

# Imam outlines conduct of diplomacy by the Islamic State

The conduct of modern diplomacy as well as the behaviour of diplomats takes place in a world notorious for its glitter, luxury, cunning, deception, bribery, corruption and sexual licence. Modern States also spend enormous amounts on their embassies and conduct of foreign relations.

In this world has emerged an Islamic State. How should the Islamic State conduct its foreign relations? How should the diplomats and staff of the embassies of the Islamic State conduct themselves?

The Islamic State's ambassadors and charge d'affaires were recalled to Tehran recently for consultation. While in Tehran they also went to see Imam Khomeini. In his speech to them the Imam answered some of the problems of Islamic diplomacy. This speech of Imam Khomeini is of great importance not only for the conduct of diplomats and diplomacy, but also for the understanding of the fundamentally different nature of the Islamic State. The following is the Imam's speech:

"In the name of God, the compassionate, the Merciful.

I pray to God Almighty for the good health of you gentlemen, you members of the staff of our foreign embassies, our ambassadors and you dear students who have come here from foreign countries. I think that you who live in foreign countries, who are assigned to the embassies of the Islamic Republic abroad, and you of our youth who live abroad shoulder a heavier task than do we who live at home. Why? Because we are aware of the status of Islam and of what is happening to the Muslim world, and if our enemies and detractors should perchance come across an individual or a group whose conduct is against Islam, they will condemn that person or that group. But you are assigned to countries such as those of the west, which are either non-Islamic or which, if they are, have not gained a full insight into the core of the issues, and as such they must accept you as being the representatives of Islam. Should your personal behaviour be in

contrast with Islam, or should your embassies display deviations from Islam then the people in those countries will conclude that Islam is that which you are presenting to them.

Should the prevailing atmosphere in our embassies be the same, or much the same, as it was during the past Satanic government it would mean that Islam has not found its way into our embassies abroad. But, unfortunately, as far as I know, until recently our embassies have not been truly Islamic, and if there have been any very recent changes, they have not been brought to my attention. This lack of conformity with Islam has been manifest in many aspects: in the premises of your embassies, and in the conduct of our foreign ministry staff, especially the women. Your embassies do not live up to the meaning of the Islamic Republic.

Certain emissaries of our Prophet Muhammad, upon whom be peace, who were sent to the courts of leading kings of their time, were reported to have used the tips of their swords to draw the regal silken curtains which hung in the doorways of their private halls. This symbolised the bloodying of the Pharaonic high noses of those days. It seems simple, but only because its complexity is not obvious. The individuals who were sent on those missions were simple Arabs devoted to Islam. They wanted to show their stand from the beginning, and they meant to show from where they got their backing. They meant to prove from the outset that regal grandiosity and the stately pomposity manifest in the courts of the kings were too trivial to impress them.

There were, and there are, many people who tend to panic as they come across personalities who, in their judgement, are superior. This was especially true at the time of the rule of the big powers. The examples of the statemen who tried every device to make the people revere them, especially during the past fifty years and earlier on, are many and varied. During that time when a government came into power here, its treatment of the people was typical of a Sultan; it would not

show the least respect to anyone. I recall that some decades ago when the city of Khomein was under the same jurisdiction, a person was assigned governor of the city of Golpayegan. upon his arrival at the city, a group of its leading traders and merchants came to visit him. From this gathering he picked out a respected merchant from among the visiting traders and ordered his men to flog him. I was a small child then but small as I was I witnessed with my own eyes what a corrupt government administrator could do to an honourable and respectable man, who was head of the merchants in the Bazaar of the city. I witnessed how he had this man beaten in the presence of his peers. This was an example of their usual conduct. They also did this and similar acts in order to intimidate others; for example, when a respectable man would go to visit the statesmen, as they were sitting with him they would order a victim to be brought in and flogged in the visitor's presence just to make him understand that he too would have to obey their orders. But what the emissaries of our Prophet did were seemingly simple gestures with grave implications. From the outset they broke down the presumptuous grandiosity of the Pharaohs.

