley! And who will look after the affairs of the people on the day on which you appear in the shape of a devil? And again who will take care of the matters on the day on which you are angry? Should I say anything more or keep quiet?"²

Then 'Umar addressed Talha and said: "Should I say something or not?"

Talha replied: "Speak you are one who never speaks the truth."

'Umar said: "I know you from the day of the Battle of Uhud when your finger was severed. And I have not forgotten the words which you uttered on the day on which the verse relating to Hijab (Veil) was revealed.³ And I remember how much the Holy Prophet (S) was annoyed with you and remained angry with you on account of those words till the last day of his life."

Then he turned to Sa'd bin Waqqas and said: "You are a man who has a platoon of horsemen under his command you wish to engage yourself in massacre with their help and acquire booty."

Then he addressed Abdur Rahman bin 'Awf and said: "O Abdur Rahman! If the faith of all the Muslims is weighed and assessed and compared with your faith, your faith will certainly be superior to theirs. However, this task is not appropriate for a person like you, because you possess a weak point, and, as I have already said, the tribe of Bani Zohra has nothing to do with the Caliphate."

After 'Umar had analysed and explained the position of these few persons and taken notice of the fact that they would not attain to the Caliphate he turned to 'Ali and said: "How fit and suitable you were for the Caliphate! I swear by Allah that if the spirit of humour was not in you and I selected you for the Caliphate you would lead the people to clear truth and right path!"

In the end he turned towards 'Uthman and in a tone which showed that he was desirous of the Caliphate for him and was inviting him to it he said: "You are fit for this task. However, I can see that if I hand over the Caliphate to you; you will make Bani Umayya and Bani Abi Mu'tib ride on the necks of the people, grant them concessions and give them wealth and property. Then a pack of the wolves of Arabia will attack you and kill you in your bed. I swear by Allah that if they (Quraysh) do so, this event will take place and the wolves of Arabia will resort to this action. Remember my words on the day on which events take such a turn and know that this has to happen."

It is evident that the expression of views by 'Umar about the members of the council in the capacity of

men, as mentioned above, accorded perfectly with his plan and it is also clear that the proclamation of these views was one of the main elements for the enforcement of his plan, because 'Umar was not concerned with the members of the council and their like viz. neutral parties and groups. What really he had in view was the enforcement of his plan and these views as expressed by him impressed the people. Then 'Umar was undoubtedly very keen to give this shape to his views on the subject with great care and enthusiasm so that they might be compatible with his plan.

It may however be noted that on the one hand he invited the six persons before taking a decision regarding the council system and making necessary arrangements in the matter, and on the other hand he wanted to establish a base with the words which he was uttering and to build the council system on it.

Apart from these two aspects you can observe that, notwithstanding the fact that the words of 'Umar are mixed with various kinds of criticism, they possess two characteristics in the sense that on the one side they have been expressed with a tone of ridicule and derision, and on the other side they appear in the shape of a special topic.

If someone says that the combination of these two characteristics took place without any prior aim and intention, do not believe him. The fact is that the mental and intellectual factor of Abu Hafs ('Umar) in combining these two characteristics certainly arose from his political skill and not from his aesthetic sense, and he wished that all these matters should come to the knowledge of every one, so that they should impress every class in a special manner. And eventually the general effect of conveying these matters to others was to throw all of them into an abyss from which they had no way of escape.

By commencing the conversation in a facetious and jesting tone 'Umar wanted to satisfy his anger and to take revenge on those who dared talk with him impudently while he was in his death bed. However, if this personal factor is compared with other political factors which were agitating his mind, it will carry no importance. This point may be explained thus: Keeping in view 'Umar's derisive criticism coupled with the delicate touches and wit, which he was employing, it would appear that his object was to prompt the members of the council all the more to attain to Caliphate, and not that he wanted his action to be a means of his personal gratification, because he deprived every one of them very explicitly of the position of Caliphate and ruler ship with a special language and in a particular manner.

The point which he had in view during these proceedings was that with these stinging words he should rouse them to action so that everyone of them might express his candidature and competence and incidentally refute his thinking. Otherwise, if he had told them openly and explicitly: "Every one of you who can or wishes to enter this competition should do so and gain his object"; none of them would have come forward to compete with others. In that case 'Umar would not have achieved his object. He, therefore, adopted the method of derision and ridicule and stung them, so that they might show their reaction and at the same time might not have any other recourse except that of executing his plan.

'Umar had also another object in view in resorting to ridicule and it was that he wanted to remove the veil from the real faces of these distinguished men and leaders of the nation and to tear the curtain which had been hung between them and, others. Furthermore, as a result of this action he wanted their personalities to become a topic of general discussion for the people and to make his own high position which he had acquired stabilized, and impress this matter on the minds of the people so that they might confirm that 'Umar was such a person that none after him possessed similar competence for the Caliphate and ruler ship. And possibly this remembrance of 'Umar was the most important factor which caused the setting aside of 'Ali and the tacit nomination of 'Uthman.

For if 'Ali had assumed the reins of the Caliphate after the death of 'Umar no difference would have been felt in the outward appearance of the matters and the course of events as compared with the period of 'Umar's Caliphate and consequently the value and worth of 'Umar which was felt during the Caliphate of 'Uthman would not have become known during the Caliphate and ruler ship of 'Ali. Furthermore by adopting a special style and method on the subject while criticizing the members of the council he had something else in view. His idea was that outwardly he should not assume any responsibility for the appointment of the Caliph but should pretend that he had handed over this matter to the people and his own part was only that of an adviser and a guide!

The result of all this thinking was that he invented a system which was a combination of nomination and election. From the point of view of election, however, he contented himself with the idea that its outward shape should remain intact, although, in fact, it did not conform either to the rules of religion or with the national spirit. And his main idea was that none should be considered responsible for nomination and appointment.

When the preliminaries for the enforcement of the mental plan of 'Umar were completed and their results which were the effects of different factors and objects became apparent, he did not permit that the election should take place in a natural manner. He compelled the people to execute his plan in a decisive manner without creating any differences or diversions, and ordered that if the election ended in diversity of opinions the nominees should be beheaded!

Caliph 'Umar, therefore, took into consideration such a council and formulated such severe regulations for them, and strangely enough he did not delegate the authority for the execution of the regulations to the members of the council or to anyone of them but entrusted this task to an external force viz. the police. Thus he did not leave any path open for them except submission because he had ordered that whoever opposed his command should be beheaded and if all the members of the council opposed it, they should meet the same fate!

Hence, one of the minutest points which he had taken into account for creating a favourable atmosphere

for the implementation of his plan was that he decided that during the intervening period i.e. till the appointment of the Caliph one of the freed slaves of the Muslims would look after the state affairs. By this means he wanted the people to believe from the psychological point of view that the matter had a national shape. And by limiting the time for the election and subjecting it to strict supervision and control his object was that whatever he had intended should be accomplished without any negligence and respite.

The law relating to the council was neither ambiguous nor detailed. It had been prepared in a very easy and simple manner and was exact and decisive in all respects.

He called Abu Talha Ansari, the Chief of the Police Department and ordered him as follow:

"When I am dead collect fifty of your men. Then confine all the members of the council in a room and keep them under supervision. Give them three days for consultations and in any case do not allow the period to exceed three days. Then keep it in mind that if five persons are agreeable and one man differs you should cut off his head, and if two persons are not agreeable you should kill both of them. In case, however, they are equally divided i.e. three persons hold one view and the other three hold the other, enforce the view of the group to which Abdur Rahman belongs and the three persons belonging to the other group should either submit or be killed. And in case unanimity is not achieved during the period of three days, kill all of them and then leave it to the people to elect whomsoever they like!"

In any case it was a law which was easy, simple and straightforward and at the same time decisive, binding and exact. It was exact, because its ease, simplicity and firmness revolved round the pivot of a particular object and possibly such an incident had no precedent in the political history of the world!

It was simple because its implementation was allied with great weakness and severity and at the same time it had been designed in a strange manner and its form was such that 'Ali should have remained aside and might not have been able to get elected.

There may be some persons who may say: "If the intention of Abu Hafs ('Umar) in designing this plan had been to deprive 'Ali from the Caliphate and to appoint 'Uthman to that position, he could, as was his wont, nominate 'Uthman to the Caliphate explicitly and decisively." It should, however; be remembered that the position enjoyed by 'Ali in the minds of the people and his influence on public thinking was very well known to 'Umar and did not need any proof. Hence, for his and other reasons he had no alternative except to come to terms with public thinking in such a way that the people should automatically implement what 'Umar desired and his plan should be enforced without their facing his anger.

The point which attracted attention in this dexterously drawn plan was that he mentioned the name of 'Ali and extolled his qualities and thus apparently did not oppose public opinion regarding attachment for 'Ali, except in respect of this point which he apparently expressed unintentionally although in fact intentionally

and purposefully.

Then he mentioned the names of five others. He was not worried about their enjoying public confidence and did not also fear the opposition of their supporters.

Hence, the implementation of his plan with a firm resolve was fit to make its headway and his purpose was being achieved without any trouble or inconvenience and without his nominating any particular person to the Caliphate. And incidentally he had also not taken responsibility for the actions of the future Caliph.

In short, by taking the preliminaries of the matter into account the deprivation of 'Ali from the Caliphate and the coming into office of 'Uthman was abundantly clear. The above mentioned point may be elaborated thus: The victory of 'Uthman was certain because Abdur Rahman was his son in law and Sa'd was his cousin (paternal uncle's son) who could in no circumstances oppose him or leave his group, Apart from this Talha belonged to the tribe of Taym and if he had lost hope of becoming the Caliph he would certainly not have elected a Hashimite, In that event out of the six persons only two viz.

'Ali and Zubayr would have been left and in case they had expressed opposition they would naturally have been beheaded. In any case, irrespective of the distinction which had been given to Abdur Rahman for the good order and management of the consultations 'Umar's plan was being implemented automatically.

However, the prudence and care of the Caliph demanded that Abdur Rahman should, in any case, have been the central figure. The fact that 'Umar relied on the honesty of Abdur Rahman and in the meantime did not consider the tribe of Bani Zohra fit for the Caliphate (as mentioned above) simply meant that Abdur Rahman should enjoy a special position in the council, and if by chance the two pans of the scale became equal Abdur Rahman should make that of 'Uthman heavier.

