

The Little Green Book

Volume I Chapter 5

The Imam

We need a head of government who is not at the mercy of his lust and other temptations. We need someone to govern us for whom all are equal, for whom all enjoy the same rights and obligations; someone who doesn't indulge in favoritism, who regards his family in the same light as others, who will cut off his son's hands if he steals, and execute his brothers and sisters if they sell heroin.

As far as function and rank are concerned, there is no difference between the guardian of a minor and the guardian of an entire people. Leading the government or indeed occupying any official position is like the Imam and his appointees taking care of children.

The great scholars, those “fortresses of Islam,” are the embodiment of Islamic faith as well as its guardians. They affirm Islamic principles in their emotional and moving sermons and through the special nature of their leadership. That's why, when after a long life, perhaps even more than a hundred years, they die, that death is a great blow to Islam, and why the faithful experience an immense lack in their absence. But if it's a question of my death, I who do nothing but sit in a corner of my house studying; what lack will the faithful feel in my absence?

The Imams were shining lights in the darkness of the heavens, infinitely gifted and by birth and nature superior to other men – much so that even the angel Gabriel declared “If I came too close to them, I would be burned.”

The leaders of the USSR and of England and the president of the United States are invested with power (like the Imam), but they are infidels. They wield their political power and influence in order to fulfill sordid personal ambitions, which they accomplish by administering inhuman laws and using inhuman political methods. But the Imam and the clergy have the duty to use the political apparatus to apply the laws of Allah and to bring about a system of equality for the benefit of the people. Governing means nothing for them except pain and difficulty, but what can they do? The rule of the clergy is an obligation they must fulfill.

Since the Almighty did not designate anyone by name to form the Islamic government in the absence of the hidden Imam [the Twelfth Imam], what are we to do? But while Allah did not name anyone, He intended that the virtuous

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characteristic of Islamic governments from the dawn of Islam to the reign of the Twelfth Imam be perpetrated. These virtues, these qualities, represented by perfect knowledge of law and justice, are to be found in many of the religious learned of our time. If those learned come together, they will be able to establish the authority that will bring about universal justice. If a competent man, combining in himself these supreme virtues, appears and founds a true Islamic government, it means that he has been invested as the Holy Prophet to lead the people; therefore, it is the people's absolute duty to follow him.