

July 31, 2007
Progressive Ponderings
Government Against the People

This Pondering is different; it stresses a sense of urgency and immediacy. Those of you who agree with it are encouraged to inform others, make demands of your representative and Senators, and band together to save the Constitution and democracy in the United States.

"Authorization for the Use of Military Force." This Act passed in Sept. 2001, allows the president to unjustifiably claim the whole world, including the United States, as a battlefield in the so-called War on Terrorism. Declaring the U.S. itself a battlefield allows the president to impose Martial Law.

In Oct. 2006, the *John Warner Defense Authorization Act* enabled the president to declare a "public emergency," giving him authority to station troops anywhere in the United States and to take control of the National Guard of each state without consent of the state governors. It overturned the *Posse Comitatus Act* which barred use of the military within the United States for police-type functions and revised the *Insurrection Act* allowing the National Guard takeover.

These acts effectively granted the president dictatorial power. Democrat as well as Republican congress members are the enablers. Taking his cue from these acts, President Bush became the master of the "signing statements" exempting himself and the executive department from the rule of law. He has also expanded his power against the people by the use of Executive Orders.

In a May 2007 *Executive Order: National Continuity Policy*, Bush defines "catastrophic emergency" as "any incident, regardless of location, that results in extraordinary levels of mass casualties, damage, or disruption severely affecting the U.S. population, infrastructure, environment, economy, or government function." He gets to do the defining! This order ambushes both judicial and congressional oversight, condensing power into a single branch of government. Part of the Order is "classified," again denying "we the people" knowledge of government abuses.

A most recent *Executive Order: Blocking Property of Certain Persons Who Threaten Stabilization Efforts in Iraq* adds to all of the above. It allows blocking (confiscating) property of "Certain persons" (war protestors, individual and group). It criminalizes the antiwar movement at a time when polls show approx. 70% of U.S. citizens are against the war. This order violates Constitutional Amendment 1 - freedom of speech, press, and assembly; Amendment 4 - illegal search and seizure; and Amendment 5 - due process.

These executive orders are scarcely mentioned in the mass media. We were alerted to the last one by a daughter and son-in-law living in Canada! Very few of our friends in the peace movement (all news junkies) were aware of it until we brought it to their attention.

The constitutional remedy provided by our forefathers to prevent this power hoarding is impeachment. Members of Congress swear to uphold the Constitution including their responsibility to use the impeachment provision. If the above infractions, along with other domestic and international laws too numerous to mention, do not add up to impeachable offenses, what would?

Right wingers, take note; actions allowed one president can be claimed by their successors. To protect our constitutional democracy, impeachment is imperative. Impeachment being "Off the table" is not for leaders of the House and Senate to decide. Express your rights today.
jmayer