The secret of the matter was not hidden from 'Ali or from those persons who were occupied with public matters in those days. However, when the pros and cons are studied and the ways and means of the business are taken into consideration it transpires that politics is politics, whatever it maybe and in whatever shape it may appear!

The fact is that the aim of the council and the time which had been fixed for the implementation of the plan were quite clear to 'Ali and if our interpretation is permissible we may say that, in fact, the attitude of 'Ali in the matter of politics had an aspect of idealism. He did not give up this course and policy at any cost and sacrificed his personality for the sake of his principles. We shall not be exaggerating if we say that the method and policy of 'Ali helped the advancement of the scheme of others, because, whether before the consultations or thereafter he acted time and again to his own disadvantage.

When Caliph 'Umar had finished with his remarks with regard to the council and had also given order to Abu Talha Ansari, Imam 'Ali and his uncle Abbas departed from 'Umar's presence, and the members of Bani Hashim's family and their supporters, who were present there, also accompanied them. They had not yet covered a long distance when 'Ali began explaining the matters and said to his uncle: "The aim and purpose of this plan is that I should be deprived of the Caliphate and 'Uthman should attain to it."

It may be pointed out that 'Ali gave these explanations in reply to his uncle's question, because Abbas had asked 'Ali: "What is your view about the Council?"

When the secrets of this council and its aims and objects had been explained, Abbas suggested to 'Ali that he should not attend the meeting of the council. However, 'Ali, who possessed a policy and an ideal, did not agree to his uncle's proposal, and prepared himself for every sacrifice. People knew that he was a man, who was firm and constant against every happening, was steadfast in the path of truth, never abandoned this policy and object at any time, and considered the greatest victory and success to lie in that he should prefer his sublime intellectual and religious interests to worldly benefits.

The six persons concerned assembled in a room and Abu Talha Ansari and a party of armed police stood outside the door in a row. Behind the strong group of fifty police men there was a larger group of sentries who formed a row like a chain and were guarding the premises. And still behind the sentries a large number of the people had gathered in different rows in the form of a crowd. The number of persons forming these rows was large and they were all armed. Generally the people had only two thoughts and two opinions.

It is true that six persons were sitting in the room, but according to the calculation of the people they were not more than two. One of them was 'Ali and the other was the nominee of 'Umar.

Furthermore, those present in the gathering had no doubt about the fact that the supporters of 'Ali were in a majority and were superior to others from the point of view of past record, steadfastness and firmness.

'Ammar and Miqdad were mentioning in their place the priority of 'Ali was certain and indisputable, but the second position of 'Uthman had a different shape, because two government parties who had power in their hands were his supporters viz. well equipped and armed soldiery which was under the command of Abu Talha Ansari, and the group which was represented by Ibn Abi Sarah, the head of the deceitful and the hypocrites.

A person who observed the conditions and witnessed the combat during those days from close quarters narrates that the two rival groups had arrayed themselves opposite each other and each of them was crying slogans in favour of its candidate. The favourable and opposing voices were reaching the ears of

the six persons who had retired in the room and it was known that four persons out of the six members did not in fact have any supporters.

The voices which were being raised outside were clearly indicatives of support for either 'Ali or 'Uthman. In the circumstances what was the proper course for the remaining four persons to pursue? And why should they have involved themselves in trouble when they had no hope of success? And none had nominated them and the people, too, did not attach any importance to them. No doubt this external pressure cut the matters short and the field of contest lay open for the two real rivals. And there is no doubt about the fact that this external pressure placed the remaining four members of the council virtually in the same position which 'Umar had prepared for them before his death.

The first person who assessed the situation properly (and was also acquainted with the 'conditions beforehand) was Talha, who removed the doubts of those who were raising a hue and cry, and, when he felt that he had no supporters, he withdrew in favour of 'Uthman. Then Zubayr withdrew in favour of 'Ali. Then Sa'd joined these two persons and thus surrendered the authority to Abdur Rahman. After these developments 'Ali observed silence and 'Uthman, too, remained quiet.

Abdur Rahman had not yet left the room when the secret of Abdur Rahman's taking oath of allegiance to 'Uthman became evident and all realized that Abdur Rahman while taking the oath had the same hope which 'Umar had when he took a similar oath to Abu Bakr, with the difference that 'Umar's hope materialized whereas Abdur Rahman's did not.

As and when he remembered the forecast of the people and was reminded of it he felt grieved. However, he was never grieved as much as he was when he was coming out of 'Uthman's palace called Tamaruz Zahra. The details of this incident are given here: This was one of the royal palaces of 'Uthman. Profuse aristocratic ceremonies were arranged for the opening celebrations of this palace. Unfortunately for Abdur Rahman, however, a painful incident happened on that day, because the slaves, sentries and sentinels of the palace of 'Uthman turned him out with severe rudeness. This was due to the fact that Abdur Rahman advised 'Uthman not to incur lavish expenditure in connection with the opening celebrations of the palace and 'Uthman did not like his advice which smacked of criticism.

What is more surprising is that Abdur Rahman's chastising 'Uthman was not limited to this expulsion alone. The matters had taken such a turn that 'Uthman excommunicated Abdur Rahman and ordered that whoever conversed with him would be deprived of his social and civil rights.

It will be better now to dispense with the discussion about an event which did not take place and to turn to what happened at the end of the meeting of the council. Hence after the appointment or election of 'Uthman to the Caliphate Abdur Rahman got up; and was priding himself and singing epic verses on account of his having elevated 'Uthman to the position of Caliph .

Anyhow, by Abdur Rahman's taking oath of allegiance to 'Uthman the latter acquired the Caliphate and 'Ali was deprived of it.

On coming out of the meeting of the council 'Ali proclaimed Abdur Rahman's mistake and openly predicted the unpleasant encounters between him and 'Uthman and the ugly era and the evils which would follow.

The people who were waiting outside were anxious to know what transpired in the proceedings carried on in the room. When the news of the so called election reached them they were beside themselves with sorrow and anger.

Amongst the people the countenance of 'Ammar and the expression of the face of Ibn Abi Sarah were indicative of the intentions of the two factions.

As soon as the signs of happiness appeared in the face of 'Ammar the expression of Ibn Abi Sarah became grim and he threatened the opposite party with revengeful voice and raised uproar; and when sign of happiness appeared in the face of Ibn Abi Sarah 'Ammar began reciting epic verses and threatened the opposite party.

Of course, during the course of these events epic verses and threats were not confined to these demonstrations only. There were many people standing behind these two persons who had contradictory sentiments and every group confirmed the speech of one of these two speakers. Some persons said: "Ammar is right". Some others said: "What Ibn Abi Sarah says is correct."

A person who witnessed this campaign narrates that this dispute between the two groups was not one between two persons but was in fact a contention between two ways of thinking and whereas 'Ali was the manifestation of one of them 'Uthman was the representative of the other. In more appropriate terms it may be said that it was a quarrel between the proposition of a Caliphate and that of monarchy; or it was a fight between the principles and elements of national government and the principle and origin of despotic government.

In short the scuffle which had taken place indicated in fact the struggle of independence against despotism, struggle of justice against tyranny and oppression and struggle of equality against egotism and personal aggrandizement. In other words it was a contention between public interests on one side and personal and individual interests and egotism on the other side.

Hence, what could be expected from 'Ammar? It was that he should rise to oppose a government which was headed by 'Uthman.

We know that ‘Ammar always lived quietly and peace fully except when there was a danger of disturbance and mischief.

What could be expected from ‘Ammar when he had not forgotten the day on which he was working with the Holy Prophet (S) for the construction of the masjid and ‘Uthman was threatening him?

Hence who except ‘Ammar could save the people from the blows of the stick and the scourge of ‘Uthman during his caliphate when he was wielding great authority!

‘Ammar remembered that the Prophet (S) considered him to be as good as 'skin between the two eyes' and 'like the skin of his own nose' and had said: "With the good intentions which ‘Ammar possesses he invites the people to Paradise whereas others invite them to Hell."

Besides all this ‘Ammar was a man who remembered his own good intentions and firm faith and the persecution and torture suffered by him during the early days of his embracing Islam and knew the troubles and sufferings which he had borne!

Now the same brilliant, intellectual, and practical record and sincere faith, and valuable remembrances, coupled with noble principles which were the capital of his personality, and his mission to invite the people to truth, besides which he had not assumed any other responsibility, demanded that he should rise at that critical moment, with which the fate of all the people was linked. It was a matter with which the upper class of the nation was in agreement, but the general public was divided. It was therefore obligatory for him to express his views openly and not to abstain from speaking the truth. It was on this account that he spoke loudly and made these words reach the ears of the members of the council: "If you want to get rid of differences elect ‘Ali."

At the same time Miqdad followed ‘Ammar and said loudly: "Ammar is right. If you take oath of allegiance to ‘Ali all of us are agreeable to it."

At that very moment, as opposed to what was said by ‘Ammar and Miqdad, a man named Abdullah bin Abu Sarah, who was one of the notorious hypocrites and has also been introduced by the Holy Qur'an as such, rose from amongst the gathering and said with a loud voice: "O members of the council! If you consider yourselves to be in need of our support; take oath of allegiance to ‘Uthman."

At this moment ‘Ammar took serious exception to it and facing Abdullah said: "O hypocrite! What have you to do with these words? Allah and all the people know that you have always been deceitful towards Islam and have been committing treachery with it and creating mischief and trouble persistently."

Hence, some Umayyads objected to what ‘Ammar was saying, and, as opposed to the Umayyads, some Hashimites, who were standing behind ‘Ammar, confirmed what he had said, and the matters took such a turn that there arose the danger of a scuffle between the two parties. However, ‘Ammar stood up personally among these two groups and spoke with an enchanting tongue and uttered effective remarks and penetrating words. He explained the secrets of the teachings of Islam, and its good intentions, wisdom and regulations, and clarified as to why Islam and the Muslims needed the leadership of Imam ‘Ali.

If ‘Ammar had been given some time at this critical moment he would certainly have won the campaign.

