

American presidency

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Domestic policy encompasses a variety of policy issues which range from poverty, law enforcement, environmental protection, labor relations among other issues. However, in recent years, the focus in domestic policy has shifted to focusing on healthcare insurance, stem cell and AIDS research, prescription drug coverage, educational testing and accountability, drilling, logging, welfare reform, gay marriage, affirmative action, homeland security, transportation safety among other issues. Discussions over these issues are usually contentious since the members of the cabinet have control over how they are formulated and implemented.

The cabinet was created in order to allow political constituencies considered important an institutional voice in running of the government affairs. The rise of important constituencies and issues necessitate the devotion to domestic policy by agencies. In this regard, the presidents in power have usually coordinated policy development using centralized mechanisms. History of domestic policy over various administrations. Many presidents have long felt that they had limited powers over the domestic policy.

During the 1930s, Franklin Roosevelt had a desire to increase control over this policy and began examining the legislation which was being sent by agencies and departments to Congress. This was a process which was known as 'central clearance' and it was aimed at strengthening the presidency. It achieved this purpose since after sometime, in addition to examining the proposed legislation; the president has the power to examine the executive orders, proposed testimony and enrolled bills. In 1939, there was the creation of the Executive Office of the President.

There was also the creation of White House Office, and this ensured that the president had a cadre of personal staff at his disposal. President Truman increased involvement in development of policies, as well as the size of personal staff. Dwight Eisenhower doubled the staff portfolios including the White House Office for planning, atomic energy, and agriculture and airways modernization. President Kennedy joined the presidency and undid most of the formal structures that Dwight Eisenhower had developed, though he retained the White House policy development.

Lyndon Johnson made sweeping policy changes in the domestic policy and expanded the domestic staff of the White House. He also institutionalized several task forces which consulted within and outside government to seek new ideas. President Richard Nixon transformed the Bureau of the Budget of Office of Management and Budget. This office was designed to help him in management the wider executive branches. New political appointees were installed and they had a higher rank than the career analysts of the agency.

The next president, Gerald Ford, eliminated the Domestic Council and created the Economic Policy Board which was also staffed by personnel of the White House. Carter on the other hand sacked five cabinet secretaries, and this undermined the gains which had been made as far as centralized staff was concerned. Ronald Reagan increased control of central domestic budgeting and he defended this decision by explaining the need for urgent budget at the time. This led to an increase in control of the policy development.

He also used the White House to create seven cabinet councils and their purpose was to ensure that heads of departments followed priorities of the

White House. His model has been retained by subsequent presidents, though it has changed names severally. Under President Bush, it was known as the "Domestic Policy Council'. President Clinton on the other hand increased the National Economic Council and this was formed to handle issues which did not fit into DPC or NSC jurisdiction. The system was also retained by President Bush, and he increased the composition of the DPC staff to over twenty professionals.

Power of President over domestic policy. Currently the President has limited powers over the domestic policy due to influence from Congress. However, the president can influence the domestic policy through two ways; appointments or reorganization. These ways can be used to gain influence over agencies which the presidency has no prior control over. The presidency can also to a certain extent influence the interpretation of law through directing the agencies on how to interpret bills which have been signed into law, by use of 'signing statements'.

In case legislation is silent or vague on certain matters, the presidency may use executive orders, presidential proclamations or memoranda to shape the implementation of the law. It may shape the law and direct it in a direction which may be different from the one the lawmakers contemplated. For instance, President Clinton used the presidential proclamation to develop a national monument in Utah, on two million acres of land. President Bush on the other hand set up a military tribunal for non-citizen terrorist suspects through an executive order in 2001.

Another means which the presidency uses to control domestic policy is through the process of rule-making. The Office of Management and Budget
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plays the role of reviewing the regulations of the central clearing process. This office has also the power to review draft regulations, especially those which are not favorable to the society. In 1985, an executive order was issued to agencies, requiring them to forward an 'anticipated regulatory actions' list which was to be reviewed by OMB. Interest groups and legislators grumbled, though Reagan and subsequent presidents have maintained these processes, some of which are stronger.

Congress realized this loophole and established statutory power which delayed changing major rules by sixty days, in 1995. During that period, Congress also gave itself power to veto such decisions through joint resolution. In 2001, this veto was used against rules of ergonomics which the Occupational Safety and Health Administration had issued. American Presidency control over foreign policy. The United States foreign policy guides the relationship which the United States has with other foreign nations.

It is very influential mainly due to the reason that the United States has the largest economy and that it is the only superpower present. The aim of the US foreign policy is the creation of a prosperous, democratic and secure environment for Americans and the international community. It deals with export controls such as non-proliferation of nuclear hardware and technology, safeguarding US interests abroad, as well as fostering trade and economic relations with other countries. Many people are of the opinion that the American presidency has more control over foreign policy than domestic policy.

This especially became clear after the September 11 terrorism attacks against the United States. However, there has been a long conflict between the President and Congress over the right to formulate foreign policy. The main debate has centered on if congress and the Presidency are equal partners in formulation of the foreign policy, or if the Presidency is solely responsible for the formulation of the foreign policy. There is also a debate on whether Congress has the right to enact legislation which controls the flexibility of the Presidency.

