



Association of Former Intelligence Officers

**Representing U.S. Intelligence Community
Service, Education, Interest, and Support**



The Islamic Republic of Iran and the new United states Administration

Farhad Mansourian

December 9, 2020

Islamic Republic of Iran

who does what to whom when?



Who is in Charge?

Can Biden Administration be successful ?



Here is what we will discuss today

- The decision-making process in the Islamic Republic of Iran.
- The role of security & intelligence agencies in that process.
- The upcoming June 2021 Presidential election in Iran.
- What do the Iranian people want.
- The Biden Administration & Iran/the Region.
- What do the Iranian leaders say and hope for.

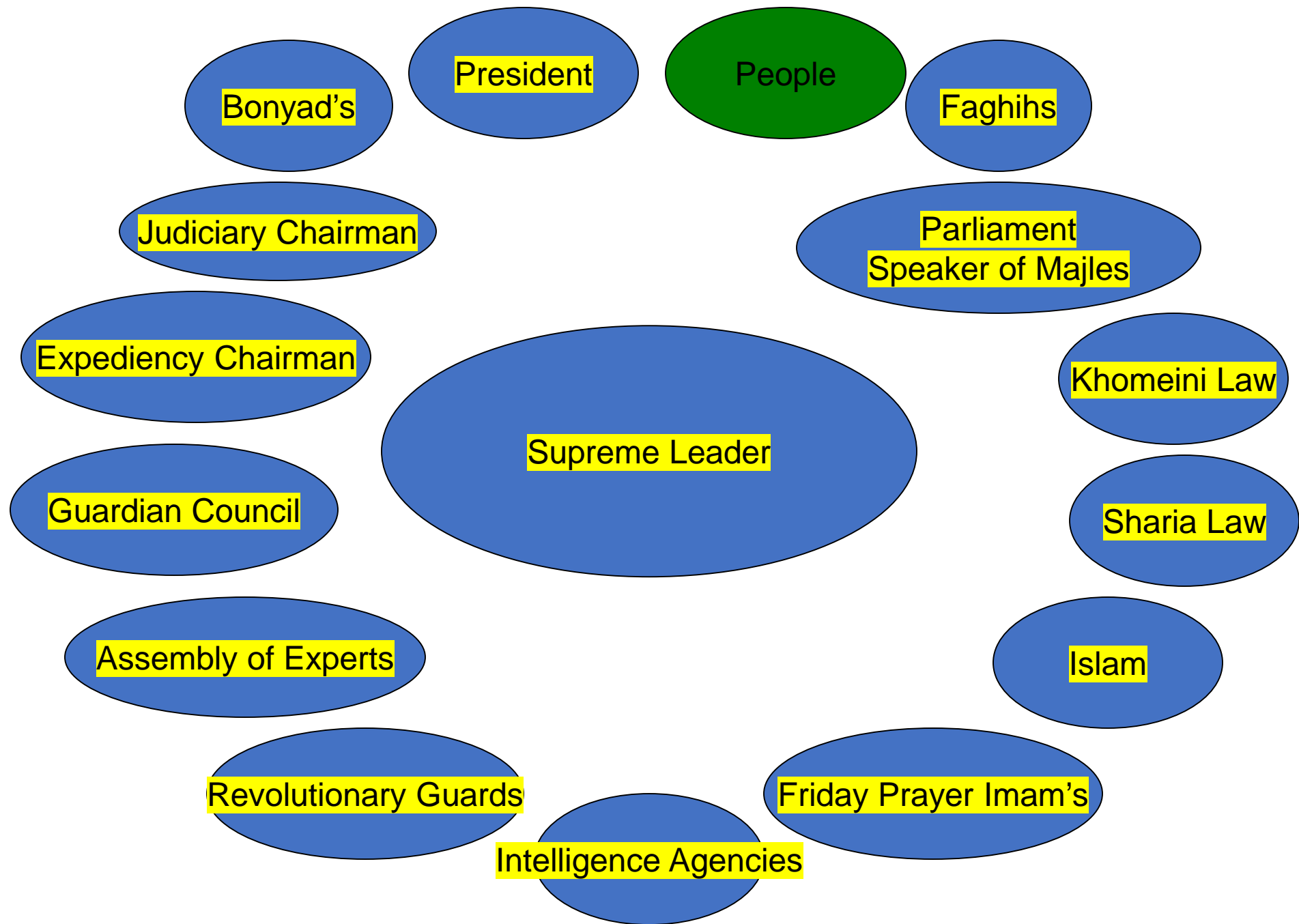
Recent Headlines Across the Globe

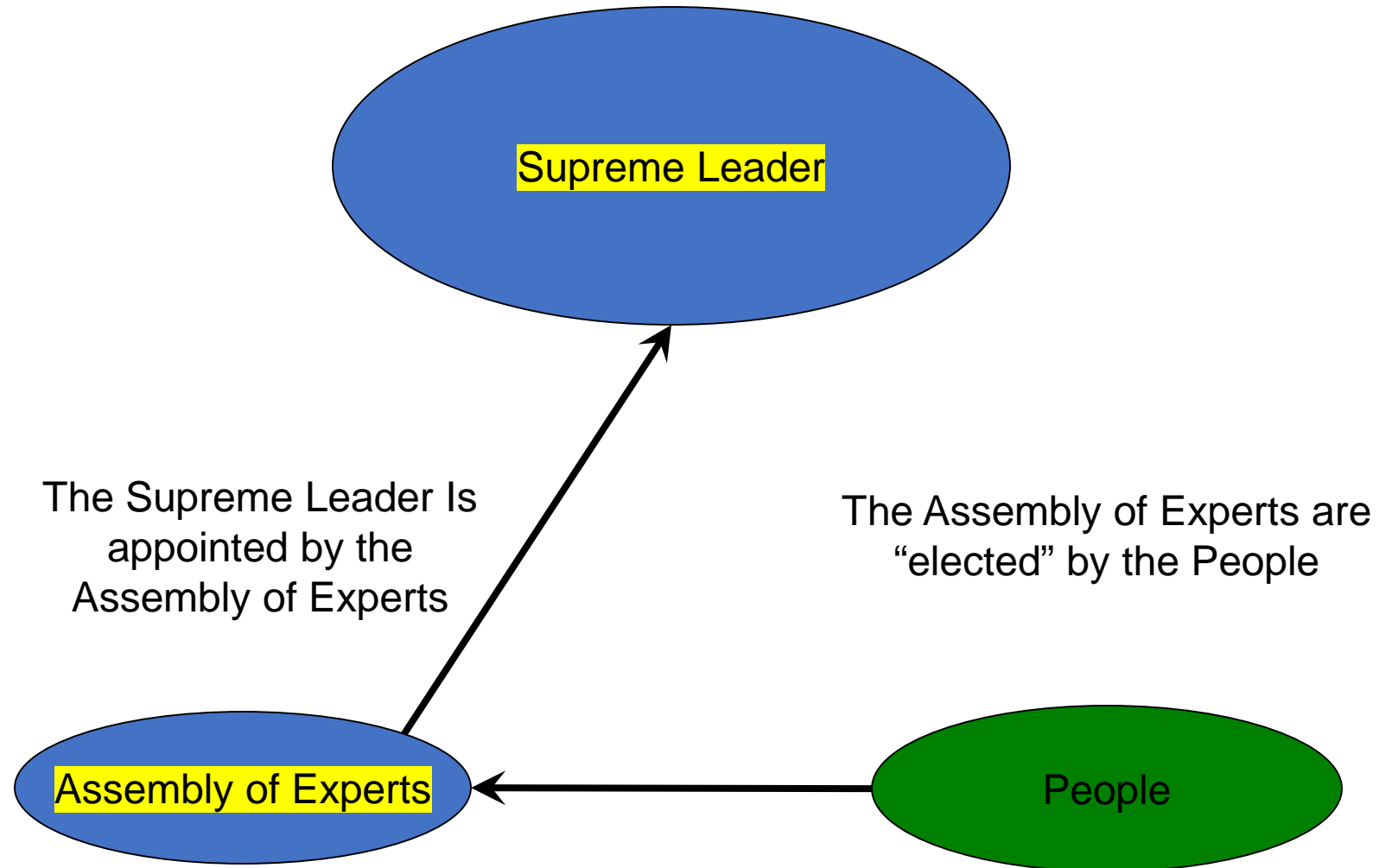
- Iran vows 'crushing' response after NYT says Trump mulled attack
- Trump Sought Options for Attacking Iran to Stop Its Growing Nuclear Program
- Trump's Iran agenda is about to end in failure
- Iran urges US's Biden to lift sanctions, rejoin nuclear deal
- Israel strikes Iranian targets in Syria in retaliation for planting of explosives on

