What’s at Stake: These newsletters have traced trends and instants in the post-WW II increase of US consolidation of economic and political power. For example, in 2013 in economic (in)justice the increasingly right-wing Republicans (labeled the Tea Party) passed a farm bill that would cut $40 billion from the federal food stamp program, and they schemed to defund Obamacare (ACA) by threatening a government shutdown. These newsletters show that President Trump is both symptom and cause of the long-hardening, bipartisan centralization of authority, though he has accelerated the development. J. M. Coetzee’s novel Waiting for the Barbarians seems to be an indictment of the apartheid regime in South Africa, but it could depict the Roman Empire, or the 16th-century Spanish conquests, or the US near-decimation of the Native Americans in the 18th and 19th centuries, or 20th-century US global military
expansion. The colonial conquerors had one aim: how to expand, how to prolong their domination as exhibited in their traits: military power, silence of intellectual elite, turning subjects into barbarian Others to be tortured. Our present rulers are no less avid for global control, at one time engaged in eight wars, including our country’s longest.

**What’s Most at Stake:** Avoiding the Convergence of War and Warming
“Sarah Lazare. “The Planet’s on Fire. War Adds Fuel.” *In These Times* (March 2020). “This brutal global order predicated on violent domination….ensures that crises of climate and war are interlinked.”

**TABLE OF CONTENTS, PRESIDENTIAL POWER NEWSLETTER #5, TRUMP ERA**

**US HISTORY: CONSOLIDATING EXECUTIVE POWER, REDUCING POWER BALANCE**
Sarah Lazare, War and Warming
NSS National Security State
Rudalevige, *The New Imperial Presidency…After Watergate*
*OMNI NSS Newsletter*
Surveillance
Glenn Greenwald, *No Place to Hide* (and public’s fear)
Totalitarian Danger
Ken Burns, Trump “Hitleresque”
War
Phyllis Bennis, War in Syria Illegal
Truthdig, Obama’s Bombs

**RESISTANCE**
Stephen Miles, Win Without War: Trump’s Secret War Memo
Separation of Powers
Daly, “House Reasserts War Powers Authority”
VFP Supports HR922
Robert Greenwald, Brave New Films: Defeat Trump

**TEXTS: CONSOLIDATING POWER**

**SOURCES OF AUTHORITARIAN PRESIDENCY**

**US NATIONAL SECURITY STATE**
Possibly most of my newsletters could be subsumed under this rubric; for example: arms trade, CIA, empire, fascism. fear, fear-mongering, imperialism, imperial presidency, Military Industrial Complex, National Security Agency, Pentagon, secrecy, surveillance, totalitarianism, war, war-makers.

NSS


Has the imperial presidency returned? This question has been on the minds of many contemporary political observers, as recent American administrations has aimed to consolidate power.

Description
In *The New Imperial Presidency*, Andrew Rudalevige suggests that the *congressional framework meant to advise and constrain presidential conduct since Watergate has slowly eroded*. Rudalevige describes the evolution of executive power in our separated system of governance. He discusses the abuse of power that prompted what he calls the "resurgence regime" against the imperial presidency and inquires as to how and why—over the three decades that followed Watergate—presidents have regained their standing.

Chief executives have always sought to interpret constitutional powers broadly. The ambitious president can choose from an array of strategies for pushing against congressional authority; finding scant resistance, he will attempt to expand executive control. Rudalevige's important and timely work reminds us that the *freedoms secured by our system of checks and balances do not proceed automatically but depend on the exertions of public servants and the citizens they serve*. His story confirms the importance of the "living Constitution," a tradition of historical experiences overlaying the text of the Constitution itself.

Praise / Awards
"Well written and, while indispensable for college courses, should appeal beyond academic audiences to anyone interested in how well we govern ourselves....I cannot help regarding it as a grand sequel for my own *The Imperial Presidency.*"
—Arthur Schlesinger, Jr.

"Readable and extremely pertinent, *The New Imperial Presidency* combines masterful history and trenchant analysis of the push and pull for power between Presidents and Congresses—and the key role played by each institution's will for power and responsibility. In the story of this distinctly American political drama, Professor Rudalevige gives us a timely primer for making sense of today's Washington scene." —former Congressman David Skaggs, executive director, Center for Democracy & Citizenship, Washington, D.C.
"Rudalevige is an authoritative guide to the resurgence of presidential power since its decline in the post-Watergate years, and to the corresponding eclipse of the Congress. Charting a trend that has reached "tidal wave" proportions in the George W. Bush presidency, Rudalevige gives a convincing account both of the extravagance of current executive claims and the dangers of congressional inertia and public passivity." —David E. Price, U.S. Representative (D.-N.C.)

