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War Powers of the President and Congress: Who Holds the Arrows and Olive Branch, by W.T. Reveley

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City Limits. By Paul E. Peterson. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981. Pp. xvi + 286. \$27.50, cloth; \$9.95, paper.)

City Limits is the most significant book about urban politics to appear in a very long time. Paul E. Peterson skillfully blends economic and political analysis in a fashion that brings needed integration and fresh perspectives to the discipline's most fragmented field.

Peterson starts with a simple but often forgotten fact: City governments in the American federal system do not make policy autonomously. Obligated to share the cost of federal and state programs, city governments nonetheless lack the authority and resources of federal and state government. Even their control over local land-use and taxation is limited by economic conditions. According to Peterson, economic circumstances and objectives determine most of the city's political agenda. The most important issues on this agenda have to do with maintaining or improving the city's fiscal base. Hence economic priorities have more influence on most city policies than local power struggles and bargaining. Indeed, improving the local economy is often the premier political issue for cities. Given all of this, city government cannot meaningfully address most issues on the national agenda.

Specifically, the city's fiscal capacity, costs of supplying particular services, and the demand for these services effectively define the limits of city policy in most instances. Peterson's typology of city policies derived from the foregoing notions is bound to inspire much new research and discussion.

Developmental policy, the first type in Peterson's scheme, usually is favored by city officials and the economic elite alike because the goal is to enhance the local fiscal base and attract taxpayers in high-income brackets. Hence an industrial park probably will win general support because it can pay for itself through user charges and because such additions increase demand for locally supplied goods and services, raise property values, and increase city tax revenues. Benefits to the whole community outweigh costs imposed on some residents. In contrast, *redistributive* policy aids low- and nontaxpaying groups at the expense of average and above-average taxpayers. However laudable, generous welfare payments and services for the poor strain the city's fiscal base and thereby undermine the capacity to compete with other municipalities in the ongoing contest to attract new firms. *Allocational* policy may exhibit aspects of both of the foregoing types but is neither wholly developmental nor redistributive. Such housekeeping obligations as police and fire protection and garbage collection do not pay for

themselves in the same way developmental programs do, nor do they confer special benefits on poor residents. Finally, public schooling is complex enough to deserve special treatment, the upshot of which is that school services can be typed as mainly developmental or redistributive, depending on their method of financing and distribution.

Peterson is most interesting when he fits his typology to traditional issues in the urban politics literature. One example is the community power structure debate.

Arguing that pluralists do not see the real correlation between reputed and actual power in developmental policymaking, Peterson breathes new life into the elitist camp by noting its preoccupation with developmental policies. Hence, he is not surprised when respondents asked to name individuals likely to help decide the fate of "major projects" reply with lists of business leaders. Nor is he surprised by the unpublicized process in which such decisions often are made, for decision-makers in competition with other cities do not wish to undermine their bargaining position with premature publicity. In the same vein, he finds Robert Dahl's ruling elite test inappropriate for developmental politics because power struggles over such issues are rare, and, in any event, the relevant test of leadership in these cases is the capacity to persuade rather than crush opposition.

Other traditional issues included in Peterson's rich analysis are ethnic and racial politics, machine-reform conflict, political parties at the local level, unions in city politics, the "un-politics" of air pollution, and federalism. Regrettably space limits preclude more than a partial listing of these topics.

Readers will want to mull over chapter 10's account of the New York fiscal collapse of 1975, and, like so many truly good books, this one concludes with a comparatively weak set of recommendations already overtaken by Reaganomics. In the main, however, Peterson has produced a major work no serious student of urban politics can ignore.

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War Powers of the President and Congress: Who Holds the Arrows and Olive Branch? By W. Taylor Reveley III. (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1981. Pp. xi + 400. \$15.95.)

The war powers have long been a source of heated debate and grave concern springing from the fact that with the war powers we are dealing

with the lives of individuals and the safety of the state. The debate is made more difficult because of the uncertainty and ambiguity of the wording in the Constitution that deals with these powers.

