



Written by [Bob Adelman](#) on January 13, 2016

“Audacious Executive Actions” Coming, Promises Obama’s Chief of Staff

Missing from the president’s State of the Union message last night was any reiteration of his promise to “go it alone” if Congress wouldn’t pass legislation friendly to his radical agenda. Some thought that in so doing he might be acknowledging his impotence during his last year in office.

On Wednesday Obama’s chief of staff, Denis McDonough (shown), [disabused any suggestion](#) that he was backing away from imposing unilateral executive action. Speaking to reporters, McDonough imperially announced:



We’ll do audacious executive action over the course of the rest of the year. I’m confident of that....

We do want to make sure that the executive actions we undertake are not left hanging out there, subject to Congress undoing them.

Missing was any reference to constitutional powers granted to the executive branch to do any such thing. Article I, Section I grants all lawmaking powers to the legislative branch, not to the executive branch:

All legislative powers herein granted shall be vested in a Congress of the United States, which shall consist of a Senate and House of Representatives.

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Under Article II, Section III the president is required to “take care that the Laws [passed by the Legislative Branch] be faithfully executed.”

Interestingly, that article also gives the president the power “to give to the Congress Information of the State of the Union, and recommend to their consideration such measures as he shall judge necessary and expedient.”

Nowhere is the president given the powers to ignore either the Congress or the Constitution. Instead, Article II, Section I provides this:

Before he enters on the execution of his office, he shall take the following oath or affirmation — “I do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will faithfully execute the Office of the President of the United States and will, to the best of my ability, preserve, protect and defend the Constitution of the United States.

By allowing his chief of staff to announce that he will in fact be acting on his own to complete his agenda, Obama is performing a “trifecta” — a three-fold abrogation of the very founding document on which the Republic rests.

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