

Successful leadership

By Maulana Wahiduddin Khan

Successful leadership depends on a successful following; if the followers fail to follow, no leader can play a successful role. The chapter Al-Nisa' (Women) of the Quran sets forth this principle: "By your Lord, they will not be true believers until they seek your arbitration in their disputes and find within themselves no doubt about what you decide and accept it wholeheartedly" (4:65). This Quranic verse relates to religious leadership, but the same principle is likewise applicable in the case of secular leadership. Secular leadership and religious leadership are different in their goals, but the method of both is one and the same.

Men and women are born with differences. Everyone is Mr Different or Miss Different, and this being so it is not always possible to convince everyone of the correctness of the leader's decisions. It is but natural that if some members of the group are in agreement with his decisions some

other members may disagree with them. This kind of difference is a natural phenomenon which occurs in both secular groups and religious groups. Then how to establish unity? Unity is a must for a leader to be successful. Without unity among his followers a leader cannot play an effective role. In such a situation the only formula that is applicable is — follow your leader, be it willingly or unwillingly. This is the only practical way to achieve unity: this is the sole basis for the success of the leader. The true leader is born and not made. His principal quality is his decision making ability. In this he is aided by his foresight, unwavering determination and his capacity for organisation. Another major virtue is his lack of any desire for personal glorification. He is a man of vision, a man of integrity with no private agenda. All these qualities make for a successful leader.

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