

Ron Paul's FREEDOM REPORT

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Will No One Challenge Obama's Executive Orders?

Texas Straight Talk, 2/10/14

President Obama's state of the union pledge to "act with or without Congress" marks a milestone in presidential usurpation of Congressional authority. Most modern presidents have used executive orders to change and even create laws without Congressional approval. However President Obama is unusually brazen, in that most presidents do not brag about their plans to rule by executive order in state of the union speeches.

Sadly, his pledge to use his pen to implement laws and policies without the consent of Congress not only received thunderous applause from representatives of the president's party, some representatives have even pledged to help Obama get around Congress by providing him with ideas for executive orders. The Constitution's authors would be horrified to see legislators actively aiding and abetting a president taking power away from the legislature.

Executive orders are perfectly legitimate and even necessary if, in the words of leading Constitutional Scholar Judge Andrew Napolitano, they "... guide the executive branch on how to enforce a law or...complement and supplement what Congress has already done." The problem is that most modern presidents have abused this power to issue orders that, as Judge Napolitano puts it, "restates federal law, or contradicts federal law, or does the opposite of what the federal law

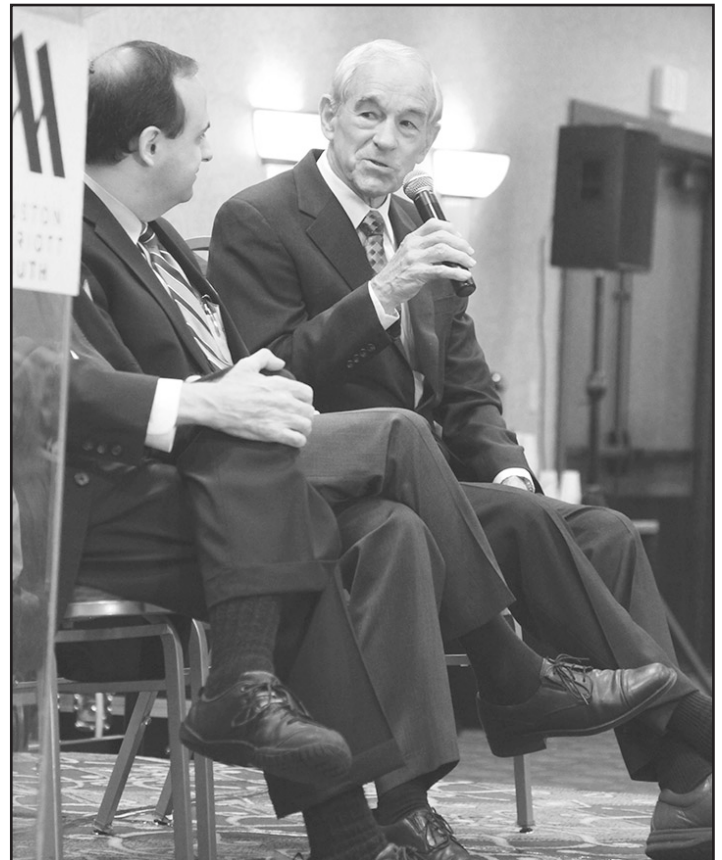


photo: Sirkon Ash

**Tom Woods (left) and Ron Paul at Mises Circle Houston,
January 18, 2014**

is supposed to do."

Political opponents of the president rightly condemned Obama for disregarding the Constitution. However, it was not that long ago that many of the same politicians were labeling as "unpatriotic" or worse anyone who dared question President Bush's assertions that he had the "inherent" authority to launch wars, spy on Americans, and even indefinitely detain American citizens.

Partisan considerations also make some members

of the opposition party hesitate to rein in the president. These members are reluctant to set a precedent of “tying the president’s hands” that could be used against a future president of their own party.

The concentration of power in the office of the president is yet one more negative consequence of our interventionist foreign policy. A foreign policy based on interventionism requires a strong and energetic executive, unfettered by Constitutional niceties such as waiting for Congress to pass laws or declare war. So it simply was natural, as America abandoned the traditional foreign policy of non-interventionism, for presidents to act “without waiting for Congress.” After all, the president is “commander-in-chief” and he needs to protect “national security,” they argued. Once it became accepted practice for the president to disregard Congress in foreign affairs, it was only a matter of time before presidents would begin usurping Congressional authority in domestic matters.