However, when the sound of ‘Ammar's shouting resounded within the room Abdur Rahman feared that this tumult might create difficulties in the implementation of his plan. In the meantime Sa'd Waqqas also feared trouble and advised Abdur Rahman to expedite the matter. Hence Abdur Rahman placed the conditions before ‘Ali as quickly as possible and decided the issue in favour of ‘Uthman.

Do you know what ‘Ammar did when ‘Ali walked out of the council room gracefully after having lost his right and the result had also been proclaimed?

‘Ammar did not make any change in his condition except to the extent to which it was demanded by change in the atmosphere. When the result of the election was announced he adopted the attitude of protest and addressed Abdur Rahman thus: "O Abdur Rahman! You abandoned ‘Ali and pushed him aside. However, truth didn't abandon ‘Ali and didn't push him aside; and you haven't selected a just person."

Miqdad also followed suit and repeated the same facts and said: "It is very strange on the part of Quraysh! They have lost a man in comparison with whom I don't know anyone as learned in judicial matters, and I don't see any one as wise and pious as he is. Alas! If I had a friend and a helper I would have known what to do!"

Abdur Rahman, who considered himself to be the champion of the election, threatened ‘Ammar and Miqdad and warned them of the consequences of contention and dispute but they did not pay any heed to him. However, ‘Ali was endeavouring to make them tolerate the circumstance and said: "I can read the thinking of Quraysh better than anyone else and know all of them thoroughly. They are the people who seek their own benefit and want to serve the interests of their own people and relatives and say, if the authority is vested in Bani Hashim it will never go out of their hands, but if someone other than Bani Hashim assumes the reins of ruler ship it may be hoped that the bellies of Quraysh will get a share from this bait".

Then he advised and emphasized ‘Ammar and Miqdad to watch the developments and assured them

that whatever they expected would happen and the future would confirm their forecast. He added that at that moment they had no duty except to resort to exhorting the people. Hence these two persons undertook the task of guidance and exhortation.

It must also be stated that the viewpoint of ‘Ammar and the opinion of his other companions who thought like him and had resorted to protest and contention was based on progressive and firm thinking, because they knew for certain the troubles which the nation would experience during ‘Uthman's regime. They also knew very well how the rules and principles would be turned topsy-turvy, and the result which these inauspicious events would produce would certainly be the awakening of the sense of apostasy and reaction in the sense that the progressive Muslim society would be converted from a great and comprehensive just socialism to a hideous and repugnant capitalism. Then naturally prejudice and party spirit would be revived and competency and efficiency would disappear; and all our affairs would be left to the tender mercy of some particular persons. And these men would somehow or other suck the blood of the people, would tarnish the peace of the society, and would throw it into disunity and confusion. Consequently the society which had become affluent after indigence, had acquired honour and credit after humility and meekness, had achieved strength after weakness, and had succeeded in attaining freedom after slavery, would topple down.

‘Ammar and his friends believed that the politics of expectation and in modern terminology the politics of wait and see had a reactionary aspect and said: "The result of allowing an interval of relief to the government of the time, and giving respite to the capitalist ruler or submitting to the influence of this class and waiting for the evil consequences of the establishment of such an organization, will be that with the help of the wealth which such an organization has at its disposal it will bring about evil, mischief and corruption in the beliefs.

Naturally in such an atmosphere every mean and incompetent person will acquire a position. Hence, when such persons are successful they will snatch the wealth and the provisions of the people and will pride themselves on account of this loot and plunder and give it the name of victory and success. Eventually owing to the rule of such a corrupt government an atmosphere of feudalism will be created and the pious minority will become subservient to the corrupt majority. Consequently developments adversity, misfortune, and affliction will engulf the society.

Keeping in view all these matters ‘Ammar rose against the government. A calm and quiet person though he was, his protest could be heard by the people during these days in the loudest terms.

‘Ammar and others of the same track wished that if possible, they should eliminate the cause which was making a new history on a wrong and deviated path and their real object was to forestall the mistakes with which the new course would be contaminated and would lead the progressive Islamic society to reaction, egotism and profiteering and create unpleasant situations for it, because they knew thoroughly

that if this bitter experience and unwholesome course made its appearance in the history of Islam even the bloody revolution which was naturally waiting for the society would not be able to correct it .

‘Ammar and those who shared his views wished to protect Islam from this covetousness and grave dangers and felt that this system of government which was based on equality and everyone could benefit from its sufficiency and efficiency should not be faced with rigidity and stagnancy, and these valuable teachings should not be treated as marketable commodities to be sold or purchased and this precious capital of human life should not be annulled, changed, and tampered with to serve the interests of mean and abominable persons, nor should anyone be allowed to interpret it according to his own wishes, and lastly this new order and sacred system should not be allowed to change gradually into capitalistic feudalism.

In short ‘Ammar and his advanced and progressive associates who shared his views believed that they should refrain from cooperating with the new administration and to protect and guard the environments of Islam from the pollutions of this government.

‘Ammar gave the agents and workers of this new government the name of barren infidelity and said: "These are ungrateful, brainless, ignorant and unblessed persons; they are thankless; they are a calamity and deceit for us; they are now at the helm".

Anyhow the schemes and the collusions of the various parties and groups of those days were very strong and public thinking could make no impression on their perverted minds. And as it is not an easy task to enlighten the public on the future mistakes and errors which are in the making, the pious and enlightened elements of those times could not easily depict the future unpleasant events before the people.

It was for this reason that ‘Ali advised ‘Ammar and Miqdad and their associates to await future events and to content themselves with guiding and advising the people. This was the only duty which they could discharge in these circumstances.

These persons, who were not happy with the prevailing conditions, were passing their, days with fortitude and expectation. Their expectation was like that of faithful revolutionists who spend their time with zeal and devotion.

In the meantime the employees and officials of the government of the time were committing acts which provided excuse to ‘Ammar and his comrades for criticism and protest and gave arguments in their hands which proved the truth of their claim and the correctness of their views and confirmed the policy of guidance adopted by this pious minority.

The historians, or some of the historians, believe that the members of the Umayyad party had been trying secretly for six years before 'Uthman's attaining to the Caliphate to elevate to government a despotic, sentimental and egotistic ruler who should prefer himself and his relatives to others.⁴

The fact is that 'Uthman was a tender-hearted and mild person and was deeply interested in his relatives, and showed great partiality to them. These very sentiments and regard for consanguinity made him a bridge for the predominance of aristocracy over democracy i .e. the public Government of Islam.

It was for this very reason that those related to 'Uthman and similarly others had kept him in reserve for years to achieve their ends; and from the benefits derived by the Umayyad party it was proved that a period of only six days and not six years was required for this purpose.

Keeping 'Uthman in reserve for this purpose has behind it a story whose origin was the day of Saqifa. This was the same day on which the party of Abu Bakr availed of the opportunity provided by the demise of the Holy Prophet (S) and made haste in making use of the principle let the Caliphate be confined to Quraysh. Later it will expand automatically and will also reach others.

Furthermore we have not forgotten the resentment felt by Abu Sufyan on the day on which Abu Bakr was selected for the Caliphate. It was the result of that very resentment that he volunteered to support 'Ali and hurried towards him and offered to take the oath of allegiance to him.

We have also not forgotten that many interested persons, while studying the events of this interval, have considered this occurrence to be a minor one and have passed it by quickly! Although this is one of the most subtle events of the period of interval and is connected with the destinies of the Islamic Government, they have not conducted thorough research in that behalf.

In order to give a true description of the conditions during the period of 'Uthman it is necessary to explain the causes of Abu Sufyan's resentment and its reactionary factors, which later gave the pact of the time of 'Uthman a new form and ensured its enforcement, so that it may become clear that the later events did not have an Islamic form and did not move in the path of gradual change and development.

No doubt history has omitted facts while discussing the Sufyani incident and has been stingy and sparing of giving information relating to it, and has not quoted any thing about its importance except to a very small extent.

In short history alludes very briefly to the mischief mongering of Abu Sufyan and mentions as against this instigation the water which 'Ali threw on this fire, and then keeps silent.

Then it briefly mentions in connection with the same happening the astonishment of Abu Bakr and 'Umar

regarding the attitude of Abu Sufyan and alludes to the consultations and exchange of views by these two persons to avoid the mischief of this genius and explains that, in order to remain safe from the wrong-doing of Abu Sufyan, Abu Bakr and 'Umar decided to soften and win him over by means of money, just as the Holy Prophet (S) paid him money by way of placating him.

However, the position of Abu Bakr and 'Umar vis-à-vis Abu Sufyan and the gift which they had decided to bestow upon him was different from the position of the Prophet, because, as written by Ibn Athir, Abu Bakr and 'Umar elevated the position of Abu Sufyan from that of a hypocrite, in which capacity he used to receive the money, to that of the 'noble of Makkah'. 'Umar abolished payment of money to him as he used to get before, and for this his plea was that Islam possessed sufficient strength and there was no need for placating him. Now this became the basis for the establishment of class system which came into existence after him.

The objection which has been raised against the action of 'Umar is that his purpose was not achieved, but only the title of the subject was changed, and if the first title had not been abolished it was possible that this class of hypocrites would gradually have been eliminated.

However, the second title viz. 'nobles of Makkah', became the cause of this class being given position and power, and naturally the question of exception and discrimination arose, and should not have arisen, because Islam had abolished discrimination.

Here it is necessary that we should discuss the nature of the period of 'Uthman on which the six days and not six years penetration of Umayyad rule had its effect.

As we have already said history has not discussed the 'Sufyani' incident in detail, and has only hinted briefly at the anxiety of Abu Bakr and 'Umar with regard to the difficult posture of Abu Sufyan, and has then assumed silence. However, persons who are well acquainted with the mentality and disposition of Abu Sufyan know that he was not a man of the type who should be easily contented with getting money and become satisfied, because his covetousness went beyond this limit.

As Abu Sufyan was a trader and was well-acquainted with ruler ship and the principles of life, it was not possible that all his objects and desires should be fulfilled by a good deal of money. And even if he occasionally obeyed the Prophet (S) at a fixed price and pretended to follow him, he was no longer prepared to give similar authority to Abu Bakr and 'Umar and in other words, to sell himself to these two persons at the same price, because he looked at them with the same opinion which he held about them earlier.