This struggle for control of foreign policy between Congress and the Presidency began during the world wars after countries began being interdependent. In 1920, Congress challenged the presidential treaty and began being assertive in running the foreign policy agenda. Some people are of the view that the intrusion of Congress in the running of the foreign policy has been disastrous and may have hindered a crucial US role, which may have averted World War Two. War powers. According to the US constitution, the President and Congress share power to declare war against other countries.

However, many presidents have not involved Congress when ordering war against other countries which are considered to be enemies of the United States. President Thomas Jefferson dispatched US Naval ships to guard vessels against attacks by pirates without prior Congressional approval. The president later secured support from Congress, though he set a precedent which has been used by many subsequent presidents. Another example is President Nixon and Johnson who although had support from Congress, there

was unanimous agreement among Congress that the actions in the Vietnam War had gone beyond those which had been given approval.

In 1973, the passing of the War Powers Resolution Act was passed, and it required the president to seek approval from Congress whenever soldiers were about to be put in harm's way. It also stipulated that hostilities should be ended by the President within 60 days, unless war had been declared against another country by Congress, or if the 60 day condition had been extended by Congress. The third exception was if withdrawing soldiers after 60 days would cause harm to them. Non military foreign aid.

Foreign assistance is a part of the US foreign policy and is under the international affairs budget of the State Department. Some of the components include economic assistance which supports security and political goals, bilateral development aid, multilateral economic contributions and humanitarian aid. In fact, the US is the largest aid donor internationally in absolute dollar terms. Domestic versus international powers. Currently, the United States Presidency has greater power in the international arena, as has been analyzed in the domestic policy and foreign policy above.

Due to the resistance by Congress on control over the domestic policy by the Presidency, this marked the beginning of curtailing the President's powers as far as domestic policy control is concerned. It has also been discussed that in 1995, Congress gave itself statutory powers to delay implementation or even reverse unfavorable policies and laws which are imposed by the Presidency. On the other hand, it has been discussed that the US foreign policy was also meant to be controlled by the Presidency and Congress on an equal basis.

The opposition to unpopular presidential policies began as early as 1920. However, President Thomas Jefferson set a precedent when he overlooked the mandate of Congress as far as foreign policy formulation is involved. This precedent was followed by many subsequent presidents, as has been discussed in the paper. Other presidents sought the approval of Congress before implementing foreign policy, but once they got this approval, they went beyond the boundaries of the mandate that they had been given. This undermined the role of Congress as far as foreign policy was involved.

Currently, it is clear that the Presidency has more control over the foreign policy than over the domestic policy. The domestic policy can only be influenced through appointments and reorganization. This is a very limited form of control over Congress. However, in the foreign policy control, the Presidency can impose policies which go over the mandate of Congress. This illustrates that the American Presidency has more control in foreign policy affairs as opposed to the domestic policy. Arguments against greater international power by US presidents.

Some people are of the view that the US presidency should have limited powers as far as foreign policy or international power is involved. One of the main reasons for supporting this argument originates from the track record of previous presidents as far as international power is involved. Many of the previous presidents including Gerald Ford, John Kennedy, Jimmy Carter, George Bush and Ronald Reagan have been accused by many political experts of pursuing American interests as far as capitalist tendencies are involved, and ignoring domestic issues including real democracy and human rights.

For instance, President Bush has been accused of exploiting international power and waging the war against Iraq, which has cost billions of dollars, yet many people in America do not have access to basic services. The number of people who do not have medical insurance at all, or have limited coverage, is more than two million, and millions others do not have access to decent housing. In spite of this situation, billions of dollars are being spent annually in Iraq and other external military installations, despite opposition from the public.

There are also people who are of the opinion that the US foreign policy supports some current and former dictatorial regimes through the foreign policy, and this undermines the gains which have been made through democracy, as well as undermines the human rights agreements. Due to the current financial crisis which faces the United States and other countries of the world, it is very important for the current US President to concentrate more on the domestic policy than international policy, since the economy of the United States is at stake.

Summary and conclusion. It has been discussed that the American Presidency has certain influence over Congress in both the foreign and domestic policy affairs. However, the Presidency is able to control the foreign affairs policy more than the domestic policy largely due to the precedent which was set by President Thomas Jefferson. Most people are against the excess control over the foreign policy, especially during this time of the global economic crisis, where the Presidency should be more focused on improving the local economy.

It is hoped that the current president will involve Congress in all policy affairs, in order to get through the economic crisis and develop an effective foreign policy. Works Cited. Ambrosio, Thomas. Ethnic identity groups and U. S. foreign policy. Washington: Greenwood Publishing Group, 2002, p 117-122. Barilleaux Ryan J. & Rozell Mark J. Power and Prudence: The Presidency of George H. W. Bush. Texas: Texas A&M University Press, 2004, p 27-32. DeConde Alexander, Burns Richard Dean, Logevall Fredrik. Encyclopedia of American foreign policy. Washington: Scribner, 2002, p 255-261.

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