It should not be surprising that some of the biggest promoters of an “energetic” executive are the neoconservatives. They are also enthusiastic promoters of the

warfare state. Sadly, they have misled many constitutionalists into believing that one can consistently support unchecked presidential authority in foreign policy, but limit presidential authority in domestic matters. Until it is fully understood that virtually limitless presidential authority in foreign affairs cannot coexist with strict limits on Presidential authority in domestic matters, we will never limit the power of the Presidency.

The people must also insist that politicians stop viewing issues concerning the separation of powers through a partisan lens and instead be willing to act against any president who exceeds his constitutional limitations. Thankfully we have scholars such as Louis Fisher, who has just published an important new book on presidential power, to help us better understand the Founders’ intent with regard to separation of powers. The key to achieving this goal is to make sure the people understand that any president of any party who would exceed constitutional limitations is a threat to liberty, and any member of Congress who ignores or facilitates presidential usurpation is being derelict in his Constitutional duty.

Ron Paul’s Texas Straight Talk, 1/21/14

Warfare, Welfare, and Wonder Woman: How Congress Spends Your Money

Supporters of warfare, welfare, and Wonder Woman cheered last week as Congress passed a one trillion dollar “omnibus” appropriation bill. This legislation funds the operations of government for the remainder of the fiscal year. Wonder Woman fans can cheer that buried in the bill was a \$10,000 grant for a theater program to explore the comic book heroine.

That is just one of the many outrageous projects buried in this 1,582 page bill. The legislation gives the Department of Education more money to continue nationalizing education via “common core.” Also, despite new evidence of Obamacare’s failure emerging on an almost daily basis, the Omnibus bill does nothing to roll back this disastrous law.

Even though the Omnibus bill dramatically increases government spending, it passed with the support of many self-described “fiscal conservatives.” Those wondering why anyone who opposes increasing spending on programs like common core and Obamacare

would vote for the bill, may find an answer in the fact that the legislation increases funding for the “Overseas Continuing Operations” — which is the official name for the war budget — for the first time since 2010. This \$85 billion war budget contains \$6 billion earmarked for projects benefiting Boeing, Lockheed-Martin, and other big defense contractors.

Ever since “sequestration” went into effect at the beginning of last year, the military-industrial complex’s congressional cheering session has complained that sequestration imposed “draconian cuts” on the Pentagon that will “decimate” our military — even though most of the “cuts” were actually reductions in the “projected rate of growth.” In fact, under sequestration, defense spending was to increase by 18 percent over ten years, as opposed to growing by 20 percent without sequestration.

Many of the defenders of increased war spending are opponents of welfare, but they are willing to set

aside their opposition to increased welfare spending in order to increase warfare spending. They are supported in this position by the lobbyists for the military-industrial complex and the neoconservatives, whose continued influence on foreign policy is mystifying. After all, the neocons were the major promoters of the disastrous military intervention in Iraq.

While many neocons give lip service to limiting domestic spending, their main priority remains protecting

Ron Paul on Leaked Phone Call of US Officials Meddling in Ukraine

*From the Ron Paul Weekly Podcast -
<http://podcastone.com/Ron-Pauls-Podcast>*

We know [the interventionism] has been going on for a long time, it's involved many countries. But this week it's Ukraine. They've been caught and it's a serious problem. It might be equal to what's going on in Syria, and that's pretty bad. I think the Russians are going to be a little more aggressive in defending what happens in Ukraine even than they have been in Syria, and they have a lot at stake there. You know, even if you lived in the real world of intervention and making good decisions and whether you are a realist or a dedicated neocon there would still be a debate going on over the wisdom of what one does in those countries. But the basic principle is why are we there? Why are we determined to get very much involved in Ukraine? That would be like if there was a debate in Mexico who the next government would be and the Russians thought to their advantage it would be very nice if they had a coalition that would support Russia. And they were engaged with money and military and what-not. I think we would have much greater right to be asking questions about it.

high levels of military spending to maintain an interventionist foreign policy. The influence of the neocons provides intellectual justification for politicians to vote for ever-larger military budgets — and break the campaign promises to vote against increases in spending and debt.