Such too was the late Mudarris. He would often sit down on a piece of carpet in his yard. He would fix up his own water-pipe for himself, filling its reservoir with water and its torch with coke. If, for instance, the Governor-General happened to drop by while he was busy doing this, he would give him the water-pipe to fill with water while he himself was preparing a fire for its torch. And thus he would humble the Governor-General of whose rank and status you have no idea. He did this for the purpose of humiliating the corrupt brains of his time. They were completely stunned in his presence as Mudarris ordered them to 'fill it in with water while I fix the fire'. Sometimes it becomes necessary to behave in such a manner that the other cannot hope to impose anything on one. If he had assumed a conduct and a courtesy as was conventional in meeting the so-called dignitaries of his time, he would have allowed the Governor-General to assert

himself, but since he assumed such a simple and decisive approach he made it impossible for the Governor-General to do so.

Because you are assigned to foreign countries you are bound to meet various ambassadors and foreign ministers. Your duties may also involve visiting the local ministries of foreign affairs, or their equivalents. You must not be embarrassed or awed by the prospect of seeing these places and meeting these people. You must remember that you are emissaries from a Muslim country which has strength far greater than those of the other countries, and which exceeds them in honour and good name - if indeed they have a morsel of such qualities at all. You must safeguard your honour from the outset. The principal task, which lies on your shoulders and which we share with you here is the task of assuming a conduct, with the people as well as with the staff of your embassies, which truly conforms with Islam: behaviour in a manner conducive to the permeation of Islam through the country of your assignment.

Ethical principles manifested in any one individual are contagious, and the people will respond in accordance with their nature. Man's original nature is without blemish. It is false education which corrupts man's innate goodness. You must always remember that you are setting foot in another country, that its people will relearn what Islam is and means through you. Remember always that their re-education must be as you would wish it for your own people. Teaching Islam to another country you must evince Islamic behaviour, Islamic ethics and Islamic practices such as will attract the people. A principal aid to this will be the publishing of magazines by each and every one of our embassies. By 'magazines' I do not mean publications typical of the past regime, but rather publications expounding Islamic ethics, publications informative of whatever has happened in this country.

Now you see that almost everywhere in the world propaganda machineries are in operation against the Islamic Republic of Iran: a multi-dimensional campaign. This propaganda is launched both by the propaganda machinery of the west, and their aligned powers, and by the propaganda machinery of the east and their clients. They are doing

all this because they are in a panic over the Islamic Republic. Worse than the loss of their interests in Iran - which, God willing, will remain so to the end of eternity - they fear the spread of this movement to their own countries. They are in a perpetual panic lest this movement and this Revolution should transcend territorial boundaries, and lest this faith should be exported to other nations. They already understand very well that which Islam teaches and fear lest the prevailing mode of life in their countries will change to something similar to the new system in Iran. They fear lest their aristocratic systems will fade under the pressure of such a movement, and fade they will, with the grace of God.

Now, instead of indulging in expenditures typical of the past regime (instead of giving the typically lavish and spectacular feasts which were all against Islamic ethics, and instead of other needless expenditure) you need to invest your money in proper informative efforts. You must re-introduce Islam to the whole world and tell others what our country is like. You must respond to each and every piece of hostile propaganda released and bandied about. You must introduce Iran to other nations of the world, and let them know of what is happening here. You must introduce the Islamic movement and the Islamic Revolution to the people of the world. Don't let yourselves be misled by the notion that if we assume a pure and austere mode of Islamic conduct we will be humiliated in the face of the overpowering splendour and magnificence which is manifest in their foreign ministeries. Instead, you will humiliate by your wise actions those magnificent buildings and those pillars of oppression and arrogance. Don't let yourselves be misled by the notion that if you adopt a simple mode of conduct, that if you only serve tea in your embassies, and that if you concentrate more on developing your embassies into centres for diffusing good deeds and knowledge and good ethics, that you will be humiliated. Nay! This is the reasoning of the 'westnob-ists', who argue that if we are different from the westerners we are humiliated.

We are determined not to go the way of the westerners. We have resolved not to be dependent. We are committed to being independ-

ent and free. You now see that the peoples which have been immune to US propaganda and the propaganda of its dependent countries, all look to you in wonder, praising your morale.

Man's attire and such of his profane possessions as his car, its make and model, are no indication of his greatness. Rather his greatness lies in certain hidden faculties which he can demonstrate and thereby prove that he is a great man. You see that the greatest of all human beings were the prophets and they were the most austere of all men too. Great as they were and as highly as they were regarded by other men, they were nevertheless the simplest and the most austere in their mode of lives. Such were all of our prophets in their everyday lives. All history testifies to the simple lives that our prophets led.

