

## BOOK NOTE

*National Security and Double Government*, by Michael J. Glennon. Oxford Univ. Press, 2014. Pp. 257. \$29.95 (hardcover).

In *National Security and Double Government*, Michael J. Glennon boldly articulates what many Americans have already come to suspect: our country's most important national security decisions are no longer made by the President, Congress, or the Judiciary. In reality, such interests are now actually decided and driven by thousands of military, intelligence, and executive personnel who are neither elected by nor accountable to the American public.<sup>1</sup> According to the Glennon, this amorphous network of individuals has stealthily come to puppeteer government security policy, both domestically and abroad, and operates according to its own terms.

Glennon proposes that a phenomenon of “double government” has emerged in the United States in the decades since WWII. This government is made up of two institutions.<sup>2</sup> The first institution is the classic “Madisonian” division of government crafted by our Founding Fathers: the legislative, executive, and judicial branches. The second is the “Trumanite” network of agents and contractors described above that fill the ranks of agencies and divisions like the National Security Agency, the Central Intelligence Agency, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court. Glennon explains that the Madisonian structure has been hollowed out due to organizational propensities, necessity for government workers to specialize, and pressures to sometimes act extraconstitutionally in order to protect the nation from external threats. According to him, double government serves as the primary reason why there appears to be almost no change in national security policy from one administration to the next, regardless of partisanship and the individuals in office.<sup>3</sup>

Although the Trumanite network can perhaps better provide the specialized skill and research needed for governance, it also lacks accountability and transparency and endangers the pillars of democracy that this country was built upon. Glennon warns that

---

1. MICHAEL J. GLENNON, NATIONAL SECURITY AND DOUBLE GOVERNMENT 39–65 (2014).

2. *Id.* at 11–13.

3. *Id.* at 58–65.

this chaotic and complex double government can fall into crisis at any moment, especially in the event of a massive national security breach.<sup>4</sup> He cautions that a suspicious and resentful public could turn away from government and obstruct its operations in the future. There may be more young Edward Snowdens at the helm ready to reveal secrets about intrusive state surveillance programs and inefficient and illegal projects and policies.

Glennon's theory of double government in the United States is based on a similar institutional erosion that has taken place in Great Britain. There, the "dignified" establishment of the monarchy and the House of Lords has been eclipsed by the "efficient" bureaucracy of the House of Commons, the Cabinet, and the Prime Minister.<sup>5</sup> The imperial crown has developed into a hollow shell revered by the people, but lacking the power to govern. To prevent the attrition of our Madisonian institutions, Glennon suggests two possible solutions.<sup>6</sup> First, he proposes various ways to strengthen systematic checks on the Trumanite network. Second, he discusses the advantages and drawbacks of the government actively cultivating civic virtue and electoral participation.

*National Security and Double Government* is a well-written and researched work. The book's abundance of notes may be slightly distracting for the casual reader. Nevertheless, the author eloquently states his case with support from numerous examples, quotes, and case studies from past political, military, and judicial personnel. Overall, this book provides an important and timely contribution to the current political discourse. Glennon clearly spells out the dangers posed by the existence of an unfettered national double government. His book questions whether Americans will stand by and allow a shadowy network of unknown individuals to pull the levers, unrestrained, on some of the most important national security issues of this century.

Michael J. Glennon is a Professor of International Law at the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University. Before entering academia, he was the Legal Counsel to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. Mr. Glennon has published and co-authored several books on the topics of national security and foreign relations.

---

4. *Id.* at 95–98.

5. *Id.* at 5.

6. *Id.* at 98–112.