

Brexit: Could it happen in the United States?

Could Brexit happen in the United States? Could we see something similar on this side of the Pond?

Imagine the imperialism of the European Parliament and then place it beside the imperialism of the Federal Government. Imagine the way in which the European Court crushes the laws of the member states of the European Union and then compare it with the manner in which the U.S. Supreme Court crushes the laws of its member states. Dare we hope, should we hope, that the example set by Britain should be followed by those dissident states within the USA which are being routinely trodden under foot by a burgeoning government and a bullying Supreme Court? Is it feasible that individual states could hold referenda on whether to remain in a Union from which they feel increasingly alienated?

The problem is, of course, that the very concept of secession is overshadowed by the issue of states' rights in relation to the Civil War, or the War Between the States. In consequence, many would balk at the secessionist option, even if, in terms of subsidiarity, it is a philosophically bona fide position.

There is, however, another way of fighting back against the inexorable centralization of power by the Federal Government and Supreme Court, and that's the solution being put forward by the Convention of States (conventionofstates.com). This much needed initiative seeks to confront the problem of the undemocratic usurpation of power by over-sized central government and to work actively towards its reversal. Its method is to return to the vision of the founding fathers who, having foreseen the problem, wrote Article V of the Constitution as a remedy for the disease of political centralization. This article of the Constitution states

specifically that “on the application of the legislatures of two thirds of the several states, [Congress] shall call a convention for proposing amendments [to the Constitution], which, in either case, shall be valid to all intents and purposes, as part of this Constitution, when ratified by the legislatures of three fourths of the several states”.

The Convention of States is, therefore, working to get the legislatures of thirty-four of the states to call on Congress to call a convention, designed to change the constitution in ways which ensure the protection of the sovereign rights of member states and which limit the power of the Federal Government and the Supreme Court. As such, the Convention of States might be our best hope to right the sinking ship. It has the potential to correct or dramatically improve many of the abuses in our current system. Using specific legal rewording of some amendments, to ensure proper interpretation, and adding new amendments which protect states’ rights from federal infringement, it might indeed be possible to change the current tyrannical course we are on.

The whole point of the representative republic, as envisioned by the founders and as championed by the Convention of States, is the spreading of power between the states and even within the states to keep the solutions and the problems as local as possible, thereby promoting the greatest amount of freedom to the people governed.

At present, we have a political system which concentrates increasing amounts of power into fewer and fewer hands. It is government of the people, by the privileged few for the privileged few. This is intolerable. The solution is to bring democracy back to the people by bringing it back to where the people actually live, their local areas, and away from centers of power, hundreds or even thousands of miles from where they live, which are unresponsive to their needs and desires. Democracy requires the restitution of local government. The Convention of States might be the way of making this happen.

Returning to the original question: Could Brexit happen in the United States? Could states such as Texas seek a similar solution? Could Texas demand Texit? Perhaps.

It seems, however, that the United States, in the Convention of States, has another option. If two-thirds of state legislatures can be persuaded to call such a Convention, as is their right under Article V of the Constitution, we might yet see Big Brother cut down to size. All who value freedom and true democracy will be encouraged by such a possibility.