The social status of the governments, the statesmen and the Army commanders in the early days of Islam is unequivocally clear to us. When the statesmen convened they would sit in circles without regard to status. When, for example, a person had business with the Prophet Muhammad, upon his entering to their meeting place in the mosque he would have to inquire, who was Prophet Muhammad? He had to ask this because our Prophet and his men would sit round in a fashion which never indicated who was superior in rank or position to the others. There was no upper section of their assemblies in contrast of the lower sections. They would sit as simply as that, perhaps on a piece of humble straw or rush matting. But he and his men never sat on a piece of carpet such as the one which is under your feet here. They would sit humbly together, but despite this seeming placidity they had a greatness such as impressed the whole world.

Man's greatness lies in his soul. Man's greatness lies in his ethical principles, his behaviour and his conduct, and not in the make and model of his car, nor other material possessions. What confers greatness on man is not the number of his bodyguards, or the number of servants. Such things cast no grandeur on man. Nay, they even tend to corrupt him and debase him from his true status.

Your common sense and your religious duty makes it incumbent on you gentlemen, who are

assigned at our embassies abroad, to ensure that your offices are maintained in the simplest possible way, and that your conduct with the people who are among your staff conforms with brotherly principles. Your staff have the responsibility to do as you tell them to, but your behaviour with them should always be brotherly. This reform should also become manifest in the manner you hold your receptions, and in your own manners and in the whole of the personnel who are assigned at your embassies. This should be a reform in line with Islam, so that it can be readily witnessed by any person who visits you at your embassies. It is no use for us to shout to the heavens that we are Muslims, and that our country is an Islamic Republic, if we do not practise that which we claim to be; they will not believe us.

It does not take swords to export this ideology. The export of ideas by force is no export. We shall have exported Islam only when we have helped Islam and Islamic ethics grow in those countries. This is your responsibility and it is a task which you must fulfil. You should promote this idea by adopting a conduct conducive to the propagation of Islam and by publishing the necessary publications in your countries of assignment. This is a must. You must have publications. You must publish journals. Such journals should be promotive and their contents and pictures should be consistent with the Islamic Republic, so that by proper publicity campaigns you may pave the way for the spread of Islam in those areas. And note that if you continue to launch such publicity campaigns, and if our beloved students make efforts to open the eyes of foreigners to the realities in Iran, and if they analyse and show the falsehood of much of the reports and news which appear here and there in the various publications, they will have exposed the distortion and the falsehood of what is regularly published in those countries.

To qualify for the fulfilment of this task, we must first believe in our hearts that we want our republic to be 'Islamic'. Our hearts should be as much inclined to Islam as our tongues are. If we urge that we want the establishment of the rule of Islam, we must as a natural consequence struggle against each and every thing which is deviating from Islam: we must begin with

ourselves. To qualify for the fulfilment of this task man must first examine his own self with a view to finding out his own deviations.

Inevitably, every man can detect blemishes in himself. Examples of the people who do not see any blemishes in themselves are very few. If a man is incapable of seeing his own flaws, this is in itself a vivid blemish in his personality. Man needs to be educated. Or better still he must be 'puricated', that is, to educate himself while he is purifying his soul. One must start out from himself, from his own family, in order that he may later on reach other communities. Our students should take every caution in order to ensure that their speech and behaviour conform with ethical and Islamic principles.

I shall pray to God Almighty for your good health. Our peoples, in short, have the responsibility to present the true Islam to other people by assuming a behaviour consistent with their faith. But if there are any of our people whose conduct is in sharp contrast with Islam, due to the penetration of certain irreligious people into their circles, such conditions will only provide a pretext for our enemies as a weapon for condemning us with all their might. We here at home do not have the heavier task on our shoulders; that is on you shoulders, our ambassadors and staff, our youth, our Islamic associations and their members, all Muslims and all Muslims-to-be. We all have our responsibilities, but in comparison yours are heavier than ours. you must succeed in performing this task, and I hope you will succeed, with the grace of God.

May God protect you at all times and may He make us successful in our endeavours for strengthening Islam everywhere, and may He make us promoters of Islam and numbered among his holy army so that, God willing, this country, as well as other Muslim countries and the impoverished masses of the world, will prosper...

May the Peace and Mercy of God and His Blessings be upon you."

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