

Devlyn Brisson

The Presidency

Dr. Fistek

The Role of the Executive Branch

The Constitution declares that the executive power shall reside in the president and mentions “executive departments,” but it does not go into detail about the structure or organization of the president’s branch of government (Pffifner, James 118). The Constitution grants the president limited powers, which is a good thing because we’re not looking for an authoritarian leader to run our country. In this paper I will discuss the powers of the executive branch, how he faithfully executes laws, and what powers the president has that is associated with his branch.

Article II Section I of the United States Constitution states, “The executive power shall be vested in a president of the United States of America.” The president has many roles and performs many duties. As chief executive, the president makes sure that federal laws are enforced (World Book). To achieve this, the executive administers the prisons and the police force and prosecutes criminals in the name of the state (Wikipedia Encyclopedia). As commander in chief of the nation's armed forces, the president is responsible for our national defense (World Book). He is also the director of foreign policy, which means he determines the United States relations with other nations. As

head of a political party, the president sets the tone for the party's positions on domestic and foreign issues.

Many people are confused of who recommends legislation. The president has this responsibility; he is known as the legislative leader. The president recommends legislation for consideration by the congress. Then the congress decides if it should pass or be dumped; after this process if the president approves of the legislation he then signs off on a bill. If he doesn't approve, he has the power to veto the bill, which in turn can be passed if it receives two-thirds vote form the Senate. These are obvious powers the president has compared to his powers over the bureaucracies.

The Executive Office of the presidency is made up of White House offices and agencies. These offices, such as the National Security Council and the Office of Management and Budget help develop and implement the policy and programs of the President (FirstGov). The National Security Council was established by the National Security Act of 1947. Later in 1949, as part of the Reorganization Plan, the Council was placed in the Executive Office of the President (www.whitehouse.gov). The cabinet is another department the president has control over. The "president's cabinet" is an institution based on practice and precedent, for it has no basis in the Constitution or law (Pffnner, James 119).

The purpose of the Cabinet is to advise the President on matters relating to the duties of their respective offices. As the President's closest and most trusted advisors, members of the Cabinet attend weekly meetings with the President (FirstGov). The Cabinet traditionally includes the Vice President and the heads of 15 executive departments which the president appoints himself. The president is very close and needs

to trust his cabinet members, because they advise him on many issues. Who the president surrounds himself by is very important; he only wants people who support him. Cabinet appointments are for the duration of the administration, but the President may dismiss any member at any time, without approval of the Senate. In addition, they are expected to resign when a new President takes office (FirstGov).

Presidents figure that with their growing number of staff, there are only two logical ways of organizing their staff to work effectively. The president nominates and appoints his staff; however, not without the approval from the Senate. With their staff growing in size, they use models to organize the president's staff. Franklin Roosevelt was known to use the "organized chaos model" to organize his staff. With this model, the president decides who get to talk to him and when. Although, most presidents would agree that this model is foolish and does not accomplish a lot. Roosevelt was known to wonder the halls of the White House and ask staff members at random to get things and do things for him. Obviously, this was chaotic and wasn't much use.

The second model that was used to organize president's staffs was the "hierarchical pyramid." This model had the same motive as the other one; however, it was designed much differently. The president was found at the top of the pyramid, and his most significant staff members were right below him. An example of this would be his Chief of Staff if right below him; anyone with less authority would be found lower on the pyramid.

The Last model is known as the "wheel and spokes model," which John F. Kennedy favored for organizing his staff. With this model, the president is located on the hub of the wheel (middle), and his staff is located on the outside of the wheel. The

people located on the inside of the wheel, are responsible for communicating and eliciting ideas with the president. This model is not always known for being extremely effective; once when Kennedy was using this model, he hired two people for the same position. It is not easy for a president to communicate with his whole staff that is why these models are implemented to make it a little easier.

The Framers of our Constitution were very cautious when granting executive powers. They are limited for a reason. They feared of an authoritarian dictatorship where the executive branch contained too many powers. As a popular leader, the president tries to motivate and inspire the American people to help accomplish the goals set in his agenda. In doing so, he will gain the support of the people.

Reference Page

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