

Governing ourselves: systems essay samples

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The government of the United States has three branches, the Executive, the Legislative, and the Judiciary. The first is the Executive branch. The President of the United States operates in the Executive branch, together with around 5 million other workers. The Executive branch implements the laws that are made in Congress.

The second branch is called the Legislative branch. It consists of the Senate and the House of Representatives. The Senate is the workplace for 100 senators who come from each state, each having two representatives. The House of Representatives, on the other hand, has 435 representatives. The number of representatives for each state is based on its population. The lower the population, the fewer the representatives a state would have. These two, the Senate and the House of Representatives, together make up Congress. They are the ones who meet, discuss, and decide on the bills that would be made into laws (Harry S. Truman Library & Museum, 2014; The White House. 2014).

The last branch in the government of the United States is the Judicial branch. It consists of the Supreme Court, the highest court, and the lower court justices. Each state has the lower courts to hear federal issues. Judges interpret the laws, hear cases, and settle issues according to the Constitution (Harry S. Truman Library & Museum, 2014; The White House, 2014).

Although there is no explicit declaration, the first three articles of the Constitution situate the three divisions of power among the branches of the American government. Article 1 indicates that the Legislative power is with Congress. Article 2 identifies that the Executive power is with the President. Article 3 establishes the Judicial power under the Supreme Court and the

lower courts as well, in the same manner that both parts of Congress has the power in the Legislative branch. A branch must fulfill only the roles that are appropriated to it. It must not take on the tasks of the other branches (Linder, 2014).

The Separation of Powers is an important idea that can be dated back to the founding of the United States. The forefathers of the newly found American freedom asserted that a tyrannical regime must never happen again. They infused this ideal into its definition in the Constitution. With this, the abuse of power is prevented as it disperses the supposed concentration of power that is observed in tyranny. In fact, each branch even has a defense to preempt the probable intrusion of the other branches (NCCS, 2014a; Linder, 2014).

James Madison, the fourth president of the United States and is said to be the father of the Constitution, reckoned that instituting the Separation of Powers was necessary in the preservation of freedom. He also explained in five Federalist Papers how the three branches are independent of yet interdependent with each other through the checks and balances system. George Washington, on the other hand, expressed in his last address the tendency of man to love and abuse power. Thus, he was in support of the checks of power through its division and distribution to the different branches (NCCS, 2014a).

When Madison said that each branch is independent, it means that each has a separate function. With this, each branch must not take over the functions of the other branches. Nonetheless, the branches are also interdependent. It denotes that each branch cooperates with one another. This includes checking one another to regulate the power. This is the system pertained to

as the checks and balances. The duties and responsibilities of a branch contain and moderate the power of the others. (Linder, 2014; NCCS, 2014b). Suppose that a branch takes on the other branch's roles - for example, if the Legislative and the Judicial branches merge -- it is possible that the interpretation of the law has bias towards the makers. In this case, the makers could dodge penalties for the disobedience that the members may have committed. The same would happen should the Executive and Legislative or Judicial branches merge. The citizens have no assurance that their rights to property and as a person would be safeguarded (NCCS, 2014b).

Fortunately, these are not the case. The system of checks and balances is observed in the following examples. The Executive branch may restrain the Legislative branch through the veto power. Meanwhile, on the Judiciary branch, the Executive can appoint new judges. On the other hand, the Judiciary branch reviews the bills that are passed by the Legislative to check their constitutionality. The Judiciary's check on the Executive, of course, would involve hearing cases and judging accordingly. Finally, the Legislative can restrict and even impeach the ones in the Judiciary branch who are culpable for high crimes such as treason. On the Executive branch, the Legislative could check the former's use of its implementation funds. Even the two parts of the Legislative -- the House of Representatives and the Senate -- check on each other. Bills would not be passed without both of their approval.

Here, we see how a branch can check on the other two branches. When we draw lines and depict how the three different branches are held together, we

can come up with an equilateral triangle. Each point connects to the other two, all in the same measure keeping the balance and stability of the American political structure.

References

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