

Has the White House Been Transformed Into a Cozy Nest for Lame Ducks?

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It seems that just yesterday the whole world was discussing a US president that would be forever remembered as a lame duck leader – Barack Obama. Most people still remember that Obama earned this nickname due to his utter inability to complete any large-scale project both in his domestic and foreign policies.

Some may argue that it's too early to say anything about Donald Trump's ability to stay true to his word since he was inaugurated just at the beginning of this year. However, the gap between the speeches of the American president, plagued by a handful of internal contradictions, and the steps that the increasingly powerful Congress is making gets more obvious by the day.

Under these circumstances, one cannot resist the urge to wonder – is Donald Trump really in control of America?

Today, if we look at the decision-making process that shapes the American foreign policy, we may notice that the ideas proposed by the sitting US president do not affect them anymore. Quite unexpectedly, in sharp contradiction with all the existing traditions, Congress is now calling the shots. Has it really managed to run away with the majority of presidential powers?

It's been noted that the unprecedented new sanctions bill that Congress sent to President Donald Trump has been dubbed as a "congressional review" of sanctions. The bill is effectively handcuffing the president in his exercise of sanctions by creating an elaborate mechanism that would prevent him from reviewing any existing sanctions regime. It's safe to say that Congress has put Trump on a very short leash.

As a result of this ballsy move on the part of American legislators, Donald Trump just like all of his successors will not be able to affect the sanctions introduced, enjoying less flexibility on the international stage. In short, American lawmakers along with those people who stand behind them have effectively created a new breed of US Presidents, making all of them "lame ducks" by cutting their wings.

In early July, The Wall Street Journal conducted a large-scale study of the mood within the US State Department, polling a total of 35,000 employees. It turned out that the overwhelming majority of its employees are outraged by the actions of the sitting US president since they believe that he does not know a thing about foreign policy matters and how they work.

We've been hearing a handful of remarks about Trump and his presidential performance too, while some of them being rather insulting. For example, a CNN producer Jimmy Carr has called Trump a "clown" that is not cut out for the job, noting that the CNN thinks that he's mad.

It's been noted that Trump could have reshaped American politics. But when it came down to actual actions, it turned out that he had no serious ideas or policies, nor even the desire to search for them. He just wanted to be president, meeting world leaders, having Oval Office, riding the Air Force One, while delegating the decision making process to a handful of his subordinates.

But the worst mistake he has made so far was the idea to put his signature under the ill-fated sanctions act, since after that point onward he would be unable to somehow improved his public image. He has not just surrendered his powers to Congress but has also claimed that foreign players played a role in his presidential victory, since the act states this explicitly.

However, if President Trump cannot pursue an independent foreign policy, what is the point for foreign leaders to hold meetings with him since he's incapable to change anything anyway? A lame duck indeed.

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