It must also be made clear that his submission and obedience to the Prophet, too, was only by way of deceit and hypocrisy, and, when he was compelled to submit, he did not consider this compulsion to be

an insult for himself because he saw the Prophet (S) at a position of leadership, which did not interfere with his own position of being an aristocrat. Nevertheless his submission was still allied with transgression.

In the circumstances would it be rational that such a person should submit, and be obedient, to Abu Bakr. And again would it be rational that Abu Bakr and 'Umar should feel secure from him after meeting his demands?

The fact is that we should believe that Abu Sufyan's agreeing to submit to Abu Bakr and 'Umar, and their being satisfied with him, had a stronger reason. It may be asked as to what that strong reason was. The reply to this question is this: Abu Sufyan was a feudalist, who spent lavishly and lived a life of pleasure. He was a profligate aristocrat, who considered himself and those like him to be entitled to special respect.

This class of persons considered themselves to be the masters and others to be their slaves. Naturally they looked at Islam from the standpoint of their own views and considered Islam to be a movement for profiteering and imagined that just like idol-worship the spirit of profit-making was hidden in its teachings. For this reason they thought that the fundamentals and principles being preached by the Prophet (S) of Islam were like king-worship of olden times and as a consequence of this groundless thinking they imagined that Islam, too, considered that it was necessary for all persons to serve the aristocrats.

Hence, in the eyes of Abu Sufyan, the difference between the factors of idolworship and Islam was indeed the difference between the results obtained from them. If the principles of Islam were useful and more paying for the aristocrats and the elders of the nation, it was well and good, but if Islam did not guarantee this object, and did not prove to be a means of service to the aristocrats, it would be better for them to seek some better ways and means to achieve their ends.

Anyhow, the minute factors which existed in the brain of Abu Sufyan made him think on these lines and he held such views about Islam.

Of course, Abu Sufyan was the head of the caravan of the camel owners and the chief of the polytheists, and the head and guide of a materialist party, and every one of these factors and stimulants was sufficient to make him think himself an idol superior to other idols.

With this disposition Abu Sufyan also possessed sufficient cunning, deceit and ingenuity, and had supporters, who propagated this way of thinking. It was these very supporters of his who rose to fight against other parties and groups to acquire the ruler ship. He, therefore, utilized all these means to achieve his object.

It is evident that such a person is not tamed easily in such an atmosphere and does not sell himself at a cheap price. Rather he would submit only when, besides acquiring material benefits, he becomes a partner in the government and the State organizations. Keeping in view Abu Sufyan's posture and position, his characteristics may be fully explained by relating the following story.

Before the event of Saqifa Abu Sufyan was certainly desirous of partaking in government and had been endeavouring to achieve this object. And as soon, however, as he felt that the various parties and groups had joined hands against 'Ali and had decided to deprive him of succeeding to the Caliphate after the Holy Prophet (S) and wished to give the Caliphate to Quraysh, he joined the pioneers and leaders of the nation and cooperated with them, although he was not one of them.

His cooperation with the opponents of 'Ali did not end there. He wanted to share the gains with them; but as he could not hope to succeed in attaining to government according to the standards which were considered in those days to be the criterion of distinction, he could not get a share in it. At the same time he did not imagine and consider it reasonable that the Caliphate should go to the smallest family of Quraysh.

He thought it to be rational that 'Ali should succeed the Holy Prophet (S) and considered this tradition to be something quite natural. However, when he saw that the real successor did not secure his right, he picked up courage and began thinking about the transfer of the Caliphate to the Umayyad family. He calculated that if it was not possible for him to acquire the Caliphate himself, he could nominate someone else from amongst Quraysh for this office. The only person belonging to the Umayyad family who had a long previous record and had undergone many hardships for the advancement of Islam and fulfilled all requirements of success according to the prevailing standards was 'Uthman and none else. He, therefore nominated him for the Caliphate.

By chance he realized on the day of Saqifa that his thinking about 'Uthman had been incorrect. However, at the same time he was so emotionally shocked at the success of Abu Bakr that he was about to become insane.

In the meantime he felt that a secret game had been played in the matter which he had not taken into account. Besides this he realized that Abu Bakr's Caliphate was a dangerous precedent for the tribes and would cost the aristocrats dearly in future.

For this reason he hastened to 'Ali with utmost sincerity and in other words volunteered for 'Ali's service with good intention from the viewpoint of aristocracy, and waived all other credits to protect this vital position and credit. However, 'Ali, whose way of thinking was opposed in principle to that of Abu Sufyan in all respects declined to accept his assistance and ignored the trouble which he was prepared to take.

At the very outset Abu Sufyan was very much grieved on account of the following two severe shocks:

(i) Rule of Bani Tamim;

(ii) Weakness of Hashimite family.

As these two shocks were intolerable they made him confused. When he came to his senses he profited by the second shock. This matter was explained years later by Mu'awiya during the Caliphate of 'Ali in a letter written by him to Muhammad bin Abu Bakr wherein he admitted that if Abu Bakr and 'Umar had not rebelled against 'Ali, ignored his right, and formed factions, he and his father would not have rebelled. Thereafter Mu'awiya wrote thus in the same letter especially about the common action of Abu Bakr and 'Umar against 'Ali: "These two persons (Abu Bakr and 'Umar) caused great pain and grief to 'Ali and were very harsh upon him."

These two severe blows which Abu Sufyan experienced did not bring about any change in his ideas and way of thinking. No doubt, no change could be expected from the mentality of Abu Sufyan, because Islam, with all its strength, had not been able to bring him round.

Abu Sufyan observed that the elevation of Abu Bakr and 'Umar to the status of the Prophet (S) was something unnatural and these two persons transgressed their limits and undertook a task which was not suitable for them. Now he attributed the staying at home of 'Ali to a strange weakness or lapse on his part, because he who had a clear and admitted right had abandoned it. Then after minute reckoning and comparison between these two strange incidents he came to the clear conclusion, and thought, that it was also possible for Bani Umayya to achieve this object through a short cut, and even if he himself could not attain to the Caliphate his nominee could do so.

When Abu Sufyan rose in support of 'Ali he drew such benefits from the second shock, which he had to suffer, as had not crossed his mind earlier. As this rising of his was prompted by selfishness, he could not think of anything else. That is to say, that although 'Ali did not attach any importance to his rising or opposition, but this rising had great significance in the eyes of Abu Bakr and 'Umar, and these two persons attached great importance to it.

Abu Bakr and 'Umar were frightened of Abu Sufyan's rising because they imagined that it would open the doors of danger and create troubles. They thought that although the sobriety, coolness and firmness of 'Ali had relieved them of trouble in the circumstances then prevailing, none would be able to obviate Abu Sufyan's mischief, if he resorted to it on some other occasion; and none would be able to resist the biting stings and sharp claws of this reactionary ghoulish.

No doubt Abu Bakr and 'Umar pondered deeply over this difficulty, and acted with utmost courtesy and,

according to some historians, found out a solution of the problem, that is, they silenced him with money; but ignored the most subtle points of his personality, because Abu Sufyan was not a man who might have kept quiet as he had been during the days of the Holy Prophet. In any case however he could not be satisfied with the share which he got secretly from the budget of expenses.

Besides all this he was far above that he should admit Abu Bakr and 'Umar to be superior to him, and his condition was such that although apparently he was obliged to remain silent but was secretly engaged in fraud, deceit and obstruction, and Abu Bakr and 'Umar did not know how to remain safe from his mischief. Apart from rendering him financial help, therefore, they were obliged to seek his good will confidentially. We are not aware whether Abu Sufyan saw Abu Bakr and 'Umar at a particular spot or they met him at an appointed place.

It is an admitted fact, however, that all the parties were unanimous that the Caliphate should be confined in the tribe of Quraysh. The questions which arise in this behalf go to show and we can give a definite reply in this connection and say that the silence of Abu Sufyan was more meaningful than that he should be treated to fall under the category of "placating their hearts" by means of the money which he realized from Abu Bakr. Similarly the silence of this man before 'Umar was much more valuable than that he should be contented with receiving money in the capacity of an aristocrat.

Rather the real value of his silence was that 'Uthman should be promised the Caliphate after 'Umar, and incidentally Mu'awiya, with the means and resources in his hand, might prepare a favourable atmosphere for the achievement of this end.

This point is quite obvious that in the matter related to Bani Umayya they were aware that the nomination of 'Uthman for the Caliphate was not in Abu Sufyan's interest so that they might agree with each other in the matter and form a front.

Furthermore, the supremacy of the orders and commands of the Holy Prophet (S) did not permit that people should rise openly in opposition to them, because such an action involved serious collision and was bound to end in bloodshed. For this reason it was necessary to attain to this end and to enforce this programme, that they (Abu Sufyan and his party) should build a bridge and cross it.

They could not also help creating a point of transition so that actions and reactions might come in contact with each other at that point and the profit and loss of the actions taken might have equilibrium and balance. In that event it was necessary for the enforcement of the plan and the programme that there should be a tender-hearted and mild companion, who should also be attached to his relatives, so that they might place him in the first row of the selfish persons and profit seekers, and under the protection of the rule of such an element they might oppose the Prophet's orders as much as they could.

The reaction of this action should be that the Caliph, whom they used as a tool to achieve their end, might be annihilated. After the annihilation they might themselves show another reaction so that they might achieve the required balance; and eventually Abu Sufyan might assume the reins of office in the shape of Mu'awiya, who should be sitting in ambush in Damascus. In case such a helpless old man lacking self reliance had not been available, Bani Umayya would have been faced with much trouble and hardship to solve their difficulty.

However, 'Uthman was a person who was suitable for this task and had been made for this purpose. Eventually, therefore, he was treated to be fit for being praised for his past and to serve as a stepping stone for the future.

The historians imagine that the Umayyad agents were secretly active for a period of six years behind 'Uthman in the shape of profiteering despotic tribal government, although if proper care is exercised it becomes clear that before 'Uthman's coming at the helm, these agents had been struggling in this path for twelve years, and on account of his leniency, tender-heartedness and strong attachment for his kith and kin, 'Uthman had been placed in such a situation that he could not keep the government of the Umayyad party hidden even for a moment.

The fact that 'Ammar had taken the initiative in the matter of holding disputation with the government of the time and leading the disputants was certainly the result of 'Uthman's supporting his near relatives and showing partiality to Bani Umayyah and Bani Mu't.

