**Chapter 6 (“The President and the Executive Branch”)**

**6.1 - The President and Vice President**

**Qualifications for President:**

* The office of the U.S. **President** is often considered one of the most powerful jobs in the world due to his/her influence over world events.
* According to Article II of the Constitution, the only three qualifications:

1) **Must be 35 Years old**

2) **Native Born**

3) **Be a U.S. resident for at least 14 years**

* With the exception of the current president, every other president has been a **white male** and all but one has been a Protestant Christian.
* Most have a **college degree**, have been **a lawyer**\_ and come from states with a **large population**
* Presidential election “firsts”:
  + **John F. Kennedy** was the first Catholic president (1960)
  + Geraldine Ferraro was the first female vice presidential candidate (1984).
  + **Jesse Jackson** was the first African American candidate to narrowly miss his party’s nomination (1988).
  + Joseph Lieberman was the first Jewish vice presidential candidate (2000).
  + **Barack Obama** became the first African American President of the USA (2008)
  + Hilary Clinton was the first woman to run for President as the nominee for one of the major political parties (2016

**Electing a President:**

* Presidential elections take place every **4** years in years that are divisible by the number **4**.
* Presidents are elected NOT by the **popular vote**, but by an indirect method of election called the “**Electoral College**”.
* Voters actually vote for “**elector**”, which is a **person appointed to vote in presidential elections for major candidates**
* The electoral voters is determined by the number of **Representatives** and

**Senators** in each state. There is a total of **538** electors. Although NOT a state, **Washington, DC** has three electoral votes.

* In most states, it is a(n) “**winner take all**” system, where the candidate that wins the **popular** vote wins all the electoral votes.
* To be elected president and vice president, the candidates need to win **270** out of **538**.
* The Electoral College makes it difficult for **third** parties to win the presidency.
* Despite the election in November, the results of the “**Electoral College**” are not confirmed until the month of **December** by **Congress.** This is one example of **checks and balances.**
* **Landmark Supreme Court Case – *Bush v. Gore (2000)***:
  + Because the election was too close to call, the Florida Supreme Court demanded a ***recount*** of the Florida popular votes for this Presidential Election.
  + After a series of lawsuits, banter and media pressure, the ***US Supreme Court*** decided to take over the case because of its national concern; in the end – they realized that there wouldn’t be a fair and equitable way to recount the votes (deemed the recount unconstitutional) and as a result, ***Bush*** won the 2000 Election. How did the impact the US?

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**Term of Office**:

* Presidents serve **4** year terms and most followed **George Washington**’sexample and only served **2** terms
* Only **Franklin D. Roosevelt** served more than two terms (1932 – 1945)
* Today, the \_**22nd** \_ Amendment limits the president to only two terms (with a maximum of **10** years total).
* The president earns a salary of $**400,000** per year and lives and works in the White House and has access to **Camp David**, a beautiful retreat in Maryland.
* For travel, the president travels on “**Air Force One**”, the presidential airplane, and has access to a fleet of other vehicles.

**Vice President:**

* The **Constitutional** qualifications for vice-president are identical to that of the president.
* However, the Constitution gives little power to the vice president; his/her only real job is to preside over the **U.S. Senate** and vote in the Congressional body in the event of a **tie**.
* The vice president’s most important role is to **assume the job of president**

if necessary (which has happened **9 times** in our history).

**Presidential Succession:**

* The first vice president to assume the role of the president due to a death in office was **John Tyler** in 1841.
* The “**Presidential Succession Act**\_” Act of 1947 settled the issue and confusion over who assumes the office of president.
* The **25th**  Amendment states that a vice president who assumes the role of president may choose their own **Vice President** (as long as it is approved by **Congress**)
* This amendment also gives the vice president the authority to determine **if the president is disabled or unable to do the job.**
* This amendment has only been used **3 times** in our history.
* The **Speaker of the House** and the **President Pro Tempore** are the second and third persons in line for the presidency.

