

Could “Calexit” Create a Left-Right Confederacy?

By James Ronald Kennedy on Oct 22, 2018



“Politics makes for strange bedfellows.” The 2016 Presidential election of Donald Trump produced the wedding of Bible Belt social conservatives and a flamboyant New York Billionaire with a legitimately questionable history of less than “Christian” moral social values. But the wedding of these “strange bedfellows” appears to be working out quite well—at least for the time being. As presidential politics swing from the extreme left (Obama) to the extreme right (Trump), each political camp begins to make a similar complaint—a complaint about what each camp (left or right) views as a deliberate encroachment upon their basic rights as Americans. Conservative and/or Tea Party types on the right or progressives and/or Resistance types on the left both have similar complaints. When “their” party is out of power, they both view the incumbent President to be the very essence of evil. They view the incumbent as an immediate and dangerous threat to their concept of “their” country. Today, while liberals/progressives are vocally and at times violently denouncing Trump’s contemporary America—Conservatives can recall how Obama would declare: “That’s not who we are!” while thinking to ourselves: “*You (Obama) do not represent who we are!*” Under the Trump Administration, the left is leading the fight against the power of the White House. During the Obama Administration, the right was fighting the power of the White House—hampered, of course, by establishment Republicans whose primary goal was to stay in office while maintaining the status-quo that provides the establishment types (Democrats and Republicans) with immense power, perks, and privileges.

America’s left/right political dividing line has grown into a major fault-line that threatens to divide the U.S.A. in a fashion unseen since the late 1860s and early 1861. Spokespersons on the left often warn of a coming “Civil War.” A recent article in the *New York Post* by Frank Buckley warned, “Maybe we should stare the possibility of a breakup in its face.”^[1] This left/right fault-line began to crack with the presidential election of George W. Bush in 2001 and continued to widen throughout his two terms and well into Obamas’ following two terms. With Trump’s election, the fault-line ruptured and became a gaping political, philosophical, and ideological chasm which may never be bridged—even if one assumes that such a radical chasm should be bridged.

Interestingly enough, there are solutions to this contemporary American ideological divide, but very few Americans are capable of understanding the efficacy of this American solution.

Nullification and secession are American political principles which could peacefully resolve this ideological divide. But thanks to over a century and a half of slanderous anti-South propaganda that has successfully branded these principles with treason, the defense of slavery and/or white supremacy racism—most Americans reject out-of-hand these honorable American political principles. Those who understand the true history of the Confederacy States of America—as opposed to the victor’s biased and self-congratulatory narrative—can see the irony of today’s left as they knowingly and unknowingly embrace the principles of nullification and secession.

The right of a sovereign state within a Republic of Sovereign States to nullify federal laws that are not pursuant to the Constitution was an accepted fact in the American Republic as originally established by the Constitution of 1787-8. Alexander Hamilton, the darling of Wall Street’s crony capitalists, a High Federalist who desired to see the establishment of a strong, vigorous, and centralized federal government, none-the-less endorsed the American principle that Sovereign States could nullify unconstitutional acts of the federal government noting, in Federalist Number 33:

But it will not follow from this doctrine that acts of the larger society [Federal] which are *not pursuant* to its constitutional powers, but which are invasions of the residuary authorities of the smaller societies [States], will become the supreme law of the land. These will be merely acts of usurpation and will deserve to be treated as such.

It will not, I presume, have escaped observation, that it [the supremacy clause of the Constitution] *expressly* confines this supremacy to laws made *pursuant to the Constitution*.[\[2\]](#)

This leaves open the question of who is the final judge as to whether the federal government is acting “pursuant to the Constitution?” Is it logical to allow the very federal government accused of violating the Constitution to be the final judge whether it is acting appropriately, or should the individual states who established and gave the federal government its power be the final judge whether its rights are being violated by its agent—the federal government? To allow the federal government to be the final judge of the limits to its powers under the Constitution would reduce the Constitution to a mere parchment barricade.

Recognizing that no part of a constitution is self-enforcing, John C. Calhoun offered the means by which the minority party—for example, blue states under Trump or red states under Obama—could enforce the constitutional restrictions on the federal government and thereby protect its rights against an aggressive majority. He designated it a “concurrent majority” by which each party is allowed a negative, within their specific state, on the acts of the other.

