

Title: Characteristics of a great politician

A politician's acumen needs to be virtuous to deal with state matters. As he needs to differentiate between unachievable and difficult tasks; impossible task cannot be conquered. He has to be willing enough to change everything in the state to uplift the nation. Visionary Statesman can balance out interest of all the classes in the state, as he knows proper functioning of a state requires interlinkages <sup>among</sup> ~~between~~ various classes. Public opinion is of utmost importance to him. A shrewd politician can temper public opinion with his patriotic leadership; in case of an illegitimate action by government. A great statesman's actions speak louder than his words. As he can diplomatically handle needs of state and simultaneously guide nation to achieve the goals set by him. For the country, he can set aside his set notions. Whereas, an average politician just proclaims utopian solutions. However ego and mien of a politician acts as a barrier for him to become a great politician.

my words: 157

revy: 180



What virtues must we require of a man to whom we entrust directing of our affairs? Above all, a sense of what is possible. In politics, it is useless to formulate great and noble projects if, due to the existing state of the country, they cannot be accomplished. The impulses of a free people are at all times a parallelogram of forces. The great statesman realizes precisely what these forces are and says to himself without ever being seriously mistaken: "I can go just so far and no further". He does not allow himself to favour one class, foreseeing the inevitable reactions of the neglected groups. A prudent doctor does not cure his patient of a passing complaint with a remedy that produces a permanent disease of the liver; and a judicious statesman neither appeases the working class at the risk of angering the bourgeoisie, nor does he indulge the bourgeoisie at the expense of the working class. He endeavours to regard the nation as a great living body whose organs are interdependent. He takes the temperature of public opinion every day, and if the fever increases he sees to it that the country rests.

Though he may fully appreciate the power of public opinion, a forceful and clever statesman realizes that he can influence it fairly easily. He has calculated the people's power to remain indifferent to his efforts; they have their moment of violence, and their angry protests are legitimate if the Government brings poverty on them, takes away their traditional liberty, or seriously interferes with their home life. But they will allow themselves to be led by a man who knows where he is going and who shows them clearly that he has the nation's interest at heart and that they may have confidence in him.

The sense of what is possible is not only the ability to recognize that certain things are impossible -- a negative virtue -- but also to know that, to a courageous man, things which may appear to be very difficult are in fact possible. A great statesman does not say to himself: "This nation is weak," but "This nation is asleep; I shall wake it up. Laws and institutions are of the

people's making; if necessary, I shall change them".

But above all, the determination to do something must be followed by acts, not merely words. Mediocre politicians spend most of their time devising schemes and preaching doctrines. They talk of structural reforms, they invent faultless social systems and formulate plans for perpetual peace. In his public speeches the true statesman knows how, if necessary, to make polite bows to new theories and to pronounce ritualistic phrases for the benefit of those who guard temple gates; but he actually occupies himself by taking care of the real needs of the nation. He endeavours to accomplish definite and precise objectives in ways that seem best to him. If he finds obstacles in his path, he makes detours. Vanity, intellectual pride, and a feeling for system are serious handicaps to the politicians. Some party leaders are ready to sacrifice the country for a theory or a set of principles. The true leader says: "Let the principles go but I must save the nation".