'Ammar knew thoroughly how dangerous the influence of this group was for the just regime of Islam from the economic point of view.

Now the substantial proofs of this reality which were felt at the very first moment, and disturbed the people, and made them plan revenge, became the cause of 'Ammar's assuming the leadership of the disputants and consequently facing the tribulations and tortures.

To make it more clear it may be said that when the oath of allegiance had been taken, instead of 'Uthman going to the masjid and explaining the plan of his government and associating the Muhajirs and the Ansar with his ruler ship, his special companions and courtiers picked him up on their hands and took him to his personal house so that they alone might enjoy their victory there.

This very occurrence became the cause of the people openly expressing their suspicions and doubts and discussing the matter fearlessly in every lane and street.

When the Caliph heard about these things he was obliged to approach the people and offer them an apology, because he explained to them that as he had taken over the task only recently he might be

given some time so that he might study and reflect over the problems. He added that as soon as he was free he would contact the people as desired by them, and as he himself also wished.

The celebration held by the first family gathering of Bani Umayyah on their success had not yet come to an end when Abu Sufyan announced his views regarding the plan for the Umayyad rule which he had sketched in his mind long ago, and had been seeking an opportunity to enforce it. As Abu Sufyan had become blind in those days he asked those present: "Is there anyone in the assembly before whom we should observe taqayya (be cautious)?" Those present replied: "Don't worry. There is none here except us."

Then Abu Sufyan began expressing his views and said: "O Bani Umayya! Hold firmly the government which you have acquired like a ball. For I swear by one by whom I swear that I had desired this position for you for years. Now that you have achieved your cherished goal, you should endeavour to transfer the Caliphate to your children. I swear by god that there is neither a Paradise nor Hell."

It is strange and surprising that the Caliph ('Uthman) supported what he said, because he did not contradict him.

If we undertake to express our views in this behalf with due respect, and offer an excuse and explanation for, 'Uthman's silence and his failing to object (against Abu Sufyan) we shall say that on account of the tie which existed between these two persons, 'Uthman attributed the words of Abu Sufyan to his weakness and old age and did not object to what he said.

Abu Sufyan did not content himself with the proclamation of this family programme, for the grudge and ill will which he had in his mind for long years erupted and the same unclean feeling took him to the grave of Hamza. He kicked the grave and said: "O Hamza! Rise and see that the kingdom for which you fought with us is in our hands now."

These expressions of Abu Sufyan are an evidence of his inclination and love for the thinking of the Period of Ignorance which he showed with so much anger and party spirit to satisfy his feelings. From another angle, however, these expressions possess a good deal of importance, because the views of Abu Sufyan distinctly show the type of government which he desired, and he thinks the government to be like a mirror in which he sees his own face.

Again it is most probable that if Abu Sufyan had uttered these words only on his own account they would have been destroyed and eliminated like many personal and individual sentiments of ill will and grudge and would not have been recorded in the pages of history. However, as he expressed his views in an authoritative tone and with the tongue of the government of the time, we see that they have remained a memorial of Abu Sufyan in the texts of history till today and fully indicate the dangerous deviations of the

government of that time.

Anyhow the authority of Abu' Amr 'Uthman bin Affan and his government advanced with great speed on the track set by Abu Sufyan, without seeking directions from the Book of Allah, or the Sunna of the Holy Prophet (S) or the conduct of the two shaykhs. Owing to the enforcement of the plan chalked out by Abu Sufyan the government of the new Caliph quickly adopted a course from which 'Uthman could not deviate.

To sum up it may be said that 'Uthman was going one way and the rest of the people were going another way.

In the meantime 'Uthman was faced with a judicial problem and everyone knows what authority and importance the rule of law carries in Islam. At the same time it is admitted that the Holy Prophet (S) prescribed certain conditions and standards for regulating the laws. He explained the stipulations attached to it and declared piety to be the prerequisite for holding charge of this task. He recommended strict equality and justice in this behalf and made a judge free and independent.

It is evident that all these provisions have been made with the sole object of creating a peaceful atmosphere so that no fear and alarm should exist in it, and the people should remain safe from injustice and transgression, and the law court should be the authority to whom problems related to blood, property and honour may be referred for solution in accordance with truth, and the judge should be able to look independently into every matter which affects peace or eliminates the comfort of the people, and should give a decisive judgement.

Now let us see how Caliph 'Uthman was faced with these problems and how he solved them.

During those days a man named Hurmuzan lived in Madina. Unfortunately after the assassination of 'Umar by Abu Lu'lu he (i.e. Hurmuzan) happened to come face to face with Ubaydullah bin 'Umar, while crossing a street.

Hurmuzan was in no way responsible for the assassination of 'Umar and none had accused him of having had any hand in it. In fact no fault on his part had been seen. Hurmuzan knew his position and the people also recognized him as a non Arab. No such thing as racial conflict was at all known in those days in the city of Madina, except in the Umayyad period.

The fact is that Hurmuzan was leading a very peaceful life under the auspices of the laws of Islam. However, Ubaydullah son of 'Umar killed him only for the offence that he and Abu Lu'lu were both non Arabs.

This occurrence involved 'Uthman into difficulty; and however, if such a problem had arisen during the days of 'Umar he would not have felt the least difficulty in solving it, because he used to adjudicate justly and preferred to meet the general rights as compared with special interests. This is proved by the fact that he enforced law in the case of his son who had been guilty of a crime. However, in contrast with 'Umar, 'Uthman became involved in serious difficulties. The result was that at the very outset this just authority weakened the principles of justice by his conservativeness, because he sided with the strong one as against the weak one, and preferred the Arab to that of non Arab origin. Consequently he adopted those standards of justice which were a memorial of the feudal period and the prejudices and oppressive regulations of that age.

All the persons who watched the result of this trial shuddered with horror, when they saw that 'Uthman supported Ubaydullah and let the blood of Hurmuzan go in vain without any valid reason.

This conservativeness became the cause of the suspension of a Divine penance and consequently one of the patent traditions of the Age of Ignorance was revived. Who knows that possibly by taking this action 'Uthman wanted to show his gratitude to 'Umar for the favour he had done to him and to support his son against the law i.e. in opposition to the Command of Allah!

It might be said that this support had become obligatory for him and it is not unlikely that Abu Sufyan had imposed this duty on him so that by this means 'Uthman might express his faithfulness to 'Umar.

By making this recommendation Abu Sufyan possibly took another advantage in the sense that non-enforcement of this punishment necessitate corruption, destruction and derangement of the judicial order of Islam, and owing to the derangement of this judicial order the most basic socialistic system of Islam was set at naught, the tribal regime of the Age of Ignorance was revived, and the judicial power of Islam was sacrificed for the interests and benefits of the groups and tribes.

In any case 'Uthman did not solve this problem on the basis of Islamic rules and regulations but solved it on the basis of prejudice, and disappointed and offended all Muslims. As a result of this negligence and carelessness all the Muslims became terrified, because they felt that from then onwards the life and property of everyone would not be safe and by the violation of the judicial regulations of Islam the rights of all persons would naturally be the object of attack of the desires of the upper class.

Another difficulty which 'Uthman had to face related to the financial affairs as a large amount of public funds had accumulated in the Baitul Mal (public treasury).

Earlier 'Umar too had been faced with the same difficulty, because as a result of the conquest made by the Islamic forces a large quantity of booty had come in their possession. 'Umar consulted the wise and clear-sighted persons as to how this large wealth might be spent. They suggested that it might be

recorded in the registers and 'Umar should distribute the amount available amongst all the people according to the socialistic principles of Islam, and he acted accordingly.

However, after the death of 'Umar some quantity of the jewellery and ornaments of the Iranian Kings were still present in the treasury and on the day 'Umar went to the masjid he showed them to the people.

The jewels glittered in the sunlight like burning fire and 'Umar feared that by looking at them he might be involved in trouble. He, therefore, ordered the treasurer to distribute them and relieve him of their mischief.

However, the treasurer replied: "Distribution of the jewels is not compatible with justice and involves the loss of a good deal of property." He added: "This heap of jewels cannot possibly be distributed among all the adult persons; and if some of them get a share and others don't get it, it would be opposed to the rules of justice.

Furthermore, the share of someone who gets it may exceed his entitlement. And if we break these jewels into small pieces they will lose their value and this will amount to wasting them. Wastage of such wealth amounts to breach of trust and the treasurer will be answerable for it. It is, of course, possible to seal these jewels and convert them into cash which may be distributed among the deserving persons. In that case the wealth will remain safe. However, at present the value of the entire belongings of the Muslims is not equal to that of these jewels. Hence the only solution is that we may keep these jewels intact till the next year. It is possible that in the meantime the wealth of the nation may increase and in that event we shall put the jewels to sale."

'Umar accepted the suggestion of his treasurer and ordered that the contents of the treasury should remain intact until they were sold and the sale proceeds were distributed among the deserving persons. But 'Umar was killed and the bright jewels which were lying in a corner of the public treasury lost their lustre.

Once again the people saw those very luminous jewels which shone in sunlight like burning fire. However, this time they saw them on the breasts of the daughters of 'Uthman and not in the courtyard of the masjid.

Then they saw that their rights had fallen under the control of the family of the government of the time in a ridiculous and dreadful manner.

This was another problem which was perhaps considered to be the most serious problem of the Islamic regime, and 'Uthman had solved this problem in a manner which was not at all compatible with the

Commands of the Book of Allah, the Sunna of the Holy Prophet (S) and the conduct of the two shaykhs. In this matter he resorted to a rash 'ijtihad' which was based on hoarding and despotic rule.

Again 'Uthman was faced with another problem which had a political aspect and was related with the civil security of the society and deliverance of the people from corruption and disorder.

The Prophet (S) had solved this problem in such a way that the two shaykhs (Abu Bakr and 'Umar) could not dare oppose it after his demise. This problem related to the family of Hakam who belonged to the tribe of Bani Abil As and had been banished by the Prophet (S) to the interior of Waj in the vicinity of Ta'if.

This Hakam and his sons were the cousins of 'Uthman and were very dangerous parasites. The Prophet (S) endeavoured to reform them, but their corruption was so deep-rooted that they were incorrigible, because it was an inherent spiritual and intellectual corruption. It had a hereditary aspect and prevailed over them like an ailment which could not be remedied.