**Chapter 6.2 – “The President’s Job / Roles of the President”**

1. In the United States, we have a ***constitutional government***. This is a government that is based on the written plan of government that is stated in the constitution.
2. Constitutional Power
   1. The Constitution says, “Executive Power shall be invested in a President…”
      1. Means – The main job of the President is to **execute**, or carry out, the laws passed by Congress.
   2. The Constitution also gives the President the power to (these powers are expressed or enumerated in Article **II**.) due to separation of powers and checks and balances.
      1. Veto, or **reject**, bills passed in Congress
      2. Call Congress into a special session
      3. Serve as **commander-in-chief** of the Armed Forces
      4. Receive leaders and other officials of foreign countries (w/ **Senate** approval)
      5. Make **treaties** with other countries ( w/ **Senate** approval)
      6. Appoints heads of executive agencies, federal court judges, ambassadors, and other top government officials (also with the approval of **Senate**)
      7. **Pardon** or reduce the penalties against people convicted of crimes
      8. Required to supply Congress with the “State of the Union”
3. Role of the President – the president has several jobs to fulfill. If at any time, the President (or other government official) commits a crime or some unlawful activity – it is the power of Congress to **impeach** that official – accusing them of misconduct in office.
   1. **Chief Executive – Most Important Role!**
      1. Carry out the laws passed by Congress with the help and assistance of his **Cabinet**.
      2. **Executive order** -- a rule or command that has the force of law.
         1. Used by President to “take care of laws that are faithfully executed”
         2. Most are administrative but some have a major impact (Harry Truman integration of the Armed Forces; 1948)
         3. Executive Order #9066 required that Japanese American citizens live in a special area – this is called **Force Internment**\_.
      3. Appointing Heads of the 15 Cabinet Departments
      4. Appointing **justices** to the Supreme Court
         1. **pardons** -- declaration of forgiveness and freedom of punishment
         2. **Reprieves** -- order to delay a person’s punishment until a higher court can hear a case.
         3. **amnesty** -- a pardon towards a group of people
   2. **Chief Diplomat / Foreign Policy Leader**
      1. As Chief Diplomat, the President directs the **foreign policy** *of* the United States.
      2. This is done by **negotiating treaties**with leaders of other nations and securing relationships with other nations – this is also called **foreign affairs**.
      3. The President utilizes his **Secretary of State**and ambassadors**/diplomats** (people that work for the government who are assigned to a foreign nation) to create better relation and build **diplomacy** with other countries.
   3. **Commander in Chief**
      1. The President has complete control over the armed forces
      2. However, as a part of “**checks and balances**”, only **Congress** has the power to declare war.
      3. Even without the official power to declare war, the President does have the authority to send troops into action. Since 1789, Presidents have done this over **150** times.
      4. For example, during the conflicts in both **Korea** and **Vietnam**, the President got involved in these conflicts and sent troops into battle without a declaration of war from our Congress.
      5. After the Vietnam War, in 1973, Congress passed the “**War Powers Resolution**” forced the President to notify Congress within \_**48** hours of sending troops overseas.
      6. Additionally, Troops must be back in **60 days**\_, unless Congress:
         * 1. **Approves an extension** or
           2. **War is declared**
   4. **Legislative Leader**
      1. Most bills that Congress considers each year come from the **President** or “Executive Branch”. The President cannot make laws, but he can encourage Congress to pass laws that he supports and **veto** laws that he is not in favor of.
      2. **Legislative program** -- new laws that the President wants Congress to pass.
      3. Why are there conflicts between the President and Congress in getting new laws passed?
         1. President represents the entire country; Congress represents **own constituents**
         2. Presidents serve a maximum of two terms; Congress has **no term limits**
   5. **Head of State**
      1. President is the main representative for the US
      2. Meets and greets foreign leaders
      3. Living symbol of our nation as he/she performs ceremonial duties (Picking the national turkey; lighting the Christmas tree)
      4. Giving medals to the country’s heroes
      5. As well, the President is interested in **domestic affairs** – all things social, political and government related to the US
   6. **Economic Leader**
      1. Plans the **federal budget** – statement of our government’s economic plans for the year.
      2. Deals with taxes, unemployment, prices of goods
   7. **Party Leader**
      1. Head of his/her political party; our current president is a member of the **Democratic** Party.
      2. How can the President help their party?
         1. **Gives speeches on behalf**\_ for other candidates
         2. **Raise money for elections**
         3. Getting people in the spotlight at big events