- Al Qaeda's No. 2, Accused in U.S. Embassy Attacks, Was Killed in Iran
- Iran Denies That Al Qaeda Leader Was Killed in Tehran
- Trump sanctions Iranian officials, organizations for human rights abuses on anniversary of deadly crackdown on protests
- Iran Diplomat Tried on Terrorism Charges in Europe ^{11/22}
- Course correction in US-Iranian relations: A road map for the Biden administration
- Biden presidency 'opportunity for dialogue with Iran'
- Rouhani: Have patience

The DNA of The Islamic Republic

- Islamic? Republic?
- A unique and unprecedented structure that resembles a criminal like organization than a formal government
- The Persian Idiom of : **شتر مرغ** vs. Islamic Republic of Iran
- **Ketman**: Living in Disguise
- **TAGHIEYEH** چرخش: Spin





What's wrong with this?



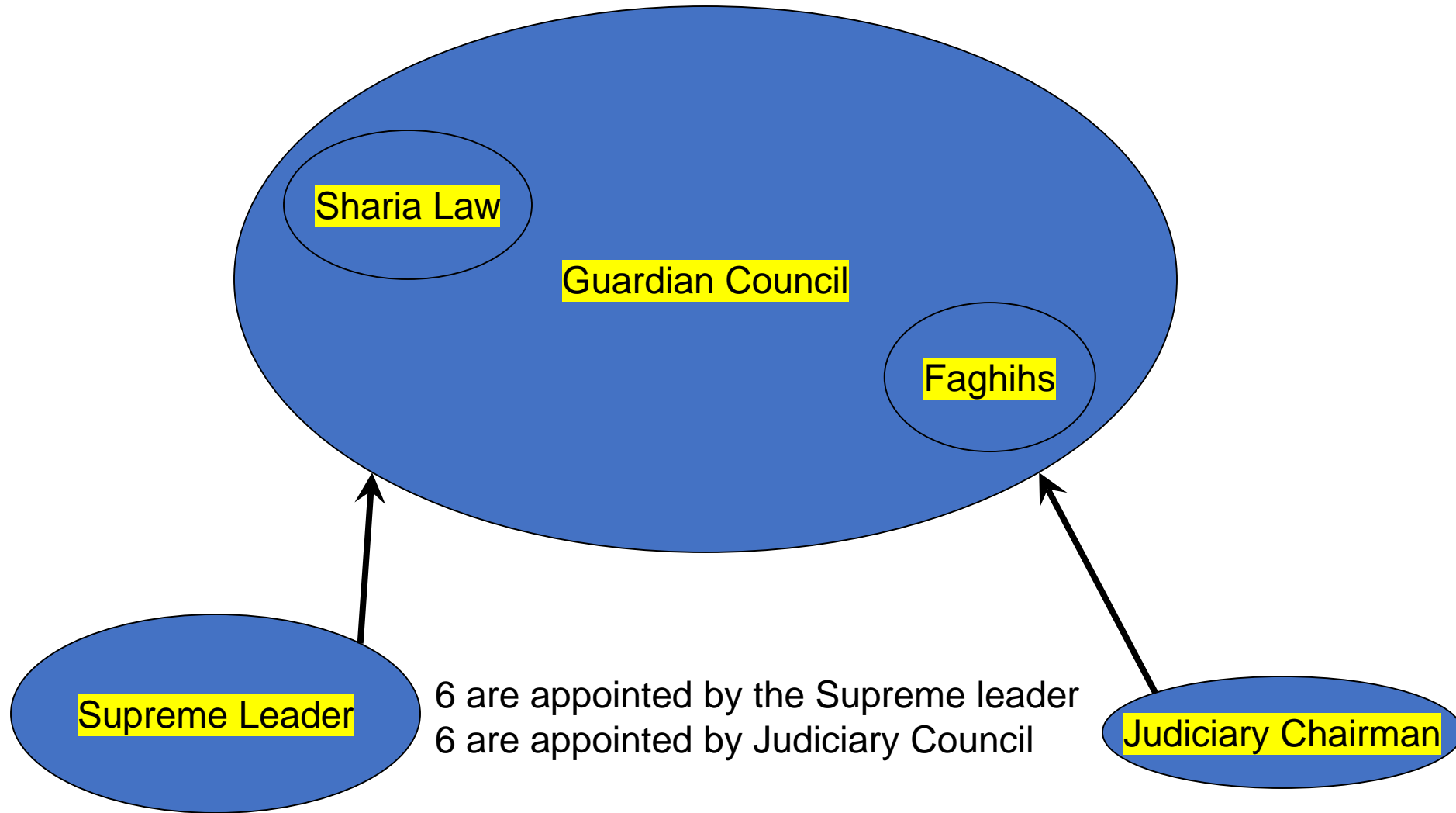
Assembly of Experts

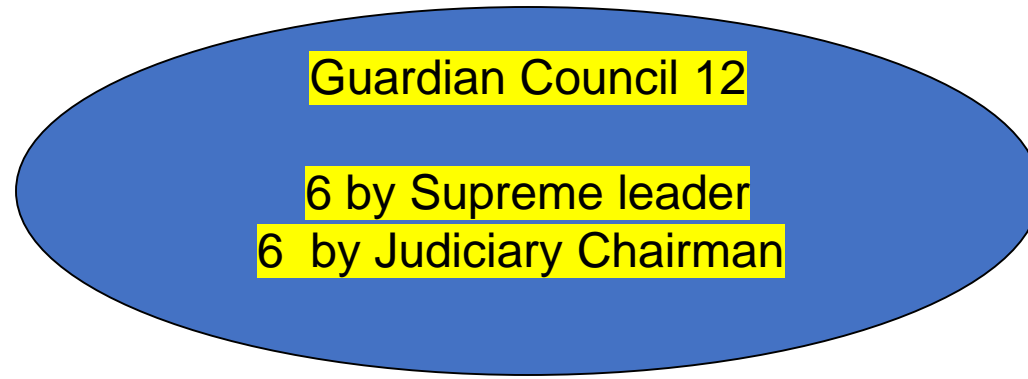
Assembly of Experts must first be vetted by the Guardian Council. The Guardian Council meets in secret and their decision is final



