Domestic Politics

Erik Gartzke
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3 Models of Dom. Politics

- Executive: President leads, others follow
- Legislative: Legislature conditions Foreign Policy
- Constitutional Balance: a bit of both
Time travel

- Executive and legislature share foreign policy power
- But this has changed over time
- Congress clearly had a more important nominal role in Constitution/was more influential early on
- Role of Congress has diminished over time
- Executive has natural advantages (personnel, presence, initiative, prestige)
Time travel II

- Disparity between Exec/Leg particularly acute today

- Scholars generally agree most important legislative power is the “power of the purse”

- Large standing army limits Congressional influence

- Chicken: can “fail to support troops in the field” or consider ceding power to the Executive.
Limits on Pres. Power

- Time
- Money
- Interest
- Bureaucracy
- Military-industrial complex
Hands in the Soup

• National Security Council (NSC, the Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs -- the President’s official National Security Advisor)

• Department of Defense (DOD, Secretary of Defense -- runs Military & large bureaucracy)

• Department of State ("State", Secretary of State)

• Central Intelligence Agency (CIA, Director of the Central Intelligence Agency)
Hands in the Soup II

- Homeland Security Agency
- Department of Commerce
- Department of Agriculture
- Department of the Treasury
- Department of Justice
- Department of Energy
- U.S. Agency for International Development
Congress

• Congress can allocate or withhold money, effectively forcing the Exec. to follow policies
  • Earmarks for major defense contracts
  • The Contras
  • Libya (threatened)
Congress II

• Congress can hold hearings and use public to compel the Exec. to adopt or change policies
  • Vietnam/CIA covert operations hearings
• Congress has the sole right to ratify treaties
  • Woodrow Wilson - League of Nations
Fast Track

• Basic problem for Congress -- collective action

• Also problem for Exec.

• Why make a treaty with foreign power if it will not be ratified by your own Congress?

• Partial solution -- Fast Track

• Mostly used in dealing with trade, but could be effective in other policy areas as well.
War Powers

• “Congress shall have the power to declare War”
• “The President shall be the commander-in-chief”
• Logical tension between these two positions
  • Founders never imagined a time when the United States would have a standing army
  • Countries seldom declare war any more.
The Courts

• Ignored/irrelevant for much of US history
• Playing a more prominent role in recent years
  • Extra-territoriality
  • More international legal organizations
  • More complex global environment
The Role of Interest Groups

- Special interests can have a disproportionate influence on foreign policy
- Complex issues in distant places
- Most people are not much interested
- Can influence policies that then impact broader population -- treaties, alliances.

- Mearsheimer/Walt - *The Israel Lobby and U.S. Foreign Policy*