These persons were so corrupt in essence and by nature that as compared with the weak-minded and low people they had become the example of meanness and carelessness and provided the means of the agitation and disturbance of mind of the society day after day in one way or the other. The meanness and impudence of these people had reached such a stage that Hakam often walked behind the Prophet (S) and imitated his gait by way of ridicule. One day the Holy Prophet (S) happened to see these impudent and comic actions of his and said: "Be as you are." From that day onwards the people called him a clown, a buffoon and a mimic by way of hatred and contempt.

This presumptuous and shameless person carried his disrespect to its extremes and often peeped impudently into the Prophet's house through the shutter like a spy. On such occasions the Prophet (S) burst into rage and said: "Who can relieve me of the mischief of this lizard (scoundrel)."

Thereafter as and when the name of this man was mentioned the people used to call him lizard or the son of lizard.

This man and his sons and followers were very often guilty of such meanness and turpitude, and those who co-operated with this man in his mean acts were the near relatives of 'Uthman. The cooperation of such persons in the commission of such mean acts was the evidence of their close contact with one another. Their co-operation was like the actions of the rogues and ruffians who do not refrain from attacking their opponents in order to protect the position of every feudalist and to form groups to insult and ridicule those, who do not obey the feudalist or occasionally oppose him. They do not spare any disgraceful and mean action.

In spite of all these disgraceful actions and the meanness and impudence on their part the Holy Prophet (S) did not make haste in excommunicating and banishing these 'lizards'. He guided and advised them and tolerated their meanness and kept patient. However, eventually the position became such that the fear of this moral disease being communicated to other people by contagion became very strong. Only when the villainy and wickedness of these persons became known to all, the Holy Prophet (S) ordered them to be excommunicated. He was obliged, for the sake of preventing this dangerous disease from affecting others, to banish them so that they might live in the interior of Waj. And as Abu Bakr and 'Umar were not unaware of the reason of their excommunication and banishment they, during their lifetime, kept these persons in their place of banishment and did not permit them to return to the society. They also rejected the repeated recommendations of 'Uthman in this behalf.

In more clear terms it may be said that grant of freedom to these banished persons or the continuance of their banishment meant two different ways of thinking reactionary and progressive. That is to say, that if they were allowed to return to the society it meant the revival of the reactionary way of thinking, and if the status quo was maintained it went to show that the laws and principles were respected and the regulations for the security of the society and its progress would continue to be in force.

However the patent shape of the matter is as stated by us and no blind alley is observed in this case except that both sides of the matter may be taken into account in the manner detailed above, and the important results which appeared in those days may be investigated.

We are not aware whether 'Uthman could personally get out of this blind alley easily in those days or Abu Sufyan aided him to get out of it, and that the simple nature, mildness and tender sentiments of 'Uthman prevented him from realizing the bad intention of Abu Sufyan.

In any case we cannot express a definite opinion about this matter, but what is an undeniable fact is that 'Uthman was faced with this problem just as he was faced with the former two problems. He solved it with great ease just as he had done previously not on the basis of accountability to Allah nor to the nation, nor on the basis of the authority of the Qur'an, nor on the commands of the Holy Prophet, nor on the basis of respect for the legal precedents and the conduct of the two shaykhs (Abu Bakr and 'Umar), but according to his personal inclination and individual liking and on the basis of aristocratic rule and protection of family honour.

The only factor which was effectively used in solving this problem was indeed the calculation of influence and respect with a strong will, and the protection of the family position and credit, and nothing else.

By keeping this act in view and after explaining these social, economic, political and civil difficulties, it is not necessary to discuss the pulling down of the grand and real pillars of the structure of Islam which were being destroyed one after the other.

The fact is that the system and regime of Islam, generally speaking, and from the stand-point of its socialistic and philanthropic aspect and absolute justice, was intolerable for the Umayyads who were living under the protection of the kindness of 'Uthman, and the encounter of this group with the rules and regulations of Islam, whether in full or in part, was very burdensome for them. Hence it should be said that: Every act and movement which took place from the side of the Umayyads during this period was in the eyes of the Muslims like an axe struck on the root of Islam!

Keeping in view the events which these innumerable and endless petty difficulties entailed, it is natural that such proceedings should have known no limits as the different events and occurrences which were the cause of the activities of the Umayyads were opposed to the unity of Islam in all respects. This was so, because the Umayyad unity was established on the basis and principle of 'difference', and it is evident that each of these two principles were based on rules and regulations which had no common frontier and comprehensive value except war!

The Islamic principle has no aim and object except the prosperity and welfare of the society. As opposed to it, the entire attention of the Umayyad principle was directed towards the safeguarding of personal interests and profit.

The Islamic principle is established on the foundation of knowledge, action, goodness and justice, whereas the Umayyad principle was established on zeal, influence, intervention, mediation, betrayal of secrets and revilement, and the fact is that these two principles and origins are the reverse of each other in all respects.

As you have become accustomed to the oppression and encroachment by the strong i.e. powerful persons, and consequent upon the stupefaction of the distinguished religious men, who sell you, and those like you, to the feudalists like merchandise, and divide your rights and hard work between themselves, your Islamic sense as well as of others like you has ceased to work, you are not moved by the narration of these small stories of the period of 'Uthman's rule, and do not attach any importance to such events. It should, however, be remembered that before the Islamic sense was lost and the conscience of the Muslims was inhibited, even a small news of this kind shocked the Muslims society, because the people saw that the publication of such a news foreboded the taking place of an accident which would mean that the principle of 'difference' and 'egotism' had risen to stand against the principle of 'equality'.

Anyhow, there was a green pasturage outside the city of Madina where the Muslims used to graze their flocks of sheep and as the principle of cooperation and brother hood governed the people, everyone was permitted to use the pasturage.

The Holy Prophet (S) had allowed free use of the pasturage and Abu Bakr and 'Umar, too, did not interfere in this matter because the principle of equality and the observance of the policy of common animal wealth also demanded it. However, Abu Sufyan and Marwan bin Hakam, who had become habituated to the system of capitalism and had monopolized the sources of income, so that they might expand their authority over the people, made many suggestions to 'Uthman. One of them was that the pasturage in question should be monopolized for use by Bani Umayya and that it should be exclusively reserved for the animals of Bani Umayya.

During the present times you and I do not treat such an act to be something big and often consider the grant of such concessions to be the prerogative of the Caliph. It should, however, be known that our view in such matters does not have a legal aspect, because we have seen and still see many such events and have become accustomed to the oppression and encroachment by obstinate rulers and similarly to the deviations and deceit of religious persons for the sake of the reward which they get to endorse and approve the oppressions of those who violate public rights.

To defend their own sins and fraudulent actions which far exceed the transgressions of the rulers and their deceiving the simple-minded people by various means they give unjust rulings. But the common people of those days who watched this situation treated the monopolization of the pasturage by the Umayyads to be a dangerous tragedy and considered this act to be tantamount to a war started by the Umayyads against their rights and property. This was so because the people looked at these actions with the same eye with which they ought to have looked at them. The opinion of the people with regard to this incident was based on principles and they saw that this step was a specimen of the aggressive activities which had attacked the paradise of their peace and order, from all sides, and deprived them of the blessing of security, and stained the beauty of their comfort and tranquillity.

Anyhow the opinion formed by the people was not wrong, because they saw very soon that seven royal palaces were constructed for the Caliph in the city of Madina. They also saw that a similar royal palace was also constructed for Marwan in Zi Khashab. Then the matters reached such a stage that the very 'lizard' constructed markets and shops with the property looted from the Muslims. Also the people saw in those days that Sa'id bin As, Governor of Kufa, had fixed his eyes on the gardens of the mujahids and the farms of Euphrates in the suburbs of the city.

They also saw that Abi Sarah had allocated the entire income of the Nile valley to himself and was plundering the wealth of the labourers and farmers.

Besides the oppressions committed by these men of the first degree, people saw that the descendants of Umayya and Abi Mu'it had extended their hands of encroachment to all sides and openly attacked the honour, religion and property of the people, and did not desist from any aggression.

Then the people realized fully well that their fear and anxiety about the monopolization of the common pasturage at the very outset was not uncalled for and this encroachment served as a bridge over which all the future evils and mischief were to pass.

In the meantime the thing which surprised the people most was that the Caliph was supporting this selfish, proud, and stubborn man (Walid bin 'Uqba) and the judicial precedent as in the case of Ubaydullah bin 'Umar was repeated in his case as Walid first drank wine and then insulted the very basis of the religion, and in spite of this the Caliph was supporting him and did not permit that he might be awarded legal punishment.

The matter may be explained as follows: Walid bin 'Uqba was the Governor of Kufa before Sa'id bin As. He spent a night in drinking and merrymaking along with his companions and minstrels and then went to the masjid to offer prayers while he was still intoxicated and was wearing the same dress which he had worn during night. He offered two rak'ats of dawn prayers. After he had finished the prayers and his intoxication had also lessened to some extent he turned to the people and said in a jesting and ridiculous tone: "If you wish I can add a few rak'ats to the prayers."

Of course, when the people realized that this man was ridiculing prayers, which is one of the pillars of the faith, like an atheist and was entitling himself to increase or diminish it, they were disturbed and sent witnesses to Madina. As a result of this the sentiments of the Muslims in general were roused.

In spite of this the Caliph supported Walid and sided with him as against the authority of law rather against the authority of the Almighty! However, when the public anger became very intense the Caliph ordered that legal punishment might be awarded to this depraved atheist.

It was a verbal order and at the same time the countenance of 'Uthman showed that in his heart of hearts he did not wish that the order might be executed. Hence, none dared to award the punishment till 'Ali was obliged to rise and carry out the punishment.

The wicked Walid was confident that none would be prepared to execute the sentence against him, but as soon as he saw that 'Ali had got up and was going to execute it he became worried and was sure that he had no way out, especially because he knew 'Ali from his boyhood. He knew that his (Walid's) father 'Uqba bin Abi Mu'it was a polytheist who tortured the Holy Prophet (S) much, and 'Ali had killed him in compliance with the orders of the Prophet.

