

[ CHAPTER FIVE ]

## Securing and Expanding Power



I can only imagine what a sorry lot of miscalculating rascals occupy the once-hallowed halls of Congress at your ascendancy. Fear not these knaves. Most will deliver masterful oratory while turning their coats to you. It is you, not they, who concern me.

Time is your enemy; it cannot be repossessed. Time spent consolidating power is the act of an unsure, timorous leader. Time spent placating the opposition or rewarding unqualified key supporters with political positions is opportunity wasted for an invincible leader. In my time, a hundred-day grace period was traditional; judgment was withheld somewhat for the first hundred days of a new presidency. Move quickly during this customary calm period.

In advising you and executing your orders, your cabinet will help you revitalize America and make whole again this great nation. Their titles matter little, whether seemingly broad or narrow in scope; ensure only that the titles give the appearance of tradition. In my time, cabinet heads numbered a cumbersome thirteen, plum political appointments all. Reduce their number to seven, and choose the members carefully. Disregard individual quirks of human nature. What matters are the ethics, intellect, and wisdom of those who counsel you and that they are tough-minded and

courageous. Equally important is their desire to carry out your every decision without reluctance.

In times past, for the good of the country, it was better by far to choose unchaste but wise advisers, such as Benjamin Franklin, Alexander Hamilton, and Daniel Webster. In more recent times, neither those cast in the mold of the seemingly self-restrained Richard Nixon, who smiled little and whose word was of no account, nor the promiscuous William Clinton, who was a war avoider with the remarkable ability to smile even as he mourned, should be considered as possible advisers. Seek only those whose advice and actions will benefit the nation and you.

Ignore past friends for cabinet positions. Many times friendship is viewed as license to chastise. Moreover, the prerequisite for friendship is a mutual feeling of equality. You have no equals. Your friendships are those of utility; when the utility ceases, so does the friendship.

While six of your seven cabinet members must be people of inner strength, strong will, and honest counsel, the seventh should be a shallow flatterer of wit and guile. A flatterer is a secret enemy who will act as your lightning rod, drawing others of his ilk. He will become the ingratiating spokesman for your enemies. That he suggests false paths to you is irrelevant; before he can imitate Judas Iscariot, you will know your highest-placed adversaries. You need no advice from me to deal with this situation as it unwinds.

Accomplishment-oriented government, like progressive enterprises everywhere, dictates a small number of subordinates. Thus, I recommend that the seven key people reporting to you have a like number reporting to each of them, with the same traits as your best six.

Remember, any time spent grooming a successor is futile. At best, your heir apparent will be a yes-man; at worst, he will be drawn to your flatterer. Additionally, you will squander time defending his actions.

Defend no one. Each person must rise or fall based on performance alone. Your successor rises only when you fall. Should you fail, politicians will select a weak figurehead to replace you, a move that buys time for political compromise, power consolida-

tion, and intrigue. Then, the rat with the longest tail will get the most syrup.

Each day expand your power; you have no time to waste consolidating power. We both know that you will suspend the U.S. Constitution and writ of habeas corpus, no matter my thoughts. I do not approve of sedition, but I believe that you are, as Michael J. Sandel wrote of "the man on horseback," "an authoritarian figure who offers a way beyond impasse, above politics, and beyond the messy, often frustrating restraints of constitutional government." And I recognize the perilous times our once-great nation faces. I suspect that you will use, as partial precedent, the actions of an earlier commander in chief, Abraham Lincoln. In dealing with persons suspected of treasonable intent, Lincoln at times authorized his generals to make arbitrary arrests. He justified this action on the ground that he had to allow some temporary sacrifice of parts of the Constitution in order to maintain the Union and thus preserve the Constitution as a whole.

The country during the American Civil War was divided between good men at cross-purposes. You, too, have war. At your presidency, you will find the country split between honest and dishonest men, between an embattled, despairing middle class and chaos. Given time, such chaotic conditions will focus America's hatred onto politicians. Reviled and spit on by constituents, few United States representatives or senators will dare visit their home districts.

But whether they love or hate you, congressional members and voters alike know that their alternative to you is a military triumvirate. Fearing military rule and drumhead justice on one side and wrathful citizens on the other, Congress awaits your summons and initiatives.

You promised America a real war against criminals. If you choose to ask for a declaration of war against crime, Congress will deliver. The declaration should remain in effect until you no longer need it; for, beneath its shelter of legality, you can expand its jurisdiction. Congressional usefulness ceases after producing the war declaration. (As history informs us, treason is never successful; for when treason triumphs, none dare call it treason.) But be

prepared that, in the interest of national security, Congress and the Constitution may stand in the way of your goals.

