

ating it. The apparatus required continuous feeding by “trained specialists” in the new science of “national security,” and the G.I. Bill made certain that the personnel the apparatus demanded would be available and that universities themselves would be reconstructed to meet the needs of the new class.

For all the lachrymose quacking of the Watergate era about the “imperial presidency” and all the quick-response scholarship of the Beltway right in the 1980’s about the “imperial Congress,” the managerial monarchy that Roosevelt built remains with us. The reaction against it under Richard Nixon was merely a partisan ploy, and the coinage of the phrase “Imperial Presidency” by Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., was no less a piece of political propaganda than everything else he has ever written. The Old Right, whether libertarian or traditionalist, was the real enemy of the imperial presidency from its origins, and it is a tribute to the shallowness of the post-Reagan conservatives that no sooner was their own candidate the ostensible captain of the presidential flagship, and they and their buddies were let in on a share of the swag, than they promptly forgot every word that John T. Flynn, Robert Taft, Willmoore Kendall, Frank Meyer, James Burnham, and Russell Kirk had ever written or said in resistance to the new monarchy. By its very nature, Caesar’s column crushes those who resist it and simply swallows those who support it, and republican politics becomes merely a gladiatorial duel among those who seek to command

the state.

Because the managerial monarchy has emasculated serious congressional resistance, it is doubtful that Congress can accomplish much to dismantle or check the executive branch regardless of who runs either one. Tip O’Neill’s law that all politics is local needs to be amended today, when all politics is really presidential. But of course the presidency, like the state itself, is merely an instrument for the perpetuation of the power of the elite that stands behind the state. As Burnham understood, Caesar “is a myth and symbol as well as a person and a fact.” “Politically he is more creature than creator, and behind his back rise the serried ranks of the managerial bureaucracy.” It is that bureaucracy and its allies in the managerial economy and dominant culture, and not the presidency or the state itself, that is the real enemy of Middle Americans and the fragmented Old Republican legacy they sustain, and it is against that enemy that their own political efforts need to be directed. To dismantle the imperial presidency and send Caesar’s legions home to their farms would merely be to knock the weapon from the hands of the foe, but it would not necessarily mean the destruction of the foe himself. To accomplish that ultimate end, yet another new elite must displace the one that has used the presidency to put itself in power, and it is likely that any new elite that does so will forge its own spearhead of revolution from the same weapon of presidential power. c

A House Wren

by *Harold McCurdy*

Green, green, are all the trees, and a house wren trills,
Trills, warbles, chortles, close to my front door;
A little rustic birdbox invites him to build
A nest there too, and prove what singing’s for.

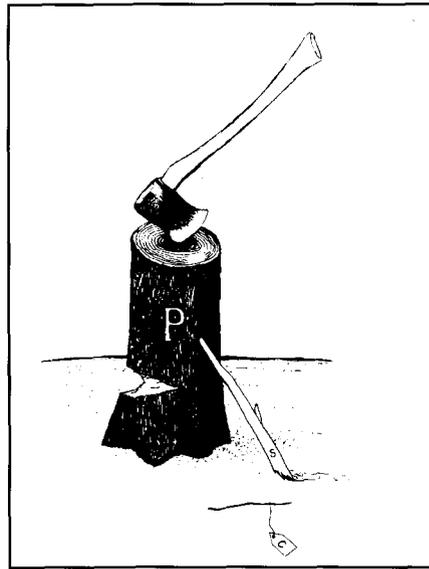
Grateful I am for green, and for the light
Conversation of leaves, and for a wren
The size of a man’s thumb, rarely in sight,
Who dares to haunt about the houses of men.

Brief brown appearances on hurrying wing
Reveal an atom too small for such loud song,
Rich, full, and passionate. So would I sing
Were I as tensely strung, and brown, and strong.

I need him near my door to sing for me
The wonder of existence better than I
Who, after eighty-eight years of trying to be
Useful and just, just manage to scrape by.

Down With the Presidency

by Llewellyn H. Rockwell, Jr.



The presidency must be destroyed. It is the primary evil we face, and the cause of nearly all our woes. It squanders the national wealth and starts unjust wars against foreign peoples that have never done us any harm. It wrecks our families, tramples on our rights, invades our communities, and spies on our bank accounts. It skews the culture toward decadence and trash. It tells lie after lie. Teachers used to tell schoolkids that anyone can be President. This is like saying anyone can go to hell. It is not an inspiration; it is a threat.

The presidency—by which I mean the executive state—is the sum total of American tyranny. The other branches of government, including the presidentially appointed Supreme Court, are mere adjuncts. The presidency insists on complete devotion and humble submission to its dictates, even while it steals the products of our labor and drives us into economic ruin. It centralizes all power unto itself, and crowds out all competing centers of power in society, including the church, the family, the business, the charity, and the community.

I will go further. The United States presidency is the world's leading evil. It is the chief mischief-maker in every part of the globe, the leading wrecker of nations, the usurer behind Third World debt, the bailer-out of corrupt governments, the hand in many dictatorial gloves, the sponsor and sustainer of the New World Order, of wars, interstate and civil, of famine and disease. To see the evils caused by the presidency, look no further than Iraq, where the lives of innocents were snuffed out in a pointless war, where bombing was designed to cause disease, and where women, children, and the aged have been denied essential food and medicine because of a cruel embargo. Look at the human toll taken by the presidency, from Dresden and Hiroshima to Waco and Ruby Ridge, and you see a prime practitioner of murder by government.

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Today, the President is called the leader of the world's only superpower, the "world's indispensable nation," which is reason enough to have him deposed. A world with any superpower at all is a world where no freedoms are safe. But by invoking this title, the presidency attempts to keep our attention focused on foreign affairs. It is a diversionary tactic designed to keep us from noticing the oppressive rule it imposes right here in the United States.

As the presidency assumes ever more power unto itself, it becomes less and less accountable and more and more tyrannical. These days, when we say "the federal government," what we really mean is the presidency. When we say "national priorities," we really mean what the presidency wants. When we say "national culture," we mean what the presidency funds and imposes.

The presidency is presumed to be the embodiment of Rousseau's general will, with far more power than any monarch or head of state in premodern societies. The United States presidency is the apex of the world's biggest and most powerful government and of the most expansive empire in world history. As such, the presidency represents the opposite of freedom. It is what stands between us and our goal of restoring our ancient rights.

And let me be clear: I am not talking about any particular inhabitant of the White House. I am talking about the institution itself, and the millions of unelected, unaccountable bureaucrats who are its acolytes. Look through the United States government manual, which breaks down the federal establishment into its three branches. What you actually see is the presidential trunk, its Supreme Court stick, and its Congressional twig. Practically everything we think of as federal—save the Library of Congress—operates under the aegis of the executive.

This is why the governing elites—and especially the foreign policy elites—are so intent on maintaining public respect for the office, and why they seek to give it the aura of holiness. For example, after Watergate, they briefly panicked and worried that they had gone too far. They might have discredited the