

Executive-Legislative Relationships and the ‘War on Terror’

Griffith University, Brisbane
18-19 March 2008

Organisers: Dr Riccardo Pelizzo, Griffith University; Professor John Owens, Centre for the Study of Democracy, University of Westminster, UK
Co-sponsored by the ANU Parliamentary Studies Centre

The *aim* of the workshop is to explore the effects of 9/11 and the ensuing “war on terror” (WOT), declared by President George W. Bush in 2001, on legislative-executive relations in six political systems: Australian, Britain, Indonesia, Israel, Italy, Russia, and the United States. Specifically:

- To what extent have the national executive/governments in these systems committed to the US-led global “war on terror” after 9/11 or after subsequent terrorist attacks in Bali, Madrid, London and elsewhere?
- To what extent has executive power increased as a consequence to a commitment to the WOT and the implementations of new national security and anti-terror policies in these systems?
- How effective has the legislature been in each of these systems in scrutinising, overseeing and limiting/checking any growth in executive power resulting from the implementation of new national security and internal security measures?
- Has the effectiveness of parliamentary/legislative scrutiny and oversight of the “war on terror” varied significantly across these different antiterrorism policy areas (e.g. national security policy compared with antiterrorism/internal security policies, immigration policy, and so forth)?

The areas of public policy that will be the focus of investigation will include all of the following:

- Legislation and unilateral executive actions relating to your country’s foreign and national security policy, including new foreign policy commitments and military involvement, especially in Afghanistan and Iraq but elsewhere also;
- New anti-terrorism and internal security measures, including new powers of arrest and surveillance, new definitions of terrorism, changes to immigration policy – many of which counterpose issues of civil liberties/rights versus national security;
- Parliamentary/legislative voting patterns on executive requests for new national security and anti-terrorism/internal security measures, including related funding requests;

- Legislative scrutiny/oversight activity by legislative committees, other legislative units, and individual legislators/MPs; executive responses to legislative requests for information on anti-terrorism/internal security measures; executive responses to request for government ministers/executive officials to appear before parliamentary/legislative committees; and other legislative to new assertions by executives of unilateral powers;
- Executive and legislative responses to relevant court decisions relating to the WOT and anti-terror policy/actions.

Tuesday, March 18

10.00-10.30: Introduction (John Owens, Riccardo Pelizzo)

10.45-12.45: Session 1 . The Anglo-American Experience

John Owens, University of Westminster, UK:

"Congressional Oversight and the US 'War on Terror': Fire Alarms, Police Patrols, and Partisanship".

Mark Shepard, University of Strathclyde, UK

“Executive-Legislative Relations in the UK”

14.30-16.30: Session 2. The Australasian Experience

Ned Schneier, City University of New York, USA:

“Executive Legislative Relations in Indonesia”

John Uhr and Phil Larkin, ANU:

“Executive-Legislative Relations in Australia”

Wednesday, March 19

10.00 – 13.00: Session 3. The European Experience

Reuven Hazan, Hebrew University:

"The Impact of a Prolonged War with Terror on Executive-Legislative Relations: An Israeli Perspective".

Tom Remington, Emory University, USA:

"Putin, the Duma, and the Terrorist Threat."

Riccardo Pelizzo, Griffith University:

“The Italian Case”

14.30-16.30: Session 4: Concluding Roundtable

Further details: Dr Riccardo Pelizzo, Centre for Governance and Public Policy
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