"The George W. Bush years provide a timely backdrop for this richly documented analysis of presidential assertiveness since Watergate." —Fred Greenstein, Princeton University

"Rudalevige sounds a wake-up call, urging us to recall and rededicate ourselves to the fundamental constitutional principles of checks and balances, separation of powers, representative government, and what it takes to keep a republic. Other branches, and the public, need to check the high-flying presidency. Powerfully argued and written." —Louis Fisher, author of Presidential War Power

"Andrew Rudalevige deals with central issues of presidential power and congressional irresponsibility. He makes a persuasive argument about the dangers of unfettered presidential power, but also takes Congress to task for failure to enforce its own prerogatives or use the framework laws it has previously enacted. His examples are compelling—even devastating. His is a voice of reasoned argumentation, and his scholarship provides a major theoretical contribution to presidential studies." —Richard Pious, Adolph and Effie Ochs Professor, Barnard College

"This book should help awaken both the electorate and its leaders to the urgency of a subject long at the heart of constitutional government. Gracefully written, sparkling with vivid quotations and insightful analysis, The New Imperial Presidency will reward both specialists and students. Yet most crucially, it is a book for citizens who seek to understand and control the politics that, in spite of all, they continue to authorize." —Russell Muirhead, Political Science Quarterly

Named a Choice Outstanding Academic Title

Table of Contents
Chapter 1: "Freedom Fries" & Presidential Power
Chapter 2: The "Foetus of Monarchy" Grows Up
Chapter 3: The "Old" Imperial Presidency
Chapter 4: The World after Watergate: The Resurgence Regime Takes Shape
Chapter 5: The Resurgence Recedes, Part I: Money & Morals
Chapter 6: The Resurgence Recedes, Part II: Peace & War
Chapter 7: Tidal Wave: The World after September 11
Chapter 8: "Practical Advantages & Grave Dangers": Imperial Presidency or Invisible Congress?
Notes

OMNI NATIONAL SECURITY STATE NEWSLETTERS
GLENN GREENWALD’S *NO PLACE TO HIDE* (2014), on Snowden, is replete with examples of excessive presidential power fueled by public fear (fueled by official fear-mongering): “the post-9-11 veneration of security above all else has created a climate particularly conducive to abuses of power” (p. 2). –Dick. And read Edward Snowden, *Permanent Record* (2019).

TRUMP

Documentarian Ken Burns warned Trump's rise would be 'Hitler-esque'—here's what else he predicted

Sunday February 16, 2020 · 6:27 PM CST

“...He (Trump) represents the greatest threat to American democracy since the Second World War. He is so fundamentally un-American...” — Ken Burns on Donald Trump, 2016 Variety Interview

The above quote is by award-winning filmmaker and documentarian Ken Burns. Millions have enjoyed his many acclaimed films on PBS. Some of those documentaries include *The Civil War, The Central Park Five, The Roosevelts, The Vietnam War*. To date, Burns, 66, has made over 30 historical films/documentaries.

In a Variety interview in 2016, Ken Burns discussed a work-in-progress called, “Defying the Nazis.” During the discussion, Burns was asked by Variety writer Brett Lang why he had become so outspoken about Donald Trump, who had not yet been elected president. Here are some excerpts from that interview with foreboding accuracy by Burns as to what would happen if Trump took office.

I refer you to Michiko Kakutani’s review of the Hitler biography... in which she didn’t mention the contemporary situation, she just put the bullet points of Hitler’s rise and every single one of them was exactly what Trump has done.

MORE

US Wars
Steve Bannon
The real danger posed by Steve Bannon, is his plan to further expand the power of the executive branch.

*By MintPress News Desk | February 8, 2017.*

“Only Congress, not the president, can declare war.”

*JUN 19, 2018* [TD ORIGINALS]
Trump’s Military Drops a Bomb Every 12 Minutes, and No One Is Talking About It

[https://www.truthdig.com/articles/trumps-military-drops-a-bomb-every-12-minutes-and-no-one-is-talking-about-it/](https://www.truthdig.com/articles/trumps-military-drops-a-bomb-every-12-minutes-and-no-one-is-talking-about-it/)

Why Did the US Drop 26,171 Bombs on the World Last Year?

*Our endless wars have destroyed nations and warped our own political culture.*

Obama dropped his 20,000 bombs

Outgoing US leader carries out 3,000 more strikes in 2016 than year before


**America dropped 26,171 bombs in 2016. What a bloody end to Obama's reign**

RESISTANCE
Trump’s Secret War Memo

Stephen Miles. WIN WITHOUT WAR. 2-22-18

8:22 PM (18 hours ago)

Dick

News just broke that Donald Trump has a secret memo that claims he can start a war whenever, wherever he wants. [1]

Even during his most outrageous power grabs, George W. Bush never tried a stunt like this. The Constitution is crystal clear that unless the United States is about to be attacked, only Congress can declare war. But Trump’s secret memo throws the Constitution out the window. And the awful truth is, if Trump uses this sham memo to start a war against North Korea or anywhere else, Congress might not have the backbone to stand in his way.

So Win Without War is using every tool in our toolkit to stiffen Congress’s spines and force them to take back their Constitutional authority to declare war. But Trump’s secret war memo just upended our timeline. If we’re going to get Congress to intervene in time, we’re going to need your help.

Please make a $15 contribution to Win Without War today to throw a wrench in Trump’s war machine before it’s too late.

Donate Now

Starting a war is supposed to be hard. That’s why the Constitution gives that power to Congress. America’s founders didn’t want one person — even the President — to be able to put countless lives at stake for their own petty reasons. Previous Presidents have stretched that constraint, with disastrous consequences. Now, Donald Trump is trampling it completely.

Dick, we can’t let Trump drag us into war with North Korea the way Bush sucked us into a sixteen-year war in the Middle East.

Congress has proved they won’t intervene in the war machine unless we make them. So that’s just what we intend to do. From behind-the-scenes meetings in Washington to lighting up the Capitol phone lines, Win Without War is prepared to ramp up the pressure on Congress until we force them to step in. But we need your help.

Can you chip in $15 today to fuel our campaign to stop Trump’s disastrous war of choice with North Korea?

Thank you for working for peace,

Stephen, Michelle, Kate, and the team at Win Without War


CONGRESS, SEPARATION OF POWER

https://apnews.com/1e4f52695826064e6712a181b92ea978
WASHINGTON (AP) — Refocusing a debate on war and peace in the midst of the Senate impeachment trial, the Democratic-controlled House on Thursday approved measures reasserting congressional authority over war powers.

In separate votes, the House passed a proposal to repeal the 2002 congressional authorization for the war in Iraq as well as a plan to prevent tax dollars from being used to take military action against Iran without congressional approval. Repeal of the 2002 authorization was approved by a 236-166 vote, while the funding measure on Iran passed 228-175.

The actions follow a Jan. 9 vote by the House asserting that President Donald Trump must seek approval from Congress before engaging in further military action against Iran.

Democrats said the three measures, taken together, would reassert Congress’s constitutional authority in questions of war and peace and sending American forces into harm’s way.

“For far too long, Congress has been missing in action on matters of war and peace,” said Rep. Barbara Lee, D-Calif, who sponsored the measure repealing 2002 war authorization.

She called the repeal vote long overdue. "It is time to end giving blank checks to any president to wage endless wars," she said.

Noting that presidents from both parties have used the “outdated” 2002 resolution to justify military action in the Middle East, Lee said leaving the resolution in place “is not only dangerous but irresponsible.”

Republicans said Lee and fellow Democrats were the ones acting irresponsibly.

“After President Trump took decisive action to take out a brutal Iranian terrorist responsible for the deaths of hundreds of Americans, Democrats now seek to restrain our president and restrict his ability to protect our nation,” said Louisiana Rep. Steve Scalise, the No. 2 House Republican.

The bills sponsored by Lee and Rep. Ro Khanna, D-Calif, “severely restrict the president’s authority to protect Americans from terrorist threats and fight ISIS,” Scalise said, referring to the Islamic State terrorist group.
The House bills are unlikely to move forward in the Republican-controlled Senate, and they face veto threats from the White House.

The White House said repeal of the 2002 war authorization would undermine the president's ability to defend U.S. forces and interests in the region against threats from Iran and Iranian-sponsored proxies. The White House also said it would “embolden our enemies with the recognizable goal of outlasting us.”

According to the White House, the spending measure in Iran would hinder Trump’s ability to protect U.S. diplomats, forces and interests in the region from the threat posed by Iran and its proxies.

Khanna said his measure would not prevent the president from acting to defend U.S. interests, but says Congress must authorize spending U.S. resources on any military action.

“It’s high time Congress reasserted our power of the purse and made clear to any president that they must come to us first before taking any offensive military action. War should always be a last resort,” he said.

