# The Powers of the President

## Which constitutional authority, given to the President, has grown the most?

- Which phrase in the Constitution, regarding the Presidency, has shown to be the most elastic?
- What is the greatest source of Presidential power?
- What are the strengths and weaknesses of the following:
  - pyramid structure, circular structure, ad hoc structure

## Who Gets Appointed

- President knows few appointees personally
- Most appointees have federal experience (85%)
- Appoint experts w/o political power race, gender, region, private industry
   Rivalries tend to develop among department heads – disagreements arise even with the President

Eisenhower Kennedy Johnson Nixon Ford Carter Reagan Bush Clinton



the "Great Communicator", bold, articulate, micromanaged, expertise in foreign policy, orderly, disliked personal confrontations, decisions structures not coherent or cogent, micromanager, improviser, set policy priorities, gave staff latitude, hands on manager, centralized power in W.H., lots of D.C. experience, good communicator, pursued liberal/centrist policies, master legislative strategist, structure was too loose,

## Reflection of Presidential Character

- Eisenhower: orderly, delegation of authority to trained specialists
- Kennedy: bold, articulate, improviser
- Johnson: master legislative strategist, micromanaged
- Nixon: expertise in foreign policy, centralized power in W.H., disliked personal confrontations
- Ford: decisions structures not coherent or cogent
- Carter: micromanager structure was too loose
- Reagan: set policy priorities and gave staff latitude
- Bush: hands on manager, lots of D.C. experience
- Clinton: good communicator pursued liberal/centrist policies

### The Power to Persuade

The President can use the office's national constituency and ceremonial duties to enlarge his/her powers
 Primary power of the President
 Must be completed quickly

## Three Audiences for Persuasive Powers

- I. Fellow politicians and leaders in W.D.C.
- 2. Party Activists and officials outside Washington
- 3. Various Publics media, organized groups

Popularity and Influence for Legislative Programs Presidents try to transform popularity into congressional support for their programs Presidential coattails – declining effect Congressional elections are relatively insulated from presidential elections Weakened party loyalty Congress members' own strong relations with their constituents

## **Decline in Popularity**

Popularity is highest after an election
 Declines by midterm, President's party usually loses congressional seats at the midterm

## The Power to Say No

- Veto 10 days after bill's passage
   Pocket Veto w/in ten days AND Congress has adjourned
- Congress rarely overrides vetoes
   "Enhanced Rescission" line item veto
  - (1996)
- 2,500 vetoes were cast, 4% overridden

## **Executive Privilege**

Confidential information b/w President and advisers need not be disclosed
Justification:

Separation of powers
Need for candid advice
Case Study: Pentagon papers

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## Impoundment of Funds

- Presidential refusal to spend funds appropriated by Congress
   Budget Reform Act of 1974
  - Pres. must notify congress of funds not intended to be spent, or delays in spending
  - Congress must agree in 45 days to delete item
  - Congress may pass a resolution demanding the funds be spent

### Why is the Constitution not much help to a new President?

- Rank the following four sources regarding their benefit to a new President. Explain numbers 1 and 4.
  - 1 = best source, 4 = weakest source
  - Interest Groups
  - Aides and Campaign Advisers
  - Federal Bureaus and Agencies
  - Outside, academic and other specialists and experts

# What was the main difference between the Carter/Clinton philosophy and Reagan's philosophy?

- Why do the sources of most news stories coming out of Washington D.C. contain anonymous sourcing?
- Link one aspect of the President's personality that you feel would have benefited them the most with regard to a crisis that occurred during their Presidency (363-364).

# Why must the President devote so much of his time and resources to the economy and foreign affairs?

Determine whether the following Presidents led using more of a "trustee approach" or the "delegate model".

Pres. (W) Bush, Clinton, Carter, Obama

How do phrases such as "mend it, but don't end it", "don't ask don't tell", "eliminate welfare as we know it" benefit a President? What item has been the same for almost every President since H.H. and why is this item important?