

DECISION MAKING IN AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY: POWERS OF THE PRESIDENT*

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In 1992 I had a rare opportunity to be an international visitor in USA. The trip was sponsored by the United States Information Agency, arranged by the Visitor Program Service. The topic to deal with was "Decision Making in U.S. Foreign Policy". It was an extraordinary opportunity to learn more about how the American foreign policy is made. My findings from that trip I published in the Mongolian Journal of International Affairs the same year and in my book *The Foreign Policy Decision Making in Small States*, edited in Moscow in 1999.

Talking about the foreign policy process in US, at the start, one decisive factor must be underlined: American foreign policy process is influenced strongly by the interaction between the presidency and Congress, as well as the respective powers of those two institutions. The Constitution is a fluid, often vague document that has provided to the president and Congress "an invitation to struggle" over power.

Historically, the absolute power of both the president and Congress has grown since de independence. But the relative power of the presidency has grown more rapidly than that of Congress. The growth of presidential power has accelerated during the 20th century and has been especially rapid since the presidency of Franklin Roosevelt.

Congressional challenge to the president after World War II was reversed to a substantial degree by the events surrounding the Vietnam War, Watergate, and the decline of the cold war consensus. The efforts of Congress to reassess itself have only been partially successful, and today the president remains the normally dominant foreign policy maker.

*This paper was presented at the United States Studies Conference on "The United States Presidency in the 20th Century", held on January 24-25, 2001, Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia

There are a number of factors that determine shifts in the relative power of the presidency and Congress over time.

1. Policy focus is one factor. Presidents tend to focus on foreign policy meanwhile, members of Congress are more apt to focus on domestic policy. Because presidents find that they often are stronger in the foreign policy process than in domestic policy making, it is common for chief executives to concentrate on foreign policy. This is natural reaction to what seems to presidents to be their greatest opportunity for leadership and self-satisfaction. One indication of this gratification is that many presidents become more foreign policy oriented as their years in the White House go by. An analysis of Ronald Reagan's speeches, for example, shows that he spoke more and more on foreign policy and less and less on domestic policy during each succeeding year of his presidency. Even presidents who say that they want to emphasize domestic affairs are soon enmeshed in foreign policy. That is what happened to Lyndon Johnson. Similarly, Bill Clinton entered presidency vowing to concentrate on domestic policy, especially the economy. But just ten weeks after Clinton's inauguration foreign policy captured every president's attention and he emerged as foreign policy president. For example, take NATO enlargement, Chinese accession to WTO, the launch of NAFTA, president's trip to India, which ended half a century of estrangement, two Clinton trips to Africa and his visit to Vietnam.

To share my personal views with you concerning the new administration, my impression is that the Bush presidency will be also a foreign policy oriented one for several reasons. First, the new president is, like Clinton, an internationalist. Second, the world is changing rapidly, the globalization process is underway precisely at a time when America has the power to influence its new direction and there is no reason why America will not use its world-wide opportunities to shape the emerging world order. And third, the strong foreign policy team chosen by the new president (General Colin Powell, Condoleezza Rice, Donald Rumsfeld) shows that Bush the Junior will pursue an active and strong foreign policy. But, probably, his foreign policy orientation will differ from that of Clinton presidency. Clinton was multilateral institution oriented, human rights-oriented, meanwhile the new American

president will focus on American national interest, therefore, he will be pursuing a realist rather than idealist approach to foreign policy, concentrating on big countries, for instance, China and Russia. It seems that improving American military strength will play a key role in the foreign and defense policies of the new administration. So, legacies and findings by people like Morgenthau, Kennan, Kissinger will be on the rise.

2. Another factor determining foreign policy powers of presidency is organisational strength. The fragmentation of Congress tends to lessen its impact on foreign policy. The strength of the presidency varies depending on how skilled an administrator the president and his chief subordinates are.

3. The political standing of the president and Congress also helps determine the respective influence of the two contestants in the struggle for power. The public's esteem of Congress is normally quite low, which harms that institution. The public standing of the president varies greatly depending on how the public perceives the president personally and what it thinks of the president's policies.

4. Situations and issues also have an impact on the relative power of the two institutions. Crises, status quo, and pure international issues are areas in which presidential strength is maximized. Meanwhile, intermestic issues, non-status quo issues and noncrises situations are more likely to evoke congressional activity.

5. Finally, partisanship also influences the relations between the president and Congress /ideology, party identification etc./¹ Summarizing, we would conclude that American presidents tend to focus on foreign policy, meanwhile, members of Congress are more apt to focus on domestic policy, without underestimating the roles of the Congress, which approves the foreign affairs budget, international treaties and confirms the presidential appointees. To our mind, such a situation will prevail in years to come.

SUPPORT OF THE CLINTON ADMINISTRATION FOR MONGOLIA'S DEMOCRACY AND RENEWAL

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The United States of America is the cradle of democracy. It can be said that independence and democracy were born at the same time. Namely the emergence of democracy and the values of democracy have opened up the perspectives of development and progress of nations of the world. Today the USA is still leading the development of democracy and progress.

On the 20th of January of 1993 at his oath taking ceremony President Bill Clinton said "Our hopes, our hearts, and our hands, are with those on every continent who are building democracy and freedom. Their cause is America's cause." He further said "I think the millions of men and women whose steadfastness and sacrifice triumphed over depression, fascism, and communism." These were the words of gratitude addressed to the peoples of eastern Europe, the former USSR, and the states that separated from it as well as the people of Mongolia who buried the totalitarian regime. One conclusion may be drawn from this. It is the idea saying that our matters concern the USA and the matters of the USA concern us. This idea has found reflection in the policy and activities of the last American President of the 20th century Bill Clinton and his administration. I would like to bring to your attention some facts and examples. First, from the very beginning the democratic processes were accomplished in Mongolia in a comparatively peaceful way and the values and the basis principles of democracy are being implemented normally. All kinds of support provided and evaluation given is a proof of all this. It is the main achievement that such kind of support and assessment come from the great powers that determine the world's policy, in part from the USA. We, the Mongolian people are proud of this. Bill Clinton after being elected the US President for the second term said "Everywhere the people strive to preserve their prestige, to freely express their opinions and elect their leader. We see that this striving became reality in the democratic coun-