The House approved a nonbinding resolution Jan. 9 asserting that Trump must seek approval from Congress before engaging in further military action against Iran. The vote followed a Jan. 3 U.S. drone strike that killed a top Iranian general in Iraq.

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, in announcing the House vote, called the killing of Gen. Qassem Soleimani “provocative and disproportionate.”

Democrats and several Republicans called Trump administration briefings on the attack inadequate, adding that officials did not provide enough details about why the attack was justified.

The Senate has not acted on proposal by Democratic Sen. Tim Kaine of Virginia asserting that Trump must seek approval from Congress before engaging in further military action against Iran. Kaine said earlier this month that he has at least 51 votes to support the bipartisan resolution.

Eleven Republicans joined with Democrats to support the House repeal measure, while four Republicans backed the bill on Iran spending. Two Democrats opposed repeal, while three Democrats opposed limits on Iran funding.

Three Republicans joined Democrats to support both measures: Reps. Warren Davidson of Ohio, Matt Gaetz of Florida and Thomas Massie of Kentucky.
Rep. Conor Lamb of Pennsylvania was the lone Democrat to oppose both measures.
[The Republican and the Democratic Parties have long constituted the US War Party, but this report dramatizes the contrast between the greater present of peace makers in the Democrats and the emphatic Republican war makers. –D]

VFP E-NEWS
SEPARATION OF POWERS, CONGRESS AND WAR POWER, HR 922
Thursday, July 19th VFP Members Help Introduce H.Res 922
Representatives Walter Jones (NC-3) and Congresswoman Tulsi Gabbard (HI-2) introduced legislation requiring that, if a president initiates or continues any war that does not have a congressional declaration, that action is an impeachable offense.
VFP members Matthew Hoh and Mike Marceau helped introduce this legislation, July 18th. Congress must take up its Constitutional responsibility for deciding when to take the American people into war and when to continue working for greater-peace alternatives.
The legislation would stipulate that when a president initiates any war without a prior congressional declaration, that action will constitute an impeachable offense and cause the House to send to the Senate for trial one or more articles of impeachment. The legislation states that this includes wars against governments or "non-state actors," and applies whether the president is initiating a new war or joining an existing war with other parties.

Watch the video!
Be sure to check out this great coverage from Stars and Stripes, Lawmakers: Presidents who bypass Congress on war powers should face impeachment

Ways to Take Action
- Sign the Petition
- Call Congress to advocate support for H. Res. 922
- Send Letters to the Editor raising awareness about the bill

Read the Bill and the full Press Release

VIDEO: This President's Day, Make Sure We Get A New One!
Robert Greenwald, Brave New Films Action
Fund info@bnfactionfund.org via uark.onmicrosoft.com
2-14-20

Dick,
Donald Trump's campaign manager, Brad Parscale made a commercial asking Americans to pick up the phone and THANK Donald Trump for what he's doing for America. In honor of President's Day, we think Americans might like to send Trump a different message. Here it is:
Share this video and deliver Trump the President's Day message he deserves!
For more videos like these, and for actions you can take, follow Brave New Films on our Facebook Action Page and on YouTube!
Don't forget to follow Brave New Films on Twitter and me, Robert Greenwald on Twitter, too.

Onwars,
Robert Greenwald, President
Brave New Films Action Fund

P.S. You can become an Action Fund Member with a contribution of $10 or more within the next 24 hours. With every donation, big or small, you will be helping to support this work. Donate now!
Table of Contents, Power of Presidency Newsletter #4

https://jamesrichardbennett.blogspot.com/2020/02/omni-presidential-power-newsletter.html

Fulbright, *The Crippled Giant*. The rise of presidential and fall of congressional power.


Brands on Woodrow Wilson in WWI

Dick Cheney, Afghan and Iraqi Wars and Expanded Unitary Executive

From Truman to Obama: Andrew Bacevich, *America’s Path to Permanent War* (see his *The New American Militarism*)

From 1940s to the 21st Century and George W. Bush: Gary Wills, *Bomb Power*


Jonathan Stevenson, Presidential and Pentagon Power Struggle During Afghan and Iraq Wars

Obama, Presidency, and Drones: Lloyd Gardner, *Killing Machine*

Feeble Resistance: Congress vs. Obama and Black Budget 2014


END PRESIDENTIAL POWER NEWSLETTER #5

OMNI Peace Newsletter | OMNI Facebook | OMNI Website

Dick Bennett
(479) 442-4600
2582 Jimmie Ave.
Fayetteville, AR 72703