

THE NATURE OF BAHÁ'Í ELECTIONS
Quotations from the Writings of Shoghi Effendi

“...I earnestly appeal to every one of you ... to ... endeavor to approach your task ... with that purity of spirit that can alone obtain our Beloved’s most cherished desire. Let us recall His explicit and often repeated assurances that every Assembly elected in that rarefied atmosphere of selflessness and detachment is in truth appointed of God....”

“Let them exercise the utmost vigilance so that the elections are carried out freely, universally and by secret ballot. Any form of intrigue, deception, collusion and compulsion must be stopped and is forbidden.”**

“Beware, beware lest the foul odour of the parties and peoples ... and their pernicious methods, such as intrigues, party politics and propaganda—practices which are abhorrent even in name—should ever reach the Bahá’í community, exert any influence whatsoever upon the friends, and thus bring all spirituality to naught. The friends should, through their devotion, love, loyalty and altruism, abolish these evil practices, not imitate them. It is only after the friends completely ignore and sanctify themselves from these evils, that the spirit of God can penetrate and operate in the body of humanity, and in the Bahá’í community.” *

“The strength and progress of the Bahá’í community depend upon the election of pure, faithful and active souls.”**

“I feel that reference to personalities before the election would give rise to misunderstanding and differences.... We should refrain from influencing the opinion of others....”

“...the elector ... is called upon to vote for none but those whom prayer and reflection have inspired him to uphold.”

“The electors ... must prayerfully and devotedly and after meditation and reflection elect faithful, sincere, experienced, capable and competent souls who are worthy of membership....”**

“...the friends must wholeheartedly participate in the elections, in unity and amity, turning their hearts to God, detached from all things but Him, seeking His guidance and supplicating His aid and bounty.”*

“If we but turn our gaze to the high qualifications of the members of Bahá’í Assemblies ... we are filled with feelings of unworthiness and dismay, and would feel truly disheartened but for the comforting thought that if we rise to play nobly our part every deficiency in our lives will be more than compensated by the all-conquering spirit of His grace and power. Hence it is incumbent upon the chosen delegates to consider without the least trace of passion and prejudice, and irrespective of any material consideration, the names of only those who can best combine the necessary qualities of unquestioned loyalty, of selfless devotion, of a well-trained mind, of recognized ability and mature experience.”

**Translations from Persian letters of Shoghi Effendi*

***Translations from Persian letters written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi*