

Liberal Democracy and the Bahá'í Administrative Order—An Analysis

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Abstract

This paper attempts to contrast the Bahá'í Administrative Order with the two dominant types of liberal democracy, namely Responsible Government and Separation of Powers, as potential models for government in the current world. Specifically analyzed will be how each system serves society's well-being through its theory of representation, how the abuse of power is prevented in the decision-making process, how the election processes function, and what the potentials of each system are on a global level. Liberal democratic conceptions, including the assumption that society's well-being is best administered by addressing the needs and inputs of the individuals comprising it, are the adopted standard of comparison.

Résumé

Cet article vise à mettre en contraste, en les considérant comme modèles possibles pour un ordre mondial, l'Ordre administratif bahá'í et les deux modes de démocratie libérale les plus dominants, à savoir le Gouvernement responsable et la Séparation des pouvoirs. L'auteur procède à une analyse spécifique des points suivants: comment chacun de ces systèmes dessert le bien-être de la société au moyen de la théorie de la représentation; comment éviter les abus de pouvoir dans le processus de la prise de décision; quel est leur processus électoral; et quelle est la distribution du pouvoir entre les différents niveaux de gouvernement. Les normes de comparaison employées reposent sur l'hypothèse de la démocratie libérale, à savoir que pour administrer le bien-être de la société il faut d'abord considérer les besoins et les opinions des individus qui la composent.

Resumen

Este ensayo procura hacer contraste entre la Orden Administrativa Bahá'í y los dos tipos de democracia liberal dominantes, verbigracia Gobierno responsable y Separación de poderes, como posibles modelos de gobierno en el mundo actual. Específicamente se analizará la forma en que cada sistema presta servicio al bienestar de la sociedad por su teoría de representación, cómo se evita el abuso del poder on el proceso resolutorio, sus procesos electorales, y cuales son las posibilidades de cada sistema a nivel global. Los conceptos liberales democraticos, incluyendo la suposición de que el bienestar de la sociedad se administra mejor al atender las necesidades y puntos de vista de los individuos que encierra, sirven de base para el criterio de comparación que se adopta.

The well-being of mankind, its peace and security, are unattainable unless and until its unity is firmly established.

Bahá'u'lláh

With all my heart I believe that the world's present system of sovereign nations can lead only to barbarism, war and inhumanity.

Albert Einstein

The Question is not so much whether there will be a new world order, but what form it will have.

Gerald and Patricia Mische

That the lack of unity (meaning precisely the classification of humanity into competitive “us-them” subgroupings) threatens the very survival of the human race in the nuclear age is a well-exhausted topic with no need of further elaboration. The present question deals rather with the characteristics of the future world order, which must replace this obsolete adversary principle inherent in society's attitudes. It was in an attempt to address this goal that in its October 1985 peace statement the Universal House of Justice offered the Bahá'í Administrative Order (BAO) as a model for study (“To the Peoples” 1–25). This paper attempts to contrast the BAO with the two dominant types of liberal democracy, namely Responsible Government (RG) in the British tradition, and Separation of Powers (SP) in the American tradition, as potential models for government in the present world. Specifically analyzed will be how each system serves society's well-being through its theory of representation, how the abuse of

power is prevented in the decision-making process, how the election processes function, and what the potentials of each system are on a global level.

The fundamental argument of liberal democratic theory is that the well-being of society can best be administered by addressing the needs and inputs of the individuals comprising it. This proposition is also adopted in this paper as the criterion by which each system is assessed.¹ However, in addition to this argument, the tacit assumption of both RG and SP is that government represents an aggregation and compromise of conflicting individual selfish interests. As a direct result, the question regarding public input leads inevitably to the theoretical debate over whether public officials should represent the people's "will," or act according to what the officials themselves regard as the public's well-being and interest. Both systems subscribe to the liberal theory of representation, calling for a republican indirect democracy in which elected government representatives are to be "delegates" acting upon a mandate given by their constituents (Dickerson and Flanagan, *An Introduction to Government and Politics* 270; and Baradat, *Political Ideologies* 120–21).

Elected representatives are responsible to their electors. This constitutes the best form of public input designed to safeguard the well-being of society, based on the argument that the will of the people best represents society's well-being. Unfortunately, once the debate of will versus well-being moves from the realm of theory to practice, the liberal stand fails to ensure proper public input. Accordingly, the republican self-interest-based democracy inevitably leads to the variant known as pluralism, which is the insertion of special interest pressure groups between popular input and government. This occurs since in the quest for proper government response to selfish vested interests, the process of "interest articulation" submits "that the individual must join with other people to achieve his or her political goals," but alas only "the best-organized and best-financed interest groups" can best articulate their demands (Baradat, *Political Ideologies* 101–2). However, "Liberal democracy rests...ultimately on the notion of universal laws applying equally.... [A]ggressive interest group activity easily becomes a pursuit of special privileges" (Dickerson and Flanagan, *An Introduction* 237). In fact, even accepting the conventional notion that government best serves society's well-being by aggregating selfish interests, pluralism, as clearly expounded by R. Michel's iron law of oligarchy and elite theory,² fails even in this respect to serve society's well-being. The pitfalls of the "special-interest effect" in economic theory serves as a concrete example in which the economic well-being of society as a whole is politically discarded to satisfy vocal special interests (McConnell and Pope, *Economics* 360). Therefore, the concept of a "delegate" representative of the people is merely reduced to a representative of the most powerfully articulated interest(s).

Especially in the case of RG, this failure of the liberal democratic theory of representation is most clearly illustrated in the process of "interest aggregation" (Dickerson and Flanagan, *An Introduction* 226) in that there is no such thing as a "delegate" representative of the people, but rather a "party member" bound by party loyalties. The formation of adversarial political parties represents an extension of the special interest groups into aggregate parties designed not to influence, but actually to seize control of government. Clearly then, regardless of any theoretical merits of the liberal theory of representation, as a mode of input it fails ultimately to serve society's well-being properly.

Traditional responses to this failure have tended to remain captive to the adversarial processes of selfish interest articulation and aggregation by merely offering an alternative theory of representation.³ The response of the BAO involves an entirely different paradigm. Rather than once again looking towards a new theory of representation to ensure proper public inputs, the BAO bases its entire foundation on the concept of "universal participation." It therefore shifts the emphasis of proper public inputs away from a reliance on a direct public mandate through its theory of representation, to the implementation of individual universal participation as a check, both on government decision-making and election processes. This is a result of the rejection of government as an aggregation of adversarial selfish interests. Thus, its theory of representation is not used to further special interests, but to eliminate them. The administrative bodies are given the role of "trustees" (Dickerson and Flanagan, *An Introduction* 270). As Shoghi Effendi writes, in the BAO

1. In fact, because this paper deals with a comparison of the BAO with two systems of government based upon and legitimized by liberal democratic and pluralist theory, I shall confine the basic assumptions of the paper (such as its theoretical conception of power, the decision-making process, the importance of elections, etc.) to pluralist assumptions. This will serve to facilitate a comparison of "liberal democracy" with the BAO on liberal democracy's own grounds; as such, I shall refrain from addressing more Marxist-oriented critiques and theoretical conceptions.

2. For a discussion of the topic, see Eva Etzioni-Halevy, *Bureaucracy and Democracy*. Once again, I have refrained from addressing Marxist critiques of the same issue because, however valid they may be, they question the very assumptions pluralist theory holds regarding "interest groups."

3. One response has been the radical theory of representation calling for direct democracy.

the basic assumption which requires all democracies to depend fundamentally upon getting their mandate from the people is altogether lacking... [The elected institutions] are not...to be governed by the feelings, the general opinion...of those who directly elect them. They are to follow, in a prayerful attitude, the dictates and promptings of their conscience. (*World Order* 153)

Ultimately, the institutions are responsible not to their electors, but to God. In practice, this implies that they are able to take into account not the narrow chronological and geographical interests of their constituents, but the well-being of society as a whole, including the future generations who did not elect them. It is quite important to note that the entire BAO is founded on the assumption of the legitimacy of the Bahá'í writings, which in effect form its "constitution." Thus, the ultimate goal of the trustees is to implement what is called for in the Writings as faithfully as possible, which is assumed to be in the best interests of the society—a society that has itself chosen such a constitution.

How power is actually controlled, a process affected by the form of the delegation of power and the existence of public inputs in the decision-making process, is fundamentally based on different paradigms under current democratic practice and in the BAO. These processes result from the attempt to deal with the dilemma of anarchy versus tyranny within the bounds of each system's theory of representation. While the distribution of power (and the prevention of its abuse) in conventional democracies is guided by the adversary principle, it is embedded in the unity principle in the BAO.⁴

Current democratic practice is to check the abuse of power by separating its distribution. On the surface, in RG absolute power is unified in the body of a parliament, power traditionally not even bound by a written constitution. However, the existence of a combined executive and legislature in parliament necessarily results in the development of strong party discipline; in effect, the majority party gains control of parliament.⁵ That a party represents the aggregation of certain interests and not society's well-being as a whole is a political situation well illustrated by partisan patronage and constituency favoring.

The ability of elected representatives to govern well is distorted by their tendency to pursue their own interests, especially those of getting themselves elected, and...to pursue the interests of the party which backs their election. (Etzioni-Halevy, *Bureaucracy and Democracy* 16)

Furthermore, party discipline shifts the bulk of the decision-making process from the supposed representative of all the people—parliament—to representatives of certain segments, in the form of the party caucus. (Regardless of whether the caucus is highly representative of its grassroots members, nonmembers who form the majority of society are still excluded.) Partisan politics ultimately reduces actual parliamentary decision-making debate to a hyperextension of the confrontational adversary principle, caricatured as being where everything the opposing "them" group voices is automatically wrong. As a result, the spirit of the check on power, and its abuse, is entirely engulfed in the adversary principle—a sort of inner or "implicit separation of powers."

This division of the distribution of power as a check also forms the fundamental principle in the SP system, divided explicitly between the adversary branches of the legislature, executive, and judiciary backed by a written constitution. This outer or "explicit separation of powers" often results in a paralysis of government, leading to the rise of various non-elected powers that are able to seize the gap left.⁶ Actual decision-making is, as a result, in the American example, highly influenced by the emergence of the "iron-triangle" of power, consisting of key public servants, key legislators, and powerful interest groups (Leo). In fact, the processes of interest articulation and aggregation, common to both RG and SP (greatly as a result of their theory of representation), form the most dominant so-called public input to government. However, this attacks the fundamental principle of democracy calling for the equality of influence for all citizens.

[G]overnment deference to interest groups does not eliminate power [as a check] but transfers it to private hands, thereby making possible the exploitation of public policy for private interests. It therefore verges on corruption. (Etzioni-Halevy, *Bureaucracy and Democracy* 47)

4. In remaining within the general bounds of pluralist theory, this paper's conception of power limits itself to behavioral concepts of power and does not address more Marxist-oriented conceptions of nonbehavioral power.

5. The case of a minority or coalition government is different in that there is no one party with control of parliament. Instability tends to be a feature of this situation.

6. Some suggested examples include the American Central Intelligence Agency, Pentagon, and Federal Bureau of Investigation.

The positive response to this dilemma has been the rise of communications media independent from government to bridge the communicative link between government and the public somewhat.⁷ Unfortunately, images conveyed by the media fail as a substitute for real individual input; in any case, the present media are caught in a special-interest dominated society and are thus susceptible to manipulating news through selective choice and presentation of information (and editorials) and therefore cannot be regarded as purely neutral channels of communication.

In contrast to the currently dominant adversary principle, the BAO approaches the distribution of power, its checks, and public input into decision-making on entirely different grounds. The BAO's skeletal structure, founded upon two distinct institutions, "the twin pillars that support" it, consists of an elected wing and an appointed wing (Shoghi Effendi, *World Order* 147). John Huddleston describes both as follows:

The elected wing is a three-tier structure with local spiritual assemblies to manage the affairs of local communities, national spiritual assemblies to coordinate the affairs of each cultural or national grouping of communities, and finally a Universal House of Justice to give guidance and direction to the whole world community. The other wing of the structure consists of Continental Boards of Counsellors, appointed by the Universal House of Justice, which in turn appoint subsidiary bodies at regional and local levels....Their role is to observe and to advise the elected wing but not to intervene directly in community affairs. ("Just System" 36)

As Lord Acton observed in 1887, it is the notion that "power tends to corrupt, and absolute power corrupts absolutely" (quoted in Bartlett, *Familiar Quotations* 615) that needs checking. To this end, the BAO uses, instead of the adversary principle, the "collective principle" within the framework of unity as a check. Legislative and decision-making authority is delegated under the condition that it not be associated with any of the nine individuals serving on an assembly;⁸ as Shoghi Effendi stated, in practice "there is a distinction of fundamental importance...between the Spiritual Assembly as an institution, and the persons who comprise it" (quoted in Huddleston, *Earth* 93). Therefore, power is to the collective; individuals have no authority or privileges with which to become corrupt. (The appointed wing has no direct decision-making power; it serves in an advisory position.) To supplement this, personal opinions voiced during consultation on assemblies are not reported to the public, rather it is the final collective opinions and decisions that are open to public study. The elimination of the importance of individual personalities is completed with the nature of Bahá'í elections, to be outlined. The House of Justice serves the triple purpose of legislature, executive, and final court of appeal in the Bahá'í Faith in seemingly RG style, but its powers are limited within the framework of the Bahá'í writings, which in effect form an expansive and clear constitution. It is envisioned that the system will evolve to include a separate legislature, executive, and tribunal, where the unity principle rather than the adversary principle will be retained in the form of the single House of Justice wherein lies final authority in the Bahá'í community.

Perhaps the single most effective check on power is, however, that its entire foundation is based on the premise of the universal participation of individuals, and the BAO's power to act in practice has been related to the degree to which universal participation in decision-making is achieved. Therefore, unlike current secular pluralism where government policy must be continually gauged according to active opposition by pressure groups of unequal influence, the BAO must continually guard against public apathy, whose emergence in practice paralyzes the system. It should again be noted, however, that in the BAO, the fundamental reason for desiring public input is not to allow the voicing of special interests; the assumption is that the administration can best implement the principles of the "constitution" by allowing the widest possible spectrum of *opinions* to be voiced (and not *interests*). On the one hand, the institutions of the BAO are ultimately conferred unconditional authority, for the sake of preserving societal unity and order. On the other hand, the authentic legitimacy of these institutions, according to the Bahá'í writings, is conditional upon various prescribed administrative procedures, designed to safeguard universal participation.

Public and universal inputs into government, while including a free press, fundamentally involve three institutions: the consultative process, the Nineteen Day Feast, and the Fund. A "free" press in the Bahá'í vision

7. For a discussion of the activities of the independent press, see Michael Clarke, ed., *Corruption*.

8. The institutions of the BAO, currently in what is labelled as its "embryonic stages," are constantly evolving towards an envisioned stage of maturity. Although the local and national bodies are now termed assemblies, they are expected eventually to evolve into Houses of Justice with the accompanying functions and responsibilities. For an excellent description of the history of the evolution of the BAO to present, as well as a detailed description of its structure, see Peter Smith, *The Bábí and Bahá'í Religions: From Messianic Shi'ism to a World Religions* 115–35.

needs to operate within a society freed from the adversary principle so that it may “cease to be mischievously manipulated by vested interests, whether private or public ...” (Shoghi Effendi, *World Order* 204).

It is, in retrospect, the other three inputs that provide the pure channels for universal participation in government on a personal, individual level. Crucial to the BAO, and labelled by Shoghi Effendi as “the bedrock” and “one of the basic laws of the Administration,” is the Bahá’í art of consultation, which forms the fundamental mode of communication both within administrative bodies and between various groups (quoted in Universal House of Justice, *Consultation* 10, 11). It is aimed at providing the channel for universal participation in decision making so that a decision may reflect the widest spectrum of experience. Recognizing at once the “right of the individual to self-expression” (Shoghi Effendi, *Principles* 44), yet calling for objectivity and detachment, its prime purposes are the investigation of truth, unanimity, and unity of action. Opinions, once expressed, are no longer associated with the speaker but become a contribution to the whole. In the case of disagreement, majority rule is followed; the unity principle is simultaneously upheld, in that once a decision is made all are expected to support and fulfil it. It is Bahá’í consultation, rather than partisan political debate, that forms the medium for decision making within the collective bodies. That this medium is highly conducive to unity, rather than division, is exemplified by the actual experience of the BAO, where decisions are most often unanimous.⁹ In fact, matters of importance in the Universal House of Justice are considered so far-reaching in impact that rarely are they implemented under non-unanimity, a practice that would virtually paralyze current partisan decision-making processes.¹⁰

Given the necessity to avoid public apathy, although final authority in decision making lies with the administration, it is not only a matter of principle but also a practical requirement that “their function is not to dictate, but to consult, and consult not only among themselves, but as much as possible with the Friends whom they represent” (Shoghi Effendi, *Principles* 44). The effectiveness of Bahá’í consultation as a substantial and constant link between the public and government is facilitated by the institution of the Nineteen-Day Feast, a regular gathering that takes place every nineteen days. It consists of three portions: the devotional, the administrative, and the social. The administrative section provides a platform for general consultation, where the administration listens to and receives the suggestions of the local community. Previously made decisions are also reported to the community, thus allowing further input from the community at large.¹¹

The third institution that provides the BAO with a pulse of the community is the strictly voluntary fund. Although it is envisioned that in the future a highly progressive tax system will complement this fund, fostering a spirit of voluntary contributions to the general community is a fundamental concept of the BAO.¹² The encouragement of individual earmarking of funds provides the administration with an indication of the concerns of the public. In addition, the health of such a voluntary fund provides the administration with a constant gauge against public apathy. However, because the entire emphasis is on universal participation—and not on the size of financial contribution—and because contributions are anonymous, there is little room for financial manipulation by large contributors. In sum, the interface between these three institutions in the BAO at the local level makes the concept of interest aggregation (i.e., political parties), even a single party system, entirely alien to the system.

A third and crucial source of public input, both in contemporary governmental systems and the BAO, is the process of elections. Precisely of interest are the information and criteria upon which the public makes its choice and the animating spirit of the elections.

It follows from the conception of government as a servant of selfish interest that in current democratic practice self-promoting nominations and campaigns form the fundamental basis for informing the public in making its electoral choices. Campaigns, however, destroy the fundamental democratic principle requiring the “guaranteeing to all equal participation and influence” (Etzioni-Halevy, *Bureaucracy and Democracy* 20); as G. Mosca argued, “the only candidates who have a chance of succeeding in election are those championed by [powerful] organized

9. According to Prof. Sohrab Abizadeh, personal interview, 15 May 1988, and Geoff Saxton, personal interview, 9 May 1988. Both Abizadeh and Saxton have served on assemblies at the local level in Canada for several years. Saxton has also been elected as a delegate to the National Convention of Canada.

10. For a compilation on the Bahá’í concept of consultation, see Research Department, Bahá’í World Centre, *Consultation*.

11. For a compilation on the Nineteen-Day Feast, see Research Department, Bahá’í World Centre, *Bahá’í Writings*.

12. See’ Abdu’l-Bahá, *Foundations* 44; and Universal House of Justice, “To the Peoples” 12.

minorities” (quoted in Etzioni-Halevy, *Bureaucracy and Democracy* 16). This disproportionate influence of the well organized, wealthy, and powerful—those in possession of the resources required to run an effective campaign—is amplified by the interaction between campaigns and the dominant form of communication in these systems: the media. This marriage places tremendous focus on individuals, thereby providing fertile ground for corruption as individual personalities rise to the heights of public authority. More substantially, these are individuals who have expressed a desire for power in the first place: “The person who campaigns...is then by definition unqualified” (Mills). The combination also changes the criteria used:

The skills of advocacy necessary for election are not necessarily the skills of compromise and deliberation necessary for governing....Can a nation...be adequately governed by officials and advisors whose skills are those necessary for successful political campaigning?¹³

Furthermore, campaign-based elections are a clear manifestation of the adversary principle, which has increasingly degraded the electoral process to the depths of immature behavior. The attempts to make oneself look good by putting down others, the personal insults, and the very fostering of disunity itself all have led to public apathy at best, and at worst, disgust

In the BAO, since the conception of government holds that it is a force for unity rather than discord, elections take on an entirely different character. “To preclude divisiveness, nominations, forming of parties, and campaigning are all strictly forbidden ...” (Huddleston, “Just System” 37). In this structure, governing becomes a dynamic ongoing interaction between administrators and the public, rather than a sporadic one. The primary way in which the community becomes informed so as to make a sound electoral choice is through its regular collective interaction at the Nineteen-Day Feast. This is supplemented by other community and individual interactions. As such, the electoral process itself explicitly encourages the electorate to base its criteria of choice on mental, spiritual, and administrative capacities. By allowing personal interactions to form the channel of communication, these factors ideally replace carefully tailored mass media images with more realistic criteria.

In the annual local election process, the electorate—consisting of all adults 21 years and older—has the opportunity to vote by secret ballot for nine persons¹⁴ to form the Local Spiritual Assembly (LSA). The nine individuals receiving the plurality of votes form the collective body. The National Spiritual Assembly (NSA) is elected indirectly: the national community annually elects delegates who elect the NSA at a National Convention, in a process similar to the election of the LSAs. They may vote for any adult member of the national community. Similarly, every five years the Universal House of Justice is elected by the members of the world’s NSAs. In practice, the delegate process at the national and international levels satisfies the need for proper electoral knowledge in that the delegates tend to be the most involved at both these levels of the community.

Perhaps the most striking feature of these elections is their ability to prevent the rise of powerful individuals. There are several reasons for this. First, the electorate votes for a complete assembly. That the ballot requires the names of nine individuals reflects the fact that the voters must regard their assembly as a collective body. Their choices must not only reflect the merits of each individual but must also attempt to properly balance the various skills and capacities of the nine persons on the ballot. Second, the ban on campaigns avoids focus on individuals. Third, widespread publicity about individuals is prevented by the use of indirect elections at the secondary and tertiary echelons.¹⁵

Given that the need for world order is more and more widely recognized by a world increasingly faced with global problems such as war, a deteriorating environment, the north-south wealth disparity, famine, etc., it would be useful to extend our comparison of governmental systems to current discussions regarding world order. Whether or not humanity currently has an adequate potential model for world order to turn to is fast becoming a crucial concern.

In this regard, the most evident models to turn to would be the two dominant systems of liberal democracy. Unfortunately, their inadequacy is probably best illustrated by the very lack of any conscious theory of world government in either system. Furthermore, under current democratic practice, which assumes that government is a

13. Judith S. Trent and Robert V. Freidenberg, *Political Communication* 312. For a full discussion of political campaigns, see Judith S. Trent and Robert V. Freidenberg, *Political Communication*. Interestingly, although the book is written as a strong defence of campaigns as a mode of communication in a democracy, it concludes with the cited admission without skipping a beat.

14. However, Counsellors are not eligible for election. These are members of the Continental Board of Counsellors and serve on the appointed wing of the BOA appointed by the Universal House of Justice.

15. Shoghi Effendi gives a complete description of the principles of Bahá’í elections in *Principles of Bahá’í Administration*.

syncretization of society's individual selfish interests, lower level governments (provincial, for example) are often placed in direct conflict. This occurs because the self-interest of one division will not always necessarily be compatible with that of another, since each receives its mandate from a separate base of self-interest. Even assuming broadly coinciding interests at a very general level in society, as is done in pluralist theory, such conflicts at the specific level may have one of two results. The first condition would be that governmental power becomes centralized in the hands of the higher level of government so that it may have the power to prevent chaos. This is the situation in most states, where governmental power is concentrated in the hands of the national government at the expense of grassroots and local initiative. If this centralization does not occur, then the second condition develops: a higher level of government too weak to govern effectively (or no higher level government). This is the present international scene, where the United Nations is not a real government, holds no true power, and national governments are sovereign. Under present assumptions of government, the alternatives would be either a highly centralized Orwellian horror able to control national interests, or an ineffective (or nonexistent) world government. Neither choice properly meets the needs of society—there is no proper response to public inputs.

The BAO, with an explicit theory of world government, and the existence of an administration unified at the highest level, is paradoxically “a highly decentralized system with most of the day-to-day affairs...handled at the local level...” (Huddleston, “Just System” 38). This decentralization is a result of two conditions. First, Mische and Mische have argued that the national centralization of power is a direct result of the international anarchy where the lack of a strong national government would render a nation highly vulnerable.

[T]he functional systems of a world security system would foster decentralization through regional and local decision-making by turning down the national security motor which presently energizes a centralization of power on the national level. (*Towards a Human World Order* 266)

Second, since each level of government is directly accountable to the same force, that is, God and hence all society, and not to their electors, they are not essentially bound to submit to the selfish interests that may exist. Thus, in practice, the relationship of the NSA with LSAs, or the Universal House of Justice with the NSAs, has rarely been that of a conciliator of interests.

In conclusion, it is of great importance to note that the quest for world order cannot and will not be fulfilled by a solitary change in our institutions; of perhaps greater importance are the underlying attitudes, the political and spiritual culture if you will, which must support these systems. Yet, one cannot expect the eradication of the adversary mentality in culture if it is deeply embedded in society's institutions. And one cannot expect strife between selfish interests to be peacefully resolved if our institutions merely reflect an aggregation of self-interest, a basis which will in any case lead to anarchy or overcentralization. And yet, one cannot expect humanity to survive indefinitely if there is not a fundamental change in our assumptions.

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