



## Trump Picks a “Czar” — Should Such a Position Exist in a Republic?

Thomas Homan (shown) has been picked by President Trump to serve as his “border czar.” Homan is coming out of retirement — having most recently led the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement agency as acting director. Homan is an enthusiastic public supporter of Trump’s efforts to tackle the surge of illegal immigration into the United States.



“Tom Homan’s coming back,” Trump said in an interview with *Fox and Friends* on Friday. Speaking by phone, the president said, “He’s going to be very much involved with the border.... He’ll be a border czar, reporting directly to me.”

Trump has been considering the creation of the post for some time, but recent shake-ups at the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) have delayed implementation of the plan. Another delay was due to resolving the question of whether the position of “czar” should work out of the White house — coordinating the border-control efforts with Homeland Security, the Department of Justice, and the Department of Health and Human Services — or be placed inside Homeland Security.

As all three of those departments have to deal with immigration issues, Trump has opted to have the “czar” work directly for him.

A question that should have been asked, by somebody inside the Trump administration, is why title the person a “czar”?

After all, a czar was the title of the absolute monarch of the old Russian Empire. The term is derived from the Roman “caesar,” another absolute ruler. The Russian rulers considered themselves the legitimate successors of the Byzantine emperors, whose empire was destroyed by the Ottoman Turks in 1453. And, since the Byzantine emperors considered themselves the true successors of the original Roman Empire, the Russians argued that they could then trace their title of czar back to the days of the caesars, including such despotic dictators as Caligula, Nero, and Domitian.

All of this seems antithetical to the idea of republican government. George Washington basically turned down the opportunity to be a king in 1782, telling his officers at Newburg, New York, that they had not fought a war for independence only to reestablish a monarchy in America.

Americans clearly understood this principle — that we are a republic, not a monarchy — for decades. Then, when Franklin Roosevelt became president in 1933, he used the excuse of the Great Depression to burst out of the chains of the Constitution, arguing that he needed extraordinary powers to “fight” the Depression. He appointed some administrators, who could basically ignore many constitutional restrictions, even calling them “dictators.” Eventually, that term was dropped when the term “dictator”



Written by [Steve Byas](#) on June 15, 2019

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became associated with Adolf Hitler and Benito Mussolini, and understandably unpopular.

Then, during the 1970s, due to the so-called energy crisis, President Richard Nixon made John Love the director of the Office of Energy Policy in 1971, referring to him as the “energy czar.” President Gerald Ford continued the practice, but after the Department of Energy was created while Jimmy Carter was president, the term fell out of fashion.

President Barack Obama revived the term in 2008, when, as president-elect, he said he would make Carol Browner his assistant for Energy and Climate Change, and referred to her as a czar. (Which should tell us something about the goals of the crowd that wants to use the climate change horse to ride for greater government powers over the economy and even our personal lives.) When she left the Obama administration in 2011, the term fell out of use again.

It should have been buried forever, but now Trump has resurrected the anti-republican term.

Of course, these “czars” all have had more official titles (just like FDR’s “dictators”), and some might argue that it is not something to worry about. But, handing out such authoritarian titles in a republic should not be tolerated. It adds to the perception that our own government officials are our masters, and we are their subjects, rather than citizens. In order to solve various problems — such as a severe economic depression, a contrived energy crisis, or the fear of human-caused “global warming” — many are willing to give up their liberties to government. Others will surrender their constitutionally protected rights out of fear of crime or terrorism.

Illegal immigration is a serious problem for America. Left uncontrolled, we will be overwhelmed by poor immigrants from lesser-developed countries, the majority of whom will vote for candidates of the Left, who will move us closer to the complete transformation of the country from a republic to a socialist state.

But let’s dispense with such terms as “dictator” and “czar” for those put in charge of dealing with this or any other serious matter — and let’s understand that these people are our servants, not our masters. This is a republic.

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