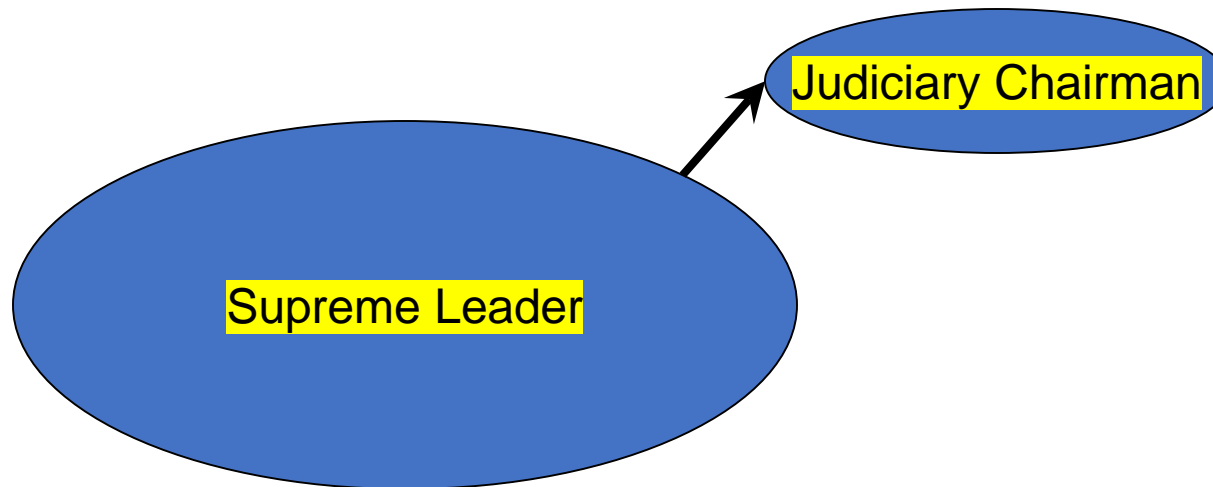
Guardian Council

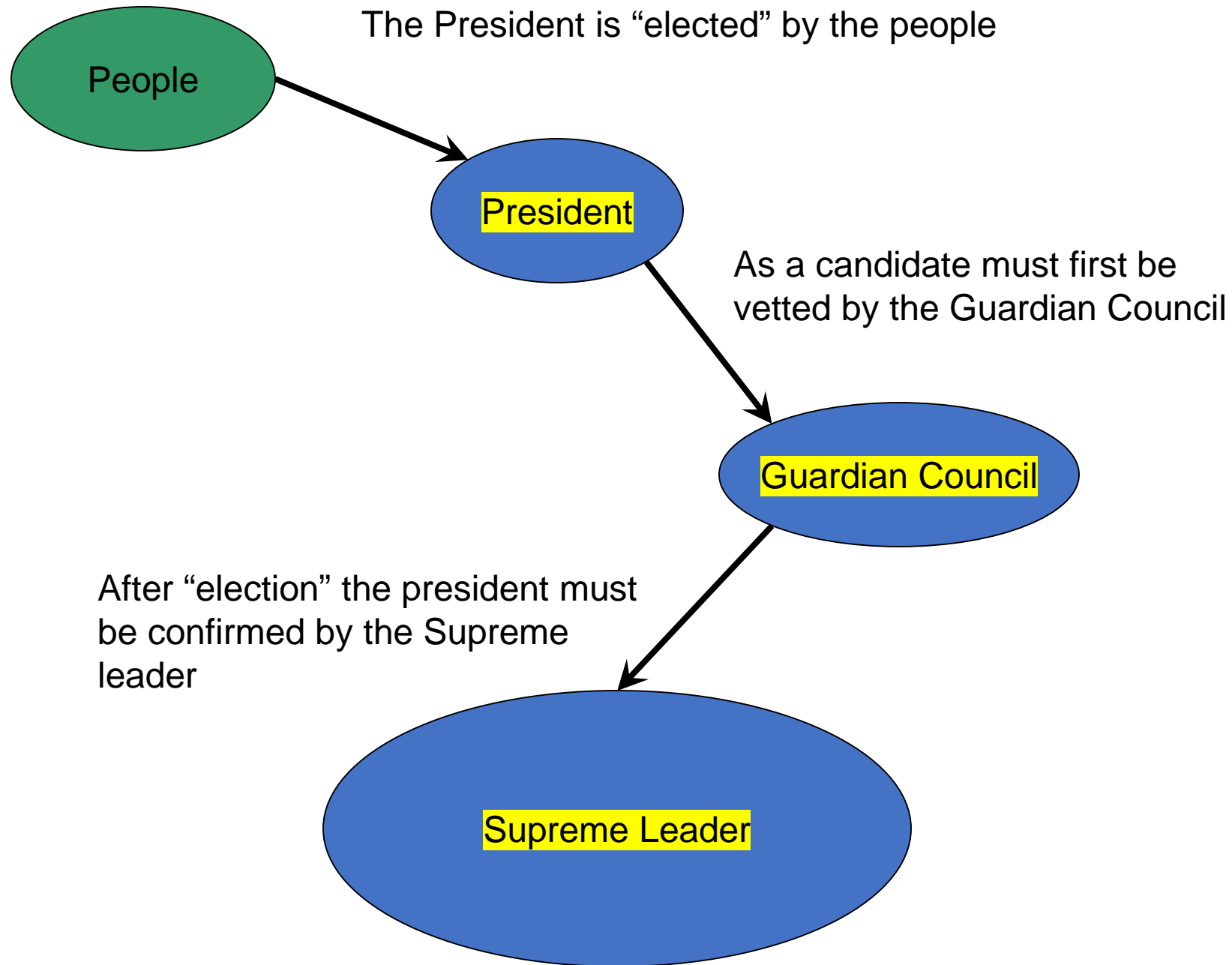
The Guardian Council are made up of 12 people from
Faghih or Sharia Law Experts.