The concurrent majority is...to give to each interest or portion of the community a negative on the others. It is this mutual negative among its various conflicting interests, which invests each with the power of protecting itself—and places the rights and safety of each, where only they can be securely placed, under its own guardianship.[\[3\]](#)

Without acknowledging it, the contemporary left has used this “concurrent majority” or more appropriately “state nullification” to ignore federal laws within their specific states—primarily as it relates to federal marijuana laws and federal immigration laws. If *Roe v. Wade* is overturned by

a future Federal Supreme Court, these same states will almost certainly nullify any subsequent federal laws restricting abortion—should such federal laws be adopted by Congress. Nullification seems to be all the rage on the left! And now, with Calexit,[\[4\]](#) it seems that the left has suddenly fallen in love with the American principle of secession.

As former President Jefferson Davis (C.S.A.) explained nullification and secession are different in application, but both principles are based upon the fact of State Sovereignty. Nullification is a constitutional technique used to *maintain* the Union when opposing interests within the Republic of Sovereign States come into irreconcilable conflict. Secession is the assertion of the inalienable right of a people to change their government whenever the existing government ceases to protect the interests of the people within a given political society.[\[5\]](#) Secession is used to *maintain* liberty and freedom of an oppressed people. Secession in the United States is based firmly upon principles announced in the 1776 Joint Declaration of Independence—when the British colonies in North America declared their individual independence by seceding from the indivisible British Empire. In so doing, each became a Sovereign State. As the Declaration of Independence explained to the world, they became, “...Free and independent States....” Note: they became sovereign states—plural—not an independent state—singular—not an aggregate of peoples united together under one supreme government. Calexit is an attempt to renew the American principle of secession as declared in the Declaration of Independence. The principle or right of secession may be suppressed by the application of bloody bayonets, but the principle of self-determination and self-government is an inalienable right and therefore can never be destroyed. Rivers of blood may be drawn to suppress this precious right, but it cannot drown this inalienable right. As Jefferson Davis noted, “The alternative to secession is coercion.” [\[6\]](#) But even the coercion of massed, bloody, Yankee bayonets cannot extinguish an inalienable right! The right remains, and even Yankees in modern day California may claim it. The right of self-determination is not a Southern thing, it is a universal human right.

For a Southern nationalist, it is amusing to observe the left complaining about the unfair treatment they receive from the Trump Administration without ever realizing that they are complaining about what they perceive as an abuse of governmental powers, which is the same complaint that conservatives used against the Obama Administration! Both are correct in that their values are being crushed by the opposing party. Such a situation is succinctly described by an old homespun saying, “It all depends on whose ox is being gored!” The American left does not care if it is the right’s interests that are being oppressed by an Obama, while the American right does not see any danger when the left’s interests are being oppressed by a Reagan, a Bush or a Trump. It is not necessarily a factor of evil, it is in fact part of our human nature. We usually do not consider the danger posed to us when the interests of others—especially our political opponents—are oppressed. We tend to be complacent when our specific interests are not directly endangered. Calhoun noted that while man is created for the social state, he is so constituted as to:

feel more intensely what affects him directly, than what affects him indirectly through others; or, to express it differently, he is so constituted, that his direct or individual affections are stronger than his sympathetic or social feelings.[\[7\]](#)

...our nature which makes us feel more intensely what affects us directly than what affects us indirectly through others, necessarily leads to conflict between individuals...hence, the tendency to a universal state of conflict...[8]

Nullification and secession allow our neighbor to protect his “ox,” while our “ox” is secure. The truth is that, in a Republic, all “oxen” are endangered whenever the federal government assumes the right to “gore our neighbor’s ox.” Perhaps Calexit will provide ideologues of both left and right an occasion to stop to consider the possibility of the mutual benefits of nullification and secession—it is certainly better than the alternative of a new Civil War. Perhaps only Southerners who understand the truth about Southern secession and the horrors inflicted upon our people by the Northern invader are capable of understanding this harsh reality.

[1] <https://nypost.com/2018/10/12/can-our-modern-house-divided-remain-one-nation/> accessed 10/14/2018.

[2] *The Federalist, Great Books of the Western World*, Robert M. Hutchins, Ed. (The University of Chicago:1952), 108-9.

[3] Calhoun, John C., *A Disquisition on Government* in *The Works of John C. Calhoun*, Vol I. (Appleton & Co., New York, 1851), 35.

[4] California secession movement.

[5] Davis, Jefferson, *The Rise and Fall of the Confederate Government*, Vol. 1 (1881, William Mayes Coast, Nashville, TN: circa 1980), 184.

[6] Davis, 177.

[7] Calhoun, *A Disquisition on Government*, 3.

[8] Calhoun, *A Disquisition on Government*, 4.

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