Furthermore, as you know, for you to succeed, you must have more than just tacit support from all military leaders of consequence. Without fail, great leaders minister to the needs of the military, those serving and the veterans. Carry your esteem for America's armed forces further. Adopt as your personal cause the care of disabled veterans. This alone ensures large contributions from citizens who want your friendship. Do more. Give your worldly goods along with almost all your presidential pay to this foundation for disabled veterans. Keep for yourself only a sum equal to that of the nation's lowest-paid soldier. While appearing altruistic, this buys you an insurance policy with the armed forces at a small cost relative to its future benefits. While small-minded authoritarian leaders prepare for flight by amassing and secreting away (outside their nation) immense sums of gold to ease their transition from great power to comfortable exile, your act of giving serves notice that you are honest, love your veterans, have burned your personal boat, and are here to stay.

These actions, though commendable, will do nothing to silence your adversaries. When you suspend the Constitution and the writ of habeas corpus, enemies and their public statements of indignation will surface. Your supporters will record the names of those individuals, tape their television quotes, and fill electronic file cabinets with their newspaper articles — all of which can be of immense value to you in times ahead, as the names of your impulsive adversaries will be documented for future recall and consideration. Similarly, the carping of foreign heads of state, however strident, is not worth heeding, since you hold the trigger to America's weaponry. Though your military is a shadow of its former strength, its might remains the most formidable in the world. Foreign leaders, judging you solely by your predecessors, can be excused their initial stupidity. They will soon understand who you are.

The next step in your plan will be to exert control and decrease legislative power by increasing the number of traditional congressional positions, thereby reducing the power of each member

more than just proportionately. In any endeavor, an extensive body is controlled more easily than an abbreviated one. Dilute your opposition but, for the sake of appearances, keep the framework of the Republic intact. Double the membership in the House of Representatives and the Senate. Maintain the same voting districts to preserve convention: have each district elect two representatives and each state four senators. Eliminate staggered terms for senate seats, thus ensuring complete congressional turnover every six years. At some time during your first hundred days in office, call for elections and require all seated members to stand for reelection.

Although decreasing individual power, adding positions will allow forthright Americans who believe that they can make a difference to involve themselves with changing government operations. Excited and inspired by your sweeping changes, honest Americans will compete with those incumbents motivated by unrequited needs to be godlike. More importantly, each congressional member will be forced either to resign or to struggle to keep his job and safeguard his perquisites. Should an adversary resign, his power goes also; if he stands for reelection, he shall be busy in his district and have little time to plot against you. Give them reasons to decline running for reelection. For example, before the elections, reduce total congressional funding by half (which will be halved again when twice as many congressional members occupy the same offices). Money will mean little to those who want desperately to join you and your fight for America's revival. Also, keep them busy. Charge the new Congress to concentrate on understanding and embodying the will of the people. Regardless of the election outcome, the sheer numbers of lawmakers prevent the cohesion necessary to rise against you.

With that in mind, should the United States Supreme Court seat nine members at your time, increase that number to fifteen. If the number is eleven, then increase it to nineteen. Numerous candidates who share your beliefs for restoring American justice will step forward.

Fortune smiles on the bold during crises. Repeal every federal, state, and local bill and statute that became law from 1964 on, along with all the ensuing regulations spawned from that period.

Americans of my time were burdened with 150,000 new laws and two million new regulations each and every year. Of course, among these thousands of bills, most of which helped devastate America while bringing pleasure and reelection to lawmakers, are a handful of beneficial statutes that you may wish to reinstate later. It is far easier to repeal all than debate a few. You have no time for debate.

Repealing these laws serves you mightily. Over five million bureaucrats and government consultants will be out of jobs, and many millions of welfare recipients will be off the dole, and all, as a consequence, will be running around willy-nilly seeking gainful employment. The equivalent of a half-billion ounces of gold stops its flow from the nation's treasury the first year. And with this drastic downsizing expect inflation to drop dramatically. You will be recognized as a resolute leader with a momentous purpose.

YOU have accomplished much in a short time. Your position is strong, despite the many protests against your actions. The armed forces of the United States are on your side, and Congress is powerless without the Constitution.

Your possible peril lies in how well you chose your six cabinet members — do they have the wisdom and the will to execute your agenda to restore the United States to greatness? — and in how quickly you begin addressing the nation's problems: crime, financial chaos, ongoing riots, terrorism, and anarchy. Now is the time to unsheathe your plan for America's restoration. Communicate with candor, Mr. President. Resolve quickly your most distasteful agenda items. At the same time, assure Americans that you will give scrupulous attention to business, the economy, and charity and promise future full employment. Pledge to act with honesty and to reestablish democracy.

Today your enemies are the most numerous and vociferous. Ask God, in His providence, to sustain you and support you in your resolve. Your magnificent successes will carry you to great heights. But since triumphs cannot continue forever, be mindful that setbacks will occur and that there will be conspiracies against you. Take comfort in the words of Machiavelli: "as it often happens in conspiracies that few are not enough and many expose them."

And you have your flatterer in place. Now you are ready to fight crime.

But while you came to power because of crime and corruption, your true importance lies in introducing far-reaching changes that will move the United States to a glorious new ten-generation cycle. Empire!