Keeping these antecedents in mind Walid was trying to escape from 'Ali's hand, but the latter caught him, knocked him down on the ground and executed the sentence on him. However, 'Uthman objected to the action of 'Ali and said that he should not have knocked him down on the ground but should have executed only the sentence on him, although 'Ali was the same person, from whom 'Uthman used to

take religious commands for guidance. Apart from the open support given by 'Uthman to Walid the thing which became the cause of the dejection and resentment of the Muslims was that they saw that the Caliph had changed the socialistic regime and the administration of public Justice into the capitalistic system and had acted in such a way that the wealth was concentrated only in the hands of the rich and was not circulated from hand to hand. They also saw that in the matter of bestowing property and position the Caliph gave the enemies of the Prophet (S) preference over the Muhajirs, and acted against the Book of Allah, which is the Divine constitution, without offering any explanation or making any secret of it. For example:

(1) He granted freedom of movement to Hakam bin Abil As, who had been excommunicated and banished by the Prophet, and thereafter gave him 1000 dirhams.

(2) Out of the various endowments made by the Prophet (S) for being spent on the welfare of the Muslims and for the assistance of the needy, there was a bazaar in Madina which was called 'Shehr Roz', 'Uthman gave this bazaar to Harth bin Hakam as a feudatory gift.

(3) Fidak which had been inherited by Lady Fatima Zahra from her father was given by 'Uthman to Marwan bin Hakam to be held by him as a feudatory gift. Besides this he gave him one-fifth of the income from Armenia as well as 100,000 dirhams in cash

(4) He gifted 4000 dirhams to Khalid bin Usayd alone.

(5) Besides appointing Abdullah bin Abi Sarah as Governor of Egypt he made over to him one-fifth of the income from Africa.

(6) Besides other concessions and gifts which 'Uthman bestowed upon Abu Sufyan he, at the time of granting him 200,000 dirhams, also sent a transfer order to the Baitul Mal (public treasury) for 100,000 dirhams in favour of Marwan. It was as a result of these uncalled for gifts that Zayd bin Arqam, the treasurer, came to 'Uthman with tears in his eyes and said: "I swear by Allah that, not to speak of 100,000 dirhams, even if you transfer 100 dirhams in favour of Marwan it will be too much".

Saying this he threw the key of the Treasury before 'Uthman and walked away.

(7) He distributed the wealth received from Iraq exclusively amongst the members of Umayyad family.

(8) He gave one of his daughters in marriage to Harth bin Hakam and gave her on this occasion 100,000 dirhams.

Innumerable events of this kind were taking place and these developments encouraged the powerful

persons to avail him of every opportunity to benefit by unlawful means and add to their wealth. And very often he intentionally provided such opportunities to the powerful persons so that they might share in his burden and troubles, and to prevent them from rising against him.

This very dirty politics became the cause of Zubayr's accumulating fabulous wealth in a surprising manner.

The foundations of the surprising financial strength of Zubayr had been laid firmly in Kufa, Basra and Egypt.

Consequently, besides his owning 1000 horses and 1000 slavegirls, this companion had more than 50,000 dinars in cash. Besides all this wealth Zubayr had also acquired abundant landed properties.

Talha had also obstructed a lofty palace in Madina and a similar one in the city of Kufa. His product of grains was valued at 1000 dinars.

Zayd bin Thabit, too, had acquired landed property worth two and a half million dinars, besides the great mass of gold and silver accumulated by him which was broken with hatchets.

Besides these persons there were others also who were mad after wealth, and relished sucking the blood of the people. They had also adopted the methods of the Umayyads and the Sufyanis. The day on which 'Uthman was besieged and he sought 'Ali's help he hinted at some of these profiteers saying: "That person, who himself is polluted and cannot defend himself, finds fault with me and accused me!"

Of course, 'Uthman forgot at the same time that the policy and way of working of the Umayyads was that the Umayyads should be near him and should be the first to make a beginning and then thrust the responsibility on him and should cut off his contact with the public and should keep him away from the just and truth seeking persons and the activities of truth should come to a standstill.

In spite of all this if the Caliph had not blocked the path of criticism, and had not claimed absolute authority, it was possible that most of these things might have been left unsaid, and the people might have observed patience. However, his own deviation from the right path and the claim of absolute authority prevented the improvement of the state of affairs, because he shut the mouths of the objectors and the critics sometime with threats and sometimes by means of whipping and military rule. And it was the Caliph's resorting to the military rule which eventually made the people revolt and bring about a revolution.

The persons belonging to all the parties raised their voices, and in connection with the grievances, which they had about the evils and malpractices, they first objected to the construction of the palaces, and the

gifts, and the governors of 'Uthman, As soon as these objections reached the ears of 'Uthman he came out of his house with anger and concern, mounted the pulpit and rejected the objections of the critics with aristocratic logic saying: "My forbearance and broadmindedness have been the cause of the people criticizing me and daring to raise their objections openly. If I had been severe like 'Umar, who was inferior to me, the sense of obedience of the people would have increased, and they would have desisted from criticism and hue and cry. However, as I am a forbearing person the people have become bold and daring."

Then he referred to the objections and criticism directed against his own actions and declared openly: "Whatever I have done was a part of my prerogatives, and if I wish to exercise the authority vested in me, and the rights which I enjoy, I shall spend more money out of the public treasury and nothing will restrain me from doing so."; and in a threatening tone 'Uthman declared: "I shall rub the noses of a number of people on the ground with my future actions."

'Uthman had not yet dismounted the pulpit when 'Ali said with a loud voice: "In that case you will be restrained from doing so."

Then 'Ammar spoke and said: "I swear by Allah that I shall be the first person whose nose will be rubbed on the ground."

Of course, this was not the first objection raised by 'Ammar. As you already know that he was most vociferous in raising objections at the time of the meeting of the six member council, which was constituted to select a Caliph and even after that he did not restrain from criticizing the government of the time on different occasions.

However, as he was a man who never lost calmness and tranquillity and made use of a thorough study and judgement and kept quiet when he saw that others were also saying the same thing in their criticism, he had remained safe from the sting of 'Uthman's tongue and the blows of his lash. Furthermore, he had a special dignity and distinction among all classes of the Muslims. And more important than all these things was that the memorable remarks and traditions of the Holy Prophet (S) about him had provided him a special security, especially because these remarks and traditions had been heard from the Prophet (S) against 'Uthman and in favour of 'Ammar on the day on which the foundation stone of the masjid at Madina was laid and 'Uthman, too, had not forgotten that incident. Above all the influence of 'Ali and the awe inspired by his party was also an effective and important factor in favour of 'Ammar.

Earlier than this Abdullah bin Mas'ud had become subjected to 'Uthman's wrath, because this man also grappled with 'Uthman fearlessly and without hiding his opinions. 'Uthman banished him from the masjid and some of the officials dragged him out in such a manner that his ribs were broken and he fainted.

Then he was taken to his house, and was deprived of all his rights on the public treasury. The people were forbidden from visiting him and none except a few particular companions including 'Ammar visited him to enquire about his health.

When Abdullah's death drew near, 'Ammar reached his bedside and listened to his last will. Abdullah asked 'Ammar to offer his funeral prayers and to bury him secretly.

'Ammar acted according to Abdullah's will. However, when 'Uthman became aware of it later, he became angry, but kept his anger hidden.

Abu Dharr also became the target of 'Uthman's wrath in his turn, because he raised objections publicly and did not refrain from open criticism. 'Uthman, therefore, banished him to Damascus and asked Mu'awiya, the genius of the Umayyad family, to take corrective measures against him. However, Abu Dharr recommenced his religious activities in the capital and created such a hue and cry that Mu'awiya became worried. And as he had not yet occupied the royal throne and did not wish that his political career should become unstable he wrote to 'Uthman about the activities and movement of Abu Dharr and sought remedy from him. 'Uthman ordered that Abu Dharr might be mounted on a vicious animal of riding and sent to Madina.

Abu Dharr had not yet reached Madina when his bones had broken and the flesh of both of his thighs had worn away. The uneven movements of the vicious camel also broke his backbone.

Immediately on his arrival at Madina Abu Dharr was handed over to the administrative authorities and later banished to Rabaza.

At the time of Abu Dharr's banishment from Madina people were forbidden from seeing him off and none except 'Ali, Aqil, Hasan, Husayn and 'Ammar could pick up courage to escort him and bid him farewell.

Marwan was commissioned to banish Abu Dharr and he was taking care that none should talk to him. However, 'Ali turned away Marwan and said good bye to Abu Dharr with a special remark which made the banishment easy for him and increased his steadfastness. Then 'Ali turned to Aqil and 'Ammar and said to them: "Bid farewell to your brother." Then he addressed both of his sons and said to them: "Bid farewell to your uncle."

Aqil, Hasan and Husayn bade farewell to Abu Dharr one by one and uttered remarks similar in principle to those uttered by 'Ali.

At last 'Ammar bade farewell to Abu Dharr and said: "May he, who has thrown you in loneliness, be deprived of the blessings of Allah! May he, who has frightened you, never see comfort and security! Of

course, if you had sought their world they would have provided you with security and if you had expressed your consent to what they did they would certainly have loved you!

The only factor and reason which does not permit the people to share your views is certainly their attachment to the world and fear of death. Yes! The people love power and the State and sovereignty belongs to him who dominates and takes the power in his hands. It is due to this fact that the people have sold their faith to such persons and they, too, have given gifts to the people from the resources which are at their disposal. Alas! These people have lost their faith and the next world and what a patent and certain loss it is!"

This incident became the cause of 'Uthman becoming annoyed with 'Ali, although he had been accusing 'Ali even before this event, but he had no ground and no excuse to his side.

'Uthman used to abuse Talha, A'isha, Hafsa and Sa'd bin Abi Waqqas, and was also harsh towards Abdur Rahman bin 'Awf. With the exception of 'Ali everyone who criticized him became involved in hardships. As regards 'Ali he was not a man who might say anything with the intention of opposition. His objections were based on principles and he had no object other than reform; and as he avoided haggling and rashness his position had remained safe, and this fact was perhaps the main factor which made 'Uthman inimical towards him. However, farewell to Abu Dharr took place in such a manner that it provided an excuse to 'Uthman; and as the personality of 'Ali was in itself a fort in which Abu Dharr had entrenched himself and the matter was of utmost importance 'Uthman strongly criticized 'Ali immediately after the departure of the banished companion, Abu Dharr and said: "When Marwan had been appointed by me to put with effect the banishment of Abu Dharr and was performing his duty why did you turn him away?"