The Judiciary Chairman is appointed by the
Supreme leader





Moderate vs. Hardliner

Upcoming Iranian Presidential Election

June 2021

How is the Islamic President “Elected” in Iran?

1. Candidates are free to announce their candidacy
2. Council of Guardians is free to approve or disapprove any candidate in secret. The criteria they require is, a ***rejal*** (noble) who
 - a. submits to the principles of ***Velayateh Fagheeh***
 - b. experienced in managing state affairs
3. No woman is allowed, not only by law (article 115), but also as Ayatollah Jannati once said, “Women do not fulfill the constitutional requirement of the ***rejal*** (noble)”

Election *continued...*

Therefore, we must clearly understand that the candidates who receive approval are **PROVEN** and **DEDICATED revolutionaries** who might have different styles in governing but are all strong believers in the ideals of the revolution (*Velayateh Fagheeh* and the exportation of revolution)



Is Iran's President Really Powerful?

- Although “*elected*” by the people, he must be confirmed by the *unelected* Supreme Leader
- Can be removed by the Supreme Leader at his will and is Subordinate to religious jurisprudent (*Velayateh Fagheeh*)
- No authority and/or control over the Justice Department, Intelligence Agencies, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Radio & Television
- No authority and/or control over the Armed Forces, Security Forces

The Supreme Leader of the Revolution

- The single most powerful person in Islamic Republic
- Article 107 of the 1979 Constitution
- Appointed by Assembly of Experts “*Majleseh Khebregan*”



Formal Powers

- Approves the election of the President and has the power to dismiss him
- Appoints the Foreign Minister, Intelligence Minister and the Head of State TV & Radio Organization.
- Appoints the Supreme Commander of all Military Forces (equivalent of our Chairman of the Joint Chief of Staff) as well as Commander of Individual Armed Forces i.e. Army, Air Force etc.
- Appoints the Supreme Commander of the IRGC



Special Advisors

- Military
- Foreign Affairs
- Foreign Intelligence
- Domestic Intelligence
- Special emissaries – 600 dispatched to Foreign countries and organizations
- Additionally, some 2000 people are special representatives of the Supreme Leader and are appointed by him. They are positioned in every state ministry or institution as well as military, revolutionary, and religious organization.
- Friday Prayers Imams

Informal Powers

- “Imam Jomeh” are Supreme leader’s personal representative to each of the 31 provinces & not only monitor the Governors (appointed by the Executive branch) but as Friday Prayer leaders, sets the political/social tone and debate for that week
- Iranian or Islamic sponsored “***Cultural*** “ Centers abroad.
- The Heads of various Bonyads (Foundations) inside & outside Iran

Time to take a Test

FOX NEWS:

Is Iran's Supreme Leader preparing to designate his son as the next in line?

- **What Happens if the Supreme Leader is Dead?**
- **Who decides what when?**
- **FACTS:**
 - Only 2 of them since 1979
 - Can his son Mojtaba replace him?
 - Who is Mojtaba?
 - 3-member secret committee of assembly of experts headed by Ayatollah Mohsen Araki have developed a list that was approved by Khamenei himself in case of his sudden death.

