Chapter 13: The Presidency

1. The Presidents
   1. Great Expectations
      1. When a new president takes the oath of office, he faces a daunting task of living up to the expectations of the American people
      2. American’s like the president when they are making good strong decisions
      3. American’s dislike the president when they are failing to meet expectations and criticize the concentration of power.
   2. Who They Are
      1. President must be 35 years old, a natural born citizen, and must have resided in the United States for at least 14 years.
      2. So far, no woman has served as a president, but given recent progress this is likely to change.
      3. List of Presidents
   3. How They Got There
      1. Elections: The Typical Road to the White House
         1. Twenty-second Amendment
            1. Ratified in 1951, this amendment limits presidents to two terms of office.
         2. Only 13 presidents have actually served two or more full terms in the White House.
      2. Succession and Impeachment
         1. 10% of American history a president who was not elected held office
            1. this is a result of the incumbent dying in office or being Impeached
         2. Twenty-fifth Amendment
            1. Ratified in 1967, this amendment permits the vice president to become acting president if the vice president and the president’s cabinet determine that the president is disabled, and it outlines how a recuperated president can reclaim the job.
         3. Impeachment
            1. The political equivalent of an indictment in criminal law, prescribed by the Constitution. The House of Representatives may impeach the president by a majority vote for “Treason, Bribery, and other High Crimes and Misdemeanors”
            2. Only two presidents have been impeached

Andrew Johnson was impeached after the Civil War stemming from his disagreement with Radical Republicans over Civil War reconstruction.

Bill Clinton was impeached for lying to the American people about an affair.

Richard Nixon narrowly escaped impeachment by resigning from office after Watergate

Watergate

The events and scandal surrounding a break-in at the Democratic National Committee headquarters in 1972 and the subsequent cover-up of White House involvement, leading to the resignation of President Nixon under the threat of impeachment

