

None Dare Call It Careerism

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Let's build a wall, I said last week, between the Office of the President and all these emergency powers our Congress has recklessly given away to the chief executive.

After admittedly "scrambling to figure out" the emergency powers possessed by POTUS, the *Washington Post's* editorial board lamented its discovery "that Congress has delegated a surprising amount of emergency or quasi-emergency power to the executive branch over the years, possibly too much."

Possibly? Well . . . it is the *Post*.

Yet, the paper acknowledges, "The implications for constitutional government are potentially serious."

Why has Congress simply handed away so much power, writing laws with so little accountability?

The federal government currently operates under "31 presidentially declared national emergencies," informs *Post* columnist Charles Lane. "[I]f Trump evades Congress's refusal to fund a border wall by declaring a national emergency at the border . . . it would not be



the first time a president took advantage of the inherent elasticity of the term."

Congress last legislated on emergency presidential powers in 1976, a mere two years after Richard Nixon became the first president in U.S. history to resign in disgrace. Yet, even then, the law left presidential authority largely unchecked, and the term "emergency" completely undefined.

Why has Congress simply handed away so much power, writing laws with so little accountability? Has Congress been saddled with inexperienced rookies? No. There are no term limits. This is the product of *very* experienced career politicians.

Read between the lines.

"Only Congress can reclaim the emergency powers it has granted the president," Lane writes, adding . . . "assuming, of course, that lawmakers want the responsibility back, too."

They don't. They prefer their cushy careers.

This is Common Sense. I'm Paul Jacob.