Ayatollah Raisi, born in 1960 in Mashhad, ex presidential candidate, currently head of Judiciary, previously Chairman of Astan Quds Razavi , second richest entity in Iran after Iranian National Oil Company, controls Billions in assets, hundreds of companies inside & outside Iran, not subject to any government regulations and oversight. Publicly skeptic on Nuclear deal.

Now That We are an Expert in the Structure of Islamic Republic!

- President Elect Biden has stated that he wishes to return to the Nuclear Agreement and renegotiate a new one. Diplomacy and Negotiations is always a good start.
- Who should Biden Administration negotiate with?
 - The Good Cop or The Bad Cop?
- Is the Ayatollah trustworthy?
- Are we trusted?

The Latest Complication



Who Did it and Why?

- Various media has said:
- “Trump Administration did it to throw a monkey wrench in Biden’s stated upcoming negotiations
- Israeli MOSAD did it because we asked them to do it
- Both of us did it to get a violent response from Iran so we can retaliate to their retaliation and destroy Iran’s major nuclear facilities (i.e., Natanz) and make matters worse for Biden administration
- KIDON did it because survival of Jewish State is at stake”
- Do you have any ideas?

Here is some of the titles Iranian and Western media have given him:

Top Scientist

Professor of Physics at Imam Hossein University

Top Nuclear Scientist

COVID-19 Vaccine Researcher



Beyond the Headlines محسن فخری زاده مهابادی

- **Mohsen Fakhrizadeh Mahabadi**
- DOB: 11-27-58
- At the age of 21 he joined IRGC
- Very successful and climbed the ranks quickly, current rank:
Brigadier General
- No pictures available until 2018
- Not a single technical paper, publication or interview record
- Formerly head of the Ministry of Defense Physics Research Center
- UN documents: Senior General @ Ministry of Defense and Armed Forces with a coverup title of “Logistics Scientist”

What Do People Say Inside Iran?

- Tired of Sanctions
- Tired of miserable Standard of Living
- Tired of Living in a Police State
- They want:
 - A secular form of government
 - Free Election
 - Live in prosperity & Peace
 - As a proud ancient civilization, they want their government to be in Full compliance with the articles of the International Human Rights declarations

Iran's Foreign Minister (The "Good Cop")



RNA1934
Date & Time: 1392/10/24 - 13:23

How will US President-elect Biden deal with Iran?

Ginny & the Bottle

- **Joe Biden** : There's a smarter way to be tough on Iran (CNN OP ED 9/20)
- I have no illusions about the challenges the regime in Iran poses to America's security interests, to our friends and partners and to its own people.
- First, I will make an unshakable commitment to prevent Iran from acquiring a nuclear weapon.
- Second, I will offer Tehran a credible path back to diplomacy.
- Third, we will continue to push back against Iran's destabilizing activities, which threaten our friends and partners in the region.
- If Iran chooses confrontation, I am prepared to defend our vital interests and our troops. But I am ready to walk the path of diplomacy if Iran takes steps to show it is ready too.

The Good Cop / Bad Cop

- Supreme Leader: نمی‌توان روی حرف آنها حساب کرد
- Iran's parliament approves bill to stop nuclear inspections (12/1)
- Hassan Rouhani tells Tehran cabinet he hopes US will 'condemn Trump policies against Iran' and lift sanctions
- IRGC: "The Islamic Republic of Iran will not negotiate its defensive power... with anybody under any circumstances" . "Missiles are a symbol of the massive potential that is in our experts, young people and industrial centers."
- other players
 - German Foreign Minister: " A return to previous agreement will not suffice, there will have to be nuclear plusno nuclear weapons but also no ballistic missiles....and Iran needs to play different role in the region"
- The Biggest Challenge: **Sequencing**

Good Cop
Bad Cop



“If you know the enemy and know yourself, you need not fear the result of a hundred battles. If you know yourself but not the enemy, for every victory gained you will also suffer a defeat. If you know neither the enemy nor yourself, you will succumb in every battle.”

Sun Tzu, The Art of War

Thank You for Your Time

farhadmansourian@gmail.com

<https://foreignaffairsintelligencecenenetwork.net/>