

# Principles of Governance

## Qualities of Elected Representatives

*The Secret of Divine Civilization*

Bahá'í Administration 9

# Qualities of Elected Representatives

In *The Secret of Divine Civilization*, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá addressed not only the kings and ministers who govern as rulers, but also the elected members of legislatures and parliaments.

# Qualities of elected representatives

*The state is... based upon two potent forces, the legislative and the executive. The focal center of the executive power is the government, while that of the legislative is the learned—and if this latter great support and pillar should prove defective, how is it conceivable that the state should stand?*

*(‘Abdu’l-Bahá (1875), [The Secret of Divine Civilization](#), p. 37)*





International Bahá'í Convention 2018

# Qualities of elected representatives

*The object in establishing parliaments is to bring about justice and righteousness, but everything hinges on the efforts of the elected representatives. If their intention is sincere, desirable results and unforeseen improvements will be forthcoming...*

*(‘Abdu’l-Bahá (1875), [The Secret of Divine Civilization](#), p. 23)*



Voting  
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# Qualities of elected representatives

*...it would be preferable if the election of nonpermanent members of consultative assemblies in sovereign states should be dependent on the will and choice of the people. For elected representatives will on this account be somewhat inclined to exercise justice, lest their reputation suffer and they fall into disfavor with the public.*

(‘Abdu’l-Bahá (1875), *The Secret of Divine Civilization*, p. 24)

# Qualities of elected representatives

*While the setting up of parliaments, the organizing of assemblies of consultation, constitutes the very foundation and bedrock of government, there are several essential requirements which these institutions must fulfill. First, the elected members must be righteous, God-fearing, high-minded, incorruptible.*

*(‘Abdu’l-Bahá (1875), [The Secret of Divine Civilization](#), p. 17)*



# Qualities of elected representatives

*Second, they must be fully cognizant, in every particular, of the laws of God, informed as to the highest principles of law, versed in the rules which govern the management of internal affairs and the conduct of foreign relations, skilled in the useful arts of civilization, and content with their lawful emoluments.*

*(‘Abdu’l-Bahá (1875), [The Secret of Divine Civilization](#), p. 17)*

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# Qualities of elected representatives

*In view of the fact that at the present time such fully developed and comprehensively learned individuals are hard to come by, and the government and people are in dire need of order and direction, it is essential to establish a body of scholars the various groups of whose membership would each be expert in one of the aforementioned branches of knowledge. This body should with the greatest energy and vigor deliberate as to all present and future requirements, and bring about equilibrium and order.*

*(‘Abdu’l-Bahá (1875), [The Secret of Divine Civilization](#), p. 37)*