1. Presidential Powers
   1. Constitutional Powers
      1. The constitution says very little about presidential power.
      2. Constitutional Powers of the President
         1. National Security Powers
            1. Severe as commander and chief of the armed forces
            2. Make treaties with other nations, subject to agreement of 2/3 of the Senate
            3. Nominate ambassadors
            4. Receive ambassadors from other nations, thereby conferring diplomatic recognition on other governments.
         2. Legislative Powers
            1. Present information on the state of the union to Congress
            2. Recommend legislation to Congress
            3. Convene both houses of Congress on extraordinary occasions
            4. Adjourn Congress if the House and Senate cannot agree on adjournment
            5. Veto legislation (Congress may overrule with two-thirds vote of each house)
         3. Administrative Powers
            1. “Take care that the laws be faithfully executed”
            2. Nominate officials as provided for by Congress and with the agreement of a majority of the Senate
            3. Request written opinions of administrative offices
            4. Fill administrative vacancies during congressional recesses.
         4. Judicial Powers
            1. Grant reprieves and pardons for federal offences (except impeachment)
            2. Nominate federal judges, who are confirmed by a majority of the Senate
   2. The Expansion of Power
      1. Today there is more power given to the president than the constitution suggests.
      2. President now has command of nuclear arsenal
      3. President is now deeply in charge of the American people, economy, and foreign relations.
   3. Perspectives on Presidential Power
      1. In the 50-60’s, American’s wanted a strong presidency
      2. By the 1970’s American’s wanted a more decentralized role of the president.
         1. Watergate Scandal and Vietnam War were main causes
      3. George W. Bush
         1. Expanded the president’s role and expanded governments role dramatically after 9/11 attacks.
2. Running the Government: The Chief Executive
   1. The presidents most important role if administrating the government
   2. New presidents have about 500 spaces open for appointment in the cabinet and subcabinet.
   3. Since the passage of the Budgeting and Accounting Act of 1921, presidents have had the obligation to recommend agency budgets to Congress
   4. The president’s cabinet has grown to become very important in government,
   5. The Vice President
      1. Before the 1970’s Vice Presidents didn’t have any major roles
         1. From time to time they were assigned minor tasks
         2. Mainly used as a tool for elections
         3. This has changed recently
      2. George W. Bush and Barack Obama both chose experienced men to be their close advisors, and they had a much larger public role than ever before.
   6. The Cabinet
      1. Cabinet
         1. A group of presidential advisors nor mentioned in the Constitution, although every president has had one. Today the cabinet is composed of 14 secretaries, the attorney general, and others designated by the president.
      2. George Washington’s cabinet was small only consisting of 3 secretaries.
      3. Senate has checks and balances on Presidential cabinet appointments.
   7. The Executive Office
      1. Major policymaking bodies of the Executive Branch
      2. National Security Council
         1. The committee that links the president’s foreign and military policy advisors. Its formal members are the president, vice president, secretary of state, and secretary of defense.
      3. Council of Economic Advisors
         1. A three-member body appointed by the president to advise the president on economic policy
      4. Office of Management and Budget
         1. An office that prepares the president’s budget and also advises presidents on proposals from departments and agencies and helps review their proposed regulations.
   8. The White House Staff
      1. Today, the White House staff includes about 600 people—many of whom the president rarely sees.
      2. Presidents often blame staff members for work not getting done, but it is usually the fault of the president for not communicating clearly.
   9. The First Lady
      1. The First Lady has no official government position, but she is often the center of national attention.
      2. Hillary Clinton played roles as an advisor to Bill and played a very public role
      3. Michelle Obama was often on television promoting education, military, and healthy lifestyles.
3. Presidential Leadership of Congress: The Politics of Shared Powers
   1. Chief Legislator
      1. President is instructed to update Congress on the state of the union “from time to time”
      2. Veto
         1. The constitutional power of the president to send a bill back to Congress with reasons for rejecting it. A two-thirds vote in each house can override a veto.
      3. Pocket veto
         1. A type of veto occurring when Congress adjourns within 10 days of submitting a bill to the president and the president simply lets the bill die by neither signing nor vetoing it.
   2. Party Leadership
      1. The Bonds of the Party
         1. Presidents can unify the party.
         2. If the presidents party is not in control of congress, he will have to talk to members of the other party and try to convince them to support the president’s agenda. This can slow down law making.
      2. Slippage in Party Support
         1. Presidents can not always gain the support of their parties votes.
      3. Leading the Party
         1. The president’s relations with party leaders is delicate. White House tries to gain support of party members by taking photos with the president or getting rides on Air Force One
            1. Presidential coattails

These occur when voters cast their ballots for congressional candidates because of the president’s party because they support the president. Recent studies show that few races are won this way.

* 1. Public Support
     1. Public Approval
        1. Members of Congress anticipate the public’s reaction to their support or opposition to the president and their policies.
        2. Public Approval makes leadership resources more efficacious
        3. Public Approval sets limits on what the Presidency can get away with
        4. Builds coalitions in Congress
        5. Mandates
           1. The perceptions that voters strongly support the president can be very influential in elections
           2. If presidential mandates are weak than the other party is likely to gain seats in Congress
     2. Legislative Skills
        1. President is required to be good at bargaining, making appeals, consulting with congress, setting priorities, exploiting “honeymoon” periods, and structuring congressional votes.

