

ROLES OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

CHIEF OF STATE

In this role, the President is a symbolic leader of our country. He performs many ceremonial duties.

As chief of state, the President:

- entertains foreign leaders with formal dinners
- promotes worthy causes (such as posing with the March of Dimes poster child)
- recognizes citizens who have made outstanding contributions to their community or nation
- bestows medals on military heroes
- throws out the first pitch at baseball games
- hosts the White House Easter Egg Roll

CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Under the Constitution, the President is the Chief Executive of the United States. In this role, the President actually runs our government. He makes sure that laws are enforced, appoints important officials, grants reprieves and pardons, issues Executive Orders, and coordinates the efforts of over 150 departments and agencies. Some of the people who help him carry out these duties are his Cabinet (13 department heads) and the White House Executive Office Staff.

COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF

The President is head of all the military forces. He is responsible for raising, training, supervising, and deploying all the defense forces. He reviews the troops and often awards service medals. The President meets with military officers, as well as civilian national security advisors.

CHIEF DIPLOMAT

The President is the leader, initiator, and guide of our foreign policy. He consults with leaders of foreign countries, performs ceremonial duties with foreign leaders and makes decisions for our country affecting our foreign affairs.

Some duties are:

- appoints the Ambassador to the United Nations who speaks for the United States
- negotiates treaties or agreements with other countries
- travels to other countries around the world where his words reflect the United States' position and ideas on foreign affairs

LEGISLATIVE LEADER

He recommends laws while advising and guiding the Congress in its lawmaking activities. Each year in January as legislative leader, the President gives his State of the Union Address to a joint session of Congress. This speech evaluates the country's domestic and foreign position and suggests what the President would like to accomplish in the next year. Even after legislation (a bill which passes both houses of Congress), the bill does not become law until the President signs it.

LEADER OF HIS POLITICAL PARTY

The President is the leader of his own political party as long as he is President. The party helps to keep him informed on the needs of the nation and the reactions of the citizens to his programs. Because he is the leader of his party, the President frequently campaigns for or endorses other candidates from his own party who are running for office.