

# **Outline Topic VII**

## **The Presidency**

- I. The President is uniquely powerful**
  - A. President is the only elected official with a national constituency.**
  - B. President plays many roles (wears many hats) each of which serves to reinforce the other**

## **II. Difference between President, Presidency (Office of the President), and Executive**

**A. President – One Individual**

**B. Office of the President – several thousand people who work for President within the White House, Old and New Executive Office Buildings including**

- 1. National Security Council**
- 2. Office of Management & Budget**

**C. Executive Branch – hundreds of thousand of people who work in the cabinet and executive agencies incl:**

- 1. Dept of Defense inc soldiers, sailors**
- 2. Other Cabinet Agencies such as Commerce, Agriculture, Homeland Security**
- 3. Non-Cabinet Agencies such as Fed Communication Commission, National Science Foundation**

### **III. Roles/Hats of the President (as per Clinton Rossiter)**

#### **A. Formal Constitutional/Legal Roles**

- 1. Chief of State – symbolic representative of the U.S. and its national sovereignty**
- 2. Chief Executive – sees that the laws are faithfully enforced;**
- 3. Commander in Chief – civilian commander of the armed forces with extraordinary powers in war time**
- 4. Chief Diplomat – sole power to negotiate treaties, appoint ambassadors, etc.**
- 5. Chief Legislator – develops budget, drafts most legislation, lobbies congress, issues regulations, Issues Executive Orders**

## **B. Informal Roles**

- 1. Leader of Political Party – selects national chairman, controls drafting of platform, raises funds, dispenses patronage**
- 2. Voice of the American People – sets the style and tone of the nation**
- 3. Protector of Peace – declares national emergencies, provides relief, calls out national guard**

## **IV. Sources of Presidential Power**

### **A. Formal Powers**

- 1. Veto/Pocket Veto**
- 2. Appointment and Removal**
- 3. Draft Treaties**
- 4. Executive Agreements**
- 5. Executive Orders**
- 6. War Powers Act**
- 7. Draft Regulations**
- 8. Prepare Budget – Office of Management and Budget--  
Economic estimates and forecasts**

## **B. Informal Powers**

- 1. Focus and Control Public Opinion**
- 2. Controls Information**
  - a. OMB**
  - b. National Security Council –  
national intelligence**
- 3. Personality**
- 4. Persuasion**
- 5. Trappings of Office**

## **V. Despite Formidable Powers, Most Presidents Feel Relatively Powerless – Limited by Congress, Courts, Bureaucracy, and Public**

### **A. Congressional Limits**

- 1. Refuse to pass Pres legislation**
  - a. Opposition Party Control of Congress**
  - b. Committees can bottle up legislation**
- 2. Congress controls the purse strings**
- 3. Congress can investigate Executive**
  - a. Committee Oversight & Investigation**
  - b. General Accounting Office (GAO)**
  - c. Request special prosecutor**

- 4. Withhold consent**
  - a. From nomination**
  - b. From treaties**
  - c. Senatorial Courtesy**
  
- 5. Impeachment**



## **B. Bureaucratic Limits**

- 1. Re-interpret/mis-interpret/ignore orders.**
- 2. Wait-out the President**
- 3. Independent Regulatory Boards**
- 4. Civil Service Protection**
- 5. Iron Triangles of Influence (Policy Sub-Governments)**

## **C. Judicial Limits on Presidential Power**

- 1. Declare Presidential actions-laws-orders unconstitutional**
- 2. Reinterpret Presidential orders-laws**

### **3. Courts Insulated from Presidential Influence**

- a. 'Life' tenure**
- b. Can't reduce their pay or jurisdiction**
- c. Can add new members to court**

### **D. Public Opinion Limits Presidential Power**

- 1. Elections**
- 2. Letter writing**
- 3. Polls**
- 4. But President can also Steer Public Opinion**

## **VI. Is President Too Powerful?**

**A. President is Powerful but Power is limited**

**B. Answer Depends on your Assessment of President**

## **VII. How Representative is President?**

**To what extent do Presidential Elections Provide Mandates and Accountability?**