

Jan. 19, 2007
Progressive Ponderings
"Signing Statements"

Dear Representative _____ or Senator _____:

President Bush is usurping your legislative power!

The Constitution with over 200 years of guiding the "separation of powers" – legislative, administrative, and judicial – has served our government well. You who represent us in Congress are charged with writing legislation to promote the well-being of the people in our country. President Bush has no reason to veto any of your legislation because of the "signing statements" he uses which have no basis in Constitutional Law. These statements effectively nullify law, use law only to advise the administration, rewrite law, line-item veto law, advance the president's authority, or are a combination of two or more of these. Each is a trespass on your constitutional duty for which you sought and were given power to represent the people.

President Bush is illegally encroaching on judicial power!

The Supreme Court has ruled that the line-item veto is unconstitutional; the president must sign a law or veto the whole law, not just a part of it. Many of Bush's "signing statements" are, in effect, making a mockery of this court decision. These "statements" often veto portions of laws.

The Constitution, legislation, and Court decisions (Common Law) make up the totality of law governing our country. "Signing statements" are a bold affront to this full complement of U.S. law. Bush claims he has this authority without ever citing the law(s) supposedly granting it. These "statements" challenge the "balance of power" since they disregard judicial decisions.

President Bush is threatening American citizens' rights – our democracy!

Our forefathers revolted to challenge an overreaching executive (King). As this administration asserts more power – power beyond the Constitutional definition – the rights of citizens and the other branches of government are being diminished and plundered. It is offensive to observe the tragedy of 9/11 being used as a power grab. Fear and secrecy are the methods of tyrants, not Constitutional government.

In the course of American history before the Bush presidency, "signing statements" had been used by presidents on just over 600 occasions. President Bush has issued over 800 of these "statements" AND, HE'S GOTTEN AWAY WITH IT! If you as a congress person don't combat this power abduction, where are we headed?

The last "signing statement" was issued Dec. 20, 2006. It was attached to a seemingly innocent postal reform law. It wasn't innocent after Bush signed. It was another Bush power grab and another loss of citizens' rights. His "statement" claimed his right to open our mail. He wants to add this to his right to read our bank statements, library accounts, internet mail, listen to our telephone calls, etc, etc,

Congressman, you are a citizen. Should he open your mail?
Jmayer

PS – Imagine year 2009. President Hilary demands the right to read George Bush's and Dick Cheney's mail.