In *War Powers of the President and Congress* W. Taylor Reveley III attempts to unravel the mystery of who holds the war powers by focusing on (p. 2) "the four main influences on the division of authority over war and peace between the President and Congress. . . ." These influences are the text of the Constitution, the purpose of the Constitution's framers and ratifiers, the evolving beliefs regarding the use and meaning of the Constitution, and the actual exercise of the war powers by the president and Congress.

Reveley approaches his topic from a traditional historical perspective. In fact, almost two-thirds of the book deals with the historical background of this struggle for power. Reveley, a lawyer, takes perhaps an overly legalistic view; although he tells us (p. 3) that to understand this problem we must look at the historical, legal, *and* political determinants, his emphasis is on the first two. He pays too little attention to the political dimensions of the conflict.

By relying primarily on the legal and historical aspects of the war power controversy, Reveley presents good portraits of possible interpretations of the constitutional text and the intent of its framers and ratifiers. However, such an historical effort is fraught with problems. The Constitution is ambiguous, the records of the Convention are not always clear, the rationale of the framers and ratifiers is often contradictory. In short, we cannot say with any degree of certainty precisely what that vague document really says.

The legalistic approach is likewise hazardous. As the author points out (p. 8), the courts have rarely been clear or consistent in their interpretation of the war powers. But where the courts have spoken, they have usually come down on the side of presidential aggrandizement.

The author's reliance on the historical/legalistic approach is limiting. He breaks little new ground and does not reinterpret past events in light of any new information or innovative framework. Additionally, by concentrating on the legal and historical determinants, Reveley gives insufficient consideration to the political dynamics of relations between the president and Congress, which often get submerged in excessive legalities.

By far the strongest part of the book is the chapter dealing with the War Powers Resolution of 1973. Here the author breaks out of his legalistic style and displays a great sensitivity to the underlying political factors. Reveley takes us through the intricate political and constitutional maneuverings which led to the passage of the resolution. While he recognizes some of the posi-

tive aspects of the act, he expresses skepticism regarding its applicability.

Reveley concludes, and I think quite correctly, by suggesting that despite the War Powers Resolution or other statutory attempts to codify the war powers of the president and Congress, "Development of the war powers is best left on indirect paths" (p. 263). He very clearly presents the case against an overly constricting codification of the war powers and instead argues for a political solution. Given past history this makes sense, but given the author's first 170 pages, it seems odd. After all, Reveley gives us primarily a historical/legalistic perspective throughout much of this book; then, in the last 60 pages, he seems to minimize constitutional arguments by emphasizing political determinants over legal ones.

This really seems to be two books in one. The first book, the historical treatment of the Constitution, fails to deal with the full scope of determinants which influence the outcomes of conflicts between the president and Congress over the war powers. The second book (the last third of the book) looks at the political dimension of the relationship. Here the author, in his conclusion, acknowledges that primarily politics, not legalities, determine the war powers for the nation. This work would have been much stronger had the authors been more cognizant earlier in his book of the political factors which influence the power struggle. Had Reveley begun from a more explicitly political perspective and carried that theme throughout the book, this would have been a more balanced and thorough treatment of the war powers conflict.

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Energy, Politics and Public Policy. By Walter A. Rosenbaum. (Washington, D.C.: Congressional Quarterly Press, 1981. Pp. vii + 229. \$7.50, paper.)

In *Energy, Politics and Public Policy* Walter Rosenbaum presents a concise, well-written, readable introduction to the political environment of energy policymaking in the United States. The breadth of energy politics topics discussed in the book is comprehensive and well-balanced. Using concrete cases and problems, Rosenbaum successfully integrates the broad issues of policy creation and implementation, the moral concerns of political and economic equity between different segments of contemporary American society and between present and future generations, and the demands and tactics of energy interest groups.

The focus of the book is upon the politics of