1. The President and National Security Policy
   1. Chief Diplomat
      1. President has the power to make treaties and engage in diplomacy with other nations.
      2. Executive agreements
         1. Agreements with the heads of foreign governments that do not require Senate ratification, but the president is supposed to report on them to Congress
      3. President is responsible for keeping the peace
   2. Commander in Chief
      1. Presidents are not actually on the battlefield, but they make key decisions that shape our military strategy.
      2. Only congress has the power to declare war, but in the modern era it is unlikely that congress could make a decision in the nuclear age.
   3. War Powers
      1. No dispute is greater than that of War Powers
      2. Congress never declared war in either Korean or Vietnamese conflicts.
      3. War Powers Resolution
         1. A law passed in 1973, in reaction to American fighting in Vietnam and Cambodia, that requires presidents to consult with Congress whenever possible prior to using military force and to withdraw forces after 60 days unless Congress declares war or grans and extension. However, presidents have viewed the resolution as unconstitutional.
      4. Legislative veto
         1. A vote in Congress to override a presidential decision. Although the War Powers Resolution asserts this authority, there is reason to believe that, if challenged, the Supreme Court would find the legislative veto in violation of the doctrine of separation of powers.
   4. Crisis Manager
      1. Crisis
         1. A sudden, unpredictable, and potentially dangerous event requiring the president to play the role of crisis manager,
      2. Examples: Hurricane Katrina, 9/11, or Cuban Missile Crisis
   5. Working with Congress
      1. Congress has challenged presidents on all fronts.
      2. Collaboration with congress is necessary to move forward with the president’s agenda.
      3. Congress usually challenges the president more on domestic policy and less on national security policy.
2. Power from the People: The Public Presidency.
   1. Going Public
      1. Presidents since Kennedy have tried very hard to keep a positive image in the eyes of the Public.
      2. Active television presence
      3. Doing “American things”
   2. Presidential Approval
      1. Presidential Approval ratings are usually at 50%
      2. Approval rating go up in a time of national crisis, for example after 9/11
      3. White House tries hard to control the contexts that the president is viewed in to control the approval rating.
   3. Policy Support
      1. Presidents should be able to speak and motivate the public on any given issue.
      2. How a president addresses issues controls how the public perceives things
      3. George W. Bush failed to communicate reasons surrounding the war in Iraq, this led to public distrust.
   4. Mobilizing the Public
      1. The president’s voice has incredible reach and his opinion can be very influential.
      2. This can lead to the public getting inspired to call their congressman/congresswoman
3. The President and the Press
   1. Presidents rely on the press to get their agenda out.
   2. Presidents try and create a good mutual relationship with the Press
   3. The press also plays an extreme role as checks and balances on the system
      1. Created drama which allowed Bill Clinton to be impeached.
   4. Press is often critical of presidents and can expose secrets.
4. Understanding the American Presidency
   1. The Presidency and Democracy
      1. Since the inception of American people have been worried that the presidency would turn into a monarchy or dictatorship — this has not happened.
      2. Concerns over presidential power are related to policy and political views.
      3. Most are concerned about too much presidential power, however the Madisonian system of checks and balances is still in place.
      4. These concerns are amplified in a time where we have two very divided parties.
   2. The Presidency and the Scope of Government
      1. Strong leadership helps this country move in the right direction
      2. Presidents often restrict their own power

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| President | Term | Party | Important Facts |
| Dwight D. Eisenhower | 1953-1961 | Republican | * Easy 50’s * Conservative domestic policies * Strong public approval |
| John F. Kennedy | 1961-1963 | Democrat | * Known for personal style * Cuban Missile Crisis * Liberal domestic policies * Assassinated |
| Lyndon B. Johnson | 1963-1969 | Democrat | * Skilled legislator * Great Society * Major civil rights laws * Escalated the Vietnam War * War policies were unpopular |
| Richard M. Nixon | 1969-1974 | Republican | * Domestic policy innovation * Reopened relations with China * Ended Vietnam War * Watergate scandal |
| Gerald R. Ford | 1974-1977 | Republican | * Pardoned Nixon * Lost election to Jimmy Carter |
| Jimmy Carter | 1977-1981 | Democrat | * Honest, but politically unskilled * Iranian hostage crisis * Peace between Egypt and Israel |
| Ronald W. Reagan | 1981-1989 | Republican | * Tax cuts * Increase in defense spending * Great Communicator |
| George H. W. Bush | 1989-1993 | Republican | * Victory in Gulf War * End of Cold War * Economy slowed |
| William. J. Clinton | 1993-2001 | Democrat | * Moved democrats to center * Balanced budget * Impeached |
| George W. Bush | 2001-2009 | Republican | * War on terrorism * Large tax cut * Began Iraq War |
| Barack Obama | 2009-2017 | Democrat | * Financial crisis * War on terrorism * Health care reform |
| Donald J. Trump | 2017- | Republican | * Conflicts with the media |