**Making Foreign Policy**

**The President and Foreign Policy:**

* “**Foreign Policy**” is the overall plan for dealing with other nations, whereas domestic policy is the plan for dealing with issues/needs within our border.
* What are the main goals of the United States’ Foreign Policy?
  1. The basic goal of this policy is **national security**, or the ability to keep the country safe from attack or harm.
  2. **International trade** is also a key goal to create new markets for American goods and provide jobs for American workers.
  3. Promoting **world peace** to keep the U.S. safe and our trade flowing.
  4. To promote **democracy** around the world helps protect our own national security
* The bureaucracy created to assist the president, in addition it help these goals is the **State** Department, the **Defense** Department, the “**Central Intelligence Agency”** (or “CIA”), and the \_**National Security Council** (or “NSC”).
* Because of conflicting powers the President and **Congress** often clash over foreign and military affairs.
* The President and Congress have several tools to help with foreign policy:
* **Treaties**, or formal agreements between nations. The most important for the U.S. today is the “**North Atlantic Treaty Organization** or “NATO”.
* All must be approved by Congress, but the president can make an “**executive agreement”** with other leaders without Congressional approval.
* **Ambassadors**, or official representatives of a country’s government help serve the U.S. We have over **150** of them in nations that the United States formally **recognizes**\_, or accepts.
* **Foreign Aid** in money, food, or military assistance also helps with foreign policy. Our most famous example was the post-World War II “**Marshall Plan**” in Western Europe.
* **International trade** allows the president to make agreements with other nations concerning trade and trade rules. Two tools that the president can use are “**trade sanctions**”, or efforts to punish another nation by imposing trade barriers, and “**embargo**”, or an agreement among a group of nations that prohibit them all from trading with a target nation.
* **Military force** allows the president to use the military to carry out some of our foreign policy.
* Utilizing the military as a part of the President’s foreign policy plan can be used to **protect** or **punish** nations, depending on the situation. This has been used several times throughout history.

**6.3 – Presidential Advisers and Executive Agencies**

**Executive Office of the President:**

* The “**Executive Office of the President**” (or “EOP”) was created in 1939 to help the president do their job. It includes specialists, secretaries, advisers, clerks, etc.
* The “EOP” has approximately **2,000** employees and a budget of over $**100 million**\_.
* The most important parts of the “EOP” are:
  + **White House Office** has about 500 people who work directly for the president. This office is led by the “**chief of staff**” for the president. It is also known as the “White House Staff”. This staff controls **who can see the president** and reads most reports and letters sent to the president (they cannot possibly read everything)
  + **Office of Management and Budget** prepares the budget and monitors hundreds of government agencies. The director reports directly to the president.
  + **National Security Council** helps the president coordinate military and foreign policy. It includes the **Vice President**, **Secretary of State**, **Secretary of Defense**, and the **Joint Chiefs of Staff** (a group made up of the top commander from each of the armed forces)
  + **Office of Administration** provides administrative services to all offices of the president. It deals with people requesting information under the “**Freedom of Information**” Act.
  + **Council of Economic Advisors** helps the president carry out the role of economic leader.

**Cabinet:**

* The “**Cabinet**\_” is a group of advisors that include the heads of 15 executive departments.
* All department heads carry the title “\_**secretary**” except for the head of the Department of Justice who is called the “**Attorney General**”
* In 2002, the “**Department of Homeland Security**” became the newest department to consolidate our defenses against **terrorist** attacks.
* The main responsibility of the Cabinet is to **advise** the president on issues related to their department.
* Although not mentioned in the **Constitution,** every president since George Washington has had one in one form or another.

**The Vice President and the First Lady:**

* Although the duties of the vice president are limited, presidents have given them more **responsibilities** through the years.
* The “**First Lady**\_” (or president’s wife) have no set responsibilities in the **Constitution**. However, they have been very active in different causes throughout the years

**The Federal Bureaucracy:**

* The “**Federal Bureaucracy**” is the millions of employees and agencies that deal with the many different things that help our nation’s government run.
* **Bureaucrats** (federal employees) and agencies that help run the U.S. government, turn new laws into action, and regulate the government.

1. **Executive Agencies** are independent agencies responsible for certain specialized areas (like “NASA”). Although not a part of the Cabinet, members of these agencies are still accountable to the President.
2. **Government Corporations** are like private businesses, but are owned by the government. They are run like businesses and charge fees, but not for a profit (like the U.S. Postal Service)
3. **Regulatory Boards and Commissions** do not report to the president, but can be impeached by Congress. Their task is to **protecting** the public (like the “FCC”).