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MailOnline

Texas could bid for independence, says Governor as fury over Obama's spending rises

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- **'We ARE racists - we are members of the human race,' says protest leader**

The governor of Texas has suggested that his state could secede from the Union after accusing the federal government of strangling Americans with taxation and debt.

Governor Rick Perry whipped his 'patriotic' supporters into a frenzy during tax protests yesterday, with many waving flags and shouting 'Secede!'

He later backtracked, telling reporters later that there was 'absolutely no reason to dissolve [the Union]'.



'How do you like Change so far?': Texan governor Rick Perry, foreground, threatens Texan independence at the 'Don't Mess with Texas' tea party protest yesterday



Thousands rally at the Tennessee State Capitol at the Tax Day Tea Party in Nashville, Tennessee yesterday as the backlash against Mr Obama's federal spending grows

Despite his pullback, Mr Perry's star was rising in conservative America yesterday as right-wing supporters struggling for a voice under Mr Obama found a new icon.

Under Mr Perry, Texas has become the point of origin for the growing right-wing storm.

Conservative politicians and talk show hosts coordinated 'tea party' protests across the country to coincide with the deadline for federal income tax yesterday. Thousands attended.

'We will be called haters, and we are,' Phillip Dennis, a Texan resident, told one such rally.

'We are haters of big-spending politicians. We will be called racists, and we are – we are members of the human race,' he said as the silent crowd broke out into cheers.

Later he added: 'The conservative sleeping giant is awake. He is awake, and he is hungry... We will not go gently into socialism – at least not here in Texas.'

The protests imitated the original Boston Tea Party of 1773, when colonists threw three shiploads of taxed tea into Boston Harbour in protest against the British government under the slogan 'No taxation without representation'.

They took place in Austin and Fort Worth, Texas, as well as Nashville, Chicago and Washington.

Mr Perry - speaking in Fort Worth - deliberately called the crowd 'patriots' instead of 'right-wing extremists', as their critics have termed them.

An unpublished report by the Department of Homeland Security this week warned that the country faces a growing threat from right-wing extremists angry at the state of economy and the election of a black president.

Yesterday Mr Perry said if his supporters were right-wing extremists then 'I'm right there with you'.

He demanded Washington cut spending and taxes - and called on the nation's leaders to reread the Constitution.

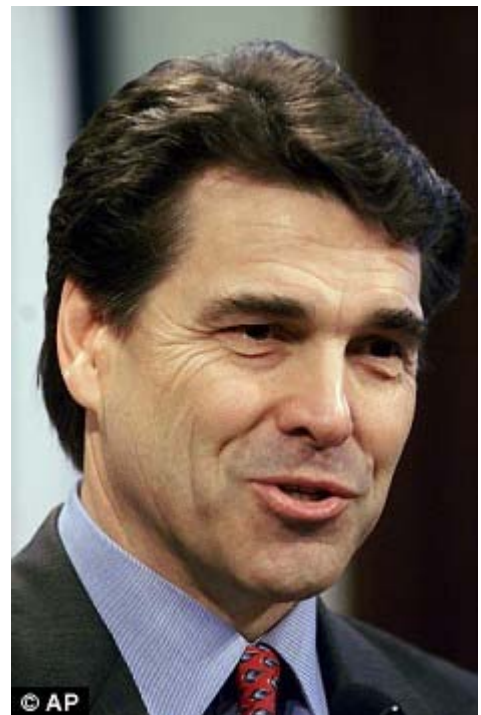
'They're overturning the rights we had one by one, making choices that would leave our founding fathers scratching their heads,' he said.

In Austin, Mr Perry told the roaring crowd that the Texan economy is in relatively good shape compared to the 'federal budget mess'.

Supporters waved flags and signs blasting the president as as 'Obama: Liar in Chief'.

Another punned on his campaign slogan promising change: 'I'll Keep My Guns and Money. You Can Keep the Change'.

One placard said, 'Stop Obama's Socialism', while another read, 'Some Pirates Are in America'.



'But there's no reason to dissolve the Union': Rick Perry, who quickly backtracked over his fiery words yesterday (file photo)

It showed photographs of Mr Obama, U.S. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid wearing pirate hats.



President Barack Obama, followed by unnamed taxpayers, arrives at the White House to speak about the U.S. tax code yesterday



Obama backlash: Protesters in Denver, Colorado yesterday

The protests came as tax forms showed today that Mr Obama and his wife Michelle took home a combined income of more than \$2.5million last year.

Texas - the home of former U.S. president George Bush - remained staunchly Republican during Mr Obama's election, stubbornly voting for John McCain even as other Republican strongholds fell.

Mr Obama has authorised trillions in taxpayers' money to be spent in a desperate attempt to lift America out of a recession that has spread across the globe.

The Dallas Morning News noted that Mr Obama's popularity ratings remain high - and that a national Gallup poll released earlier this week showed that 48 per cent of Americans believe the amount they pay in federal income taxes is 'about right'.



Protesters in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania invoked the Boston Tea Party of 1773 as they stood in the rain yesterday

That is one of the highest percentages since the annual poll began in 1956.

But the wave of government spending has unnerved Republicans - especially the party's hardcore in Texas, where many accuse the party of not being conservative enough.

Mr Perry has already refused \$550million in federal economic stimulus money slated to help Texas' unemployment trust fund.

He claimed that the money would come with strings attached that left Texans paying the bill once the federal funds ran out.

Speaking to reporters later, he added that if the federal government continues to squeeze Texans, they could strike back with secession.

However he rushed to add that he saw no reason why Texas would do that.



More protesters in Tennessee. Protests were also held in Washington, Chicago and Boston, loosely inspired by the 1773 Boston Tea Party rebellion against British colonial taxes

'There's a lot of different scenarios,' he was quoted as saying.

'We've got a great union. There's absolutely no reason to dissolve it.

'But if Washington continues to thumb their nose at the American people, you know, who knows what might come out of that.

spending-rises.html

- A banner for California tourism. It features the word "california" in a stylized font at the top left, with "FIND YOURSELF HERE" underneath. The main text reads "Win 1 of 4 Fantastic Holidays to California". At the bottom, it says "Discover your California" followed by a yellow arrow pointing to "CLICK HERE >>". The background shows a scenic view of a coastline with trees and water.
[CLICK HERE >>](#)
- A banner for a policing pledge. It shows a police officer in uniform on the left and a woman in a light-colored jacket on the right. The text says "Find out more about the Policing Pledge". Below this, it says "JUSTICE SEEN JUSTICE DONE" in a stylized font. At the bottom, it says "CLICK HERE >>".
[CLICK HERE >>](#)
- A banner for a £5000 prize. It features the text "YOUR CHANCE TO WIN £5000 TOWARDS YOUR ESSENTIAL BILLS" in large, bold letters. To the right of the text is an image of a pair of red boxing gloves. At the bottom left, it says "Lloyds TSB MailOnline". At the bottom right, it says "CLICK HERE >>".
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