'Ali replied: "As Marwan prevented our saying farewell to Abu Dharr it was necessary that I should have turned him away."

'Uthman said: "Marwan was my appointee and I had given him orders in the capacity of a Caliph and it was his duty to enforce them!"

'Ali said in reply: "The Caliph should not give orders which involve sin and should not prevent the performance of an act which is obligatory and as and when he gives such orders it is not worth being obeyed or enforced."

At this stage 'Uthman, in order to put an end to the controversy, asked 'Ali to apologize to Marwan.

'Ali said: "If there be an occasion to apologize I can speak affably to you, but it is something impossible to apologize to Marwan. And it is also necessary to make this point clear that my refusal to apologize to

Marwan is only for the reason that if this is done he will dominate you all the more, and his power will increase, and thereafter he will impose his pervasive politics on you to a still larger extent. And I tell you once again that it is in your interest to drive this child of Satan away from you.”

At this time the sensual problem which had formed a knot in ‘Uthman’s mind and was stinging him, opened a path before him for cooperation.

‘Uthman knew very well that ‘Ali did not deviate from moderation while giving advice and he was a reformer and admonisher whose advice was not prompted by spite and rancour and he had no personal consideration or avarice, as distinguished from other chief contenders, everyone of whom was influenced by a special factor and made a rush upon ‘Uthman. For this reason he considered the criticism by others to be insignificant and not deserving of contention and campaign .Furthermore, as during those days he was under the influence of the factor and motive of benevolence and expedience, he endeavoured to find out the reason for the rebellion which had taken place against him. And incidentally he was thinking of assessing the standard of the capability and efficiency of the rival. For this and other reasons, therefore, he chose the path of accusing ‘Ali and his recourse to this action resembled that of a mental patient. ‘Ali was not oblivious of this fact. He had, therefore, reminded him about this matter a number of times.

Whatever the real matter may have been, the relations between ‘Ali and ‘Uthman's adherents became strained after Abu Dharr had been seen off, and the opposition became acute. In other words accusation of ‘Ali by ‘Uthman increased so much that the equilibrium was lost and the dispute assumed such dimensions that ‘Uthman invited ‘Ali in the middle of a hot summer day and, in order to satisfy his own heart, struck him with a bamboo cane. In spite of this ‘Ali continued to tender him advice and prayed to Allah for his cure.

Eventually ‘Uthman softened and went to ‘Ali once again with kindness and love, sought his help with the consideration of kinship, and requested ‘Ali not to give away the family bias and dignity.

Once Abbas rose to mediate and thereafter Abdullah bin Abbas intervened a number of times to obtain the co-operation of ‘Ali and was under the impression that he would succeed in his efforts.

Abdullah apologized to ‘Uthman and said "I haven't been able to achieve any result from my mediation, because ‘Ammar opposed me, for he does not wish that you should obtain ‘Ali's support.” We are not aware whether these remarks of Abdullah emanated from his cunning or he was true in what he said.

In any case on all these important and delicate occasions the shadow of ‘Ammar was visible and his personality and views was the subject of discussion and attention. However, ‘Uthman was well aware of the rank, popularity and position of ‘Ammar in the society and was afraid of the memorable remarks and

tradition of the Holy Prophet (S) about him. He was also worried about his ('Ammar's) relations with 'Ali. For these reasons he excused him from the sting of his tongue, verbal molestation and whipping. And the whip was the very tool which brought worst reproaches on 'Uthman

However, as 'Uthman introduced himself as an absolute ruler and, as explained above, 'Ali restrained him and 'Ammar rejected his claim, he ('Uthman) got excited and burst out in the masjid. As at that time he had regard for 'Ali he did not say anything to him, but he abused 'Ammar. As a result of this 'Ammar also got excited and burst forth, and attacked 'Uthman and severely criticized his actions.

This annoyed 'Uthman all the more and he summoned 'Ammar before himself again but 'Ammar refused to go. Hence he was dragged forcibly and taken before 'Uthman and there a strong altercation took place between them.

Immediately on leaving 'Uthman 'Ammar proceeded to the masjid. He entered the mosque, where the people sat round him and began conversing with him. 'Ammar began speaking and discussed the dangers which had arisen from the rebellion of the people against the unjust activities of 'Uthman and explained all his unwarranted actions to the people.

On receiving information about this development 'Uthman deputed a police party to drive away and disperse the people from around 'Ammar.

This campaign by 'Ammar against 'Uthman resembled that which had taken place in Makkah some years ago.

'Uthman was puzzled and perplexed and feared that he might be obliged to perform the role of Abu Jahl in this dispute. And as 'Ammar had been recognized by all the Muslims to be the missionary and proclaimer of Paradise and the sign of guidance, he ('Uthman) was worried, because if he stood against him, he would be recognized as his opposite pole and among people like Abu Jahl.

One day some companions including Zubayr, Talha, and Miqdad met together and after serious deliberations decided unanimously to write a letter to 'Uthman. It was proposed to explain in the letter 'Uthman's deviations and unlawful acts and to ask him to repent for them and also to resign from the office of Caliphate.

A letter was however written on these very lines, and 'Ammar and ten others proceeded to deliver it to 'Uthman. However, on their way all others slipped into the lanes one by one and 'Ammar alone approached 'Uthman and handed over the letter to him. 'Uthman took the letter, read it and then said to 'Ammar: "Has this letter been written by you?" 'Ammar replied: "Yes I have written it". 'Uthman asked: "Has it been written by you only?" 'Ammar replied: "I was not alone. Some other persons were also with

me, but, being afraid of you, they have dispersed.” ‘Uthman said: "Tell me their names". ‘Ammar replied: "In no circumstances shall I mention their names.” ‘Uthman asked: "Why did you take this step alone when others feared?"

At this moment Marwan hurried up to give a reply, and said to ‘Uthman: "How long will you observe patience before this black slave? It is this very man, who has emboldened the people against you. If you kill him, the persons who have been supporting him will be terrified and other rebellious people will take lesson from his being put to death.”

After hearing the words of Marwan ‘Uthman ordered that ‘Ammar might be beaten. His slaves began beating ‘Ammar and he himself also joined them. They beat him so much that he suffered from hernia and became senseless.

Thereafter he was raised from the ground and thrown into the street like refuse.

After this incident Umme Salma came to know about all the hue and cry and came up to ‘Ammar. When she saw him in a state of coma, she directed that he might be taken to her house. People lifted the unconscious ‘Ammar on their hands and took him to the house of Umme Salma. There ‘Ammar kept lying in the same condition and as a consequence of this his noon, afternoon and dusk prayers lapsed.

As soon as he regained his senses he saw that the Mothers of the Faithful (Umme Salma, A’isha and Hafsa) and other parties to the dispute had encircled him. He then praised and thanked Allah and thought of his prayers, and offered them.

After having offered the prayers he was reminded of the mischief of Abu Jahl and said: "If I have been beaten it is not for the first time that I have been persecuted and subjected to torture in the path of Allah.”

After the incident of ‘Ammar being beaten and his becoming senseless ‘Uthman came out of his house and saw that Bani Makhzum had assembled there, and were making a hue and cry, and their chief viz. Hisham bin Walid bin Mughira was also present, and they were annoyed on account of the insult meted out to their confederate.

On this occasion Hisham keeping in view the tragic condition of ‘Ammar, turned to ‘Uthman and said: "I swear by Allah that if ‘Ammar dies I shall kill one of the elders of Bani Umayyah.”

‘Uthman smiled jestingly and went his way so that he might contact ‘Ali and have a talk with him.

The occurrence of this incident was a spark of danger which kindled a fire and its flame culminated in

the assassination of the Caliph. But the Caliph's officials did not take these incidents seriously because they thought they might once again take the government in their hands thus claiming punishment for the murder of 'Uthman. However, in spite of the vehemence with which 'Ammar contended with the undesirable actions of the government of the time, he did not participate practically in the assassination of 'Uthman. Rather he followed in 'Ali's footsteps in connection with his efforts to save 'Uthman.

'Ali was endeavouring to save the Caliph from the evils of the revolution and its factors. It was for this very reason that when 'Uthman was besieged 'Ammar followed 'Ali into his ('Uthman's) house and 'Ali advised 'Uthman to resign his office or to surrender Marwan to the people.

Although 'Ammar personally did not consider 'Uthman to be a true believer, he did not take any further step and used to say: "Uthman was guilty of ingratitude (or inclined towards infidelity) in a very ugly manner."

One day Hasan bin 'Ali was arguing with 'Ammar about the Islam and infidelity of 'Uthman. However, as 'Ammar was not satisfied, they referred the matter to 'Ali for decision. 'Ali gave a mild and gentle reply to both of them.

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1. This prophecy of Ka'b al Ahbar did not fall either under the category of information about the unseen or under that of a strong guess. Rather it was the proof and evidence of a severe party conflict which existed in those days without any hue and cry and occasionally revealed connections between Ka'b al Ahbar and the Umayyads. This man used to visit 'Umar since past days in the shape of a sincere person although in fact he was a spy of the Umayyads. And by making this prophecy he tried to mislead the Caliph about pursuing the culprit and sympathized with him with this religious tongue. Later Ka'b al Ahbar was one of the important propagandists of Mu'awiya and coined stories for his (Mu'awiya's) benefit.
 2. On the day on which 'Umar had appointed Abu Bakr as Caliph Talha had said something which annoyed 'Umar, and 'Umar had not forgotten the incident till the day on which he was dying. For details refer Nahjul Balagha vol. I page 62.
 3. Jahiz reports Talha as saying: "What is the use of the wives of the Prophet (S) veiling themselves. As and when he dies we shall marry them". He uttered these words very impolitely and the Holy Prophet (S) was displeased on hearing them.
 4. The great contemporary scholar Prof. Abdullah Alaili, who is one of the greatest research scholars of our time, had made this matter (i.e. the behind the curtain activities of the Umayyad party) the subject of special study and has described the operations of this party in a particular manner. He believes that even the assassination of 'Umar was the result of the Satanic plans of this party and Abu Lu'lu was only an agent and not the real culprit.

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