Fortunately, in recent years more Americans have recognized that a constant defense of liberty requires opposing both war and welfare. Many of these Americans, especially the younger ones, have joined the intellectual and political movement in favor of limiting government in all areas. This movement presents the most serious challenge the bipartisan welfare-warfare consensus has faced in generations. Hopefully, the influence of this movement will lead to bipartisan deals cutting both welfare and warfare spending.

The question facing Americans is not whether Congress will ever cut spending. The question is will the spending be reduced in an orderly manner that avoids inflicting massive harm on those depending on government programs, or will spending be slashed in response to an economic crisis caused by ever-increasing levels of deficit spending. Because politicians are followers rather than leaders, it is ultimately up to the people what course we will take. This is why it is vital that those of us who understand the dangerous path we are currently on do all we can to expand the movement for liberty, peace, and prosperity.

Ron Paul's Texas Straight Talk, 2/3/14

The Continuing Al-Qaeda Threat

Appearing last week before the Senate Intelligence Committee, Director of National Intelligence James Clapper testified that he could not say the threat from al-Qaeda is any less today than it was ten years ago. It was a shocking admission. Does he mean that the trillions of dollars spent fighting the war on terrorism have resulted in no gains? That those who urged us to give up some of our liberties to gain security have, as Benjamin Franklin warned, lost both?

There may be reasons Director Clapper would want us to believe that the threat from al-Qaeda is as strong as ever. An entire industry has arisen from the gov-

ernment's war on terror, and for both the government sector and the security-industrial complex the terrorist threat is big business. Economic pressure has thus far not affected the military or intelligence sectors – despite false claims that the sequestration cut military spending. However, emphasizing continued high threat levels without being able to openly explain them due to secrecy requirements is one way to keep the security budget untouched.

Also, emphasizing the continued high threat level from terrorists overseas is a good way to frighten citizens away from their increasing outrage over reports of massive domestic spying by the NSA. Unfortunately Americans may still be more willing to give up their liberties if they are told that the threats to their security remain as high as ever.

What if Clapper is telling us the truth, however? What would this revelation mean if that is the case?

For one, it means that we have gotten very little for the tremendous amount of spending on the war on terrorism and the lives lost. We are told that the military and intelligence community can protect us if they are given the tools they need, but it appears they have not done a very good job by their own admission.

More likely, it may mean that the US government's policies are causing more al-Qaeda groups to arise and take the place of those who have been defeated by US drone and military attacks. Clapper does mention that there are so many different al-Qaeda franchises popping

up it is difficult to keep track of them all, much less defeat them. But why is that? A former State Department official stated last year that every new drone strike in Yemen that kills innocent people results in the creation of 40-60 new enemies. Likewise, the young girl from Pakistan who had been brutally shot by the Taliban for her desire to go to school told President Obama during a White House meeting that “drone attacks are fueling terrorism. Innocent victims are killed in these acts, and they lead to resentment among the Pakistani people.”

Are there more al-Qaeda groups out there because our policies keep creating new ones?

On that point, Clapper said to the Senate that in Syria the al-Qaeda affiliated al-Nusra Front “does have aspirations for attacks on the homeland.” It is all the more disturbing, then, to have also read last week that Congress voted in secret to resume sending weapons to the Syrian rebels, who are dominated by al-Qaeda-affiliated groups. We have read about US-supplied weapons meant for “moderates” in Syria being seized by radicals on several occasions, and the Voice of America reported last year that our Saudi “allies” are arming the same al-Nusra Front that Clapper identifies as a threat to the US. Is the US Congress arming the very people who will commit the next attack on US soil?

Why is al-Qaeda as much a threat as it was ten years ago? Perhaps it is that we continue to fight the wrong war in the wrong manner. Perhaps because we refuse to consider that many overseas are angry because of our government's policies and actions. After ten years of no progress, is it not time to try something new? Is it not time to try non-intervention and a strong defense rather than drone strikes and pre-emptive attacks?

Nothing in this publication is intended to aid or hinder the passage of legislation before Congress.

About the F.R.E.E. Foundation

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