

Vermont Passes Resolution To Secede From The US

By Greg Szymanski

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The members of a peaceful freedom-fighting group want no part of neo-cons running the imperialistic U.S. government. Plan to secede from the U.S. gaining momentum in the fiercely independent Green Mountain state.

The neo-con band of criminals running Washington, trampling on civil rights at home and invading countries at will overseas, has led a large group of strong-minded Vermont freedom-fighters with no choice but to secede from the United States.

And last Friday at the state capital building in Montpelier, a historic independence convention was held, the first of its kind in the United States since May 20, 1861, when North Carolina decided to leave the Union.

A packed House Chamber in the Vermont statehouse, with more than 400 gathered, started the daylong secession convention with a speech by keynote James Howard Kunstler, author of *The Long Emergency*, and ended with a resolution passed to secede from the United States.

Most people think of secession as impossible if not treasonous, but the concept is deeply rooted in the Declaration of Independence, reminding us that "Whenever any form of government becomes destructive, it is the Right of the People to alter or abolish it and to institute new government."

And with the neo-con takeover of Washington, including all its branches of government that transforming America into a one-party dictatorship, that's exactly what the resolution passed in Vermont seeks to do by members of grassroots movement growing in numbers daily.

Although the resolution is the first step in the long process that needs support from the state legislators - as well as an officially recognized convention - the grass roots group called the Second Vermont Republic passed the following citizen's resolution:

"Be it resolved that the state of Vermont peacefully and democratically free itself from the United States of America and return to its natural status as an independent republic as it was between January 15, 1777 and March 4, 1791."

Even though critics give the secession group a snowball's chance in hell, organizers are firmly convinced in the present-day tyrannical political climate secession will not only succeed but will prosper.

This could only happen in Vermont where people are still fiercely independent and fed up with the course the American government is taking," said Thomas Naylor, the head of the group calling itself the Second Republic of Vermont. "We have a lot going for us and if you think about it, we have a lot in common with Poland's Solidarity movement, who many said would never succeed.

"But Poland did get its freedom, mainly because it was a country liked around the

world, sort of like how people in America feel about Vermont. When people think of Vermont, they have a warm and fuzzy feeling, an image of black and white Holstein cows and beautiful scenery. I can also tell you there is now closet support in the legislature now and we are serious about getting the support needed to secede from the United States.,

Naylor, a former Duke University economics professor, said from his Vermont home this week that statewide independence is really a euphemism for secession, adding Vermont also will seek to join the group of Unrepresented Nations similar to the Lakota Indians and other international indigenous people.

"Secession is one of the most politically charged words in America, thanks to Abraham Lincoln," said Naylor, adding he had been writing about secession for the better part of 10 years but the movement picked up tremendous steam after 9/11. "Secession really combines a radical act of rebellion grounded in fear and anger with a positive vision for the future.

"It represents an act of faith that the new will be better than the old. The decision to secede necessarily involves a very personal, painful four-step decision process. It first involves denunciation that the United States has lost its moral authority and is unsustainable, ungovernable and unfixable. Second, there is disengagement or admitting I don't want to go down with the Titanic. Third, there is demystification that secession really is a viable option constitutionally, politically and economically. And finally, defiance, saying I personally want to help take Vermont back from big business, big markets and big government and I want to do so peacefully.,"

What started out as Naylor's little fantasy to have an independent country made up of Vermont, New Hampshire and Maine, has already grown from a small group of 36 several years ago to a packed House Chamber in the state's capital. Claiming to have a membership of 160 as of last April, Naylor said the numbers have doubled or even tripled.

"I'm getting calls from all over the country supporting our movement," said Naylor. "Although there are more than 20 states with some kind of secession movement, Alaska and Hawaii being the best examples, I think Vermont really has the best chance at succeeding at seceding."

Besides holding the Vermont independence convention in Montpelier, the smallest state capital city in the United States, it also has the reputation as being the most fiercely independent and anti- big business, being the only one not allowing a McDonald's in the entire country.

"First and foremost, we want out of the United States. It's not just an anti-Bush statement and if Kerry was elected, we still would have wanted out," said Naylor. "The reality is that we have a one party system in this country, called the Republican party, that is owned and operated and controlled by corporate America. So it's not just a Bush protest, but a protest against the Empire.

Although many critics have said the mighty U.S. would not stand for Vermont's secession, Naylor as well as others disagree, including Jim Hogue, a talk show host on Vermont Public radio.

"There's nothing they would want here. There's no oil, just mountains. We're just not important enough. We're funny, we're small and we're peaceful," said Hogue several months ago in an article in the Montreal Gazette.

With most Vermont politicians, including the Congressional delegation, ignoring the grassroots secession movement or just laughing it off as good theatre, Vermont's Lt. Gov., Brian Dubie, has weighed in on the issue, giving it a certain amount of merit but stopping short of outright support.

"I really salute their energy and passion," he said in a local press interview. "we have an obligation to think of what is in our best interest as a state and for the people of our state, even as we approach federal and national issues."

Besides Naylor and Kuntsler, others who spoke at the Oct. 28 independence convention included Professor Frank Bryan of the University of Vermont; Kirkpatrick Sale, author of Human Scale; J. Kevin Graffagnino, executive director of the Vermont Historical Society; Professor Eric Davis, Middlebury College; Shay Totten, editor of the Vermont Guardian; and Dr. Rob Williams of Champlain College.

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