



# P E R S P E C T I V E S

by **Rinaldo S. Brutoco**

*Rinaldo S. Brutoco is the Founding President and CEO of the Santa Barbara-based World Business Academy and co-founder of JUST Capital. He's a serial entrepreneur, executive, author, radio host, and futurist who's published on the role of business in relation to pressing moral, environmental, and social concerns for over 35 years.*



## **Marjorie Taylor Greene – Leaving???**

*“Irreconcilable differences?”*

Congresswoman Marjorie Taylor Greene from Georgia is one of the wackier folks ever elected to the House of Representatives. Don't take my word for it: Republican arch-conservative Congresswoman Liz Cheney has said that Greene's thoughts and words are “sheer lunacy”. Another Republican, Rep. Peter Meijer of Michigan, said her words were “beyond reprehensible”. Not to be restricted to atrocious Nazi references, her comments on the existence of “Jewish space lasers” was enough to have Democratic Rep. Adam Schiff (normally an exceptionally mild-mannered fellow) remark that she is “legitimately nuts”.

Originally last May, and then again, this October, Greene seriously asked, “Should America get a divorce?” Specifically, she is raising the question of whether the “Red States” ought to secede from the Union. You may recall the last time this idea was seriously entertained was on April 12, 1861, when Confederates attacked Fort Sumter in Charleston, South Carolina. We all know how bad the outcome of that decision was. The problem, however, in that instance (which launched the American Civil War) was the violence associated with the act of wanting to leave the Union. All were compelled to utilize force to defend themselves – the Northerners who had been attacked, and the Southerners who felt they needed to violently overthrow the US Government in order to hang on to their slaves, which were the basis of the entire economy and sociology of the South. Could we have hoped for a different, non-violent, reaction if the South chose a cleverer way to secede and the North was wise enough to let them?

Ben Shapiro, one of the most prominent conservative media personalities, received millions in arch-conservative right-wing support to co-found The Daily Wire in 2015. That electronic “news” service has since become the most widely published conservative site on Facebook. Looking at the difficulty of rolling back the Federal government to permit states to resume control over themselves, Shapiro has observed it would require a “chainsaw” approach to dismantle the Union in order to prohibit it from protecting the rights of minorities. Quite accurately, he points out the slim chance of such a fundamental alteration to the Nation utilizing procedures contained within the US Constitution itself (i.e., some states could resume slavery, could ban abortion, could write revisionist history, and ultimately claim that they'd won the Civil War after all). Shapiro argues that some sort of “separation” of the States is inevitable, and that “our best hope” is a “friendly separation” rather than the violent civil war he sees coming.

The comedian Bill Maher recently quoted an unspecified news source in Alabama that found 66 percent of Republicans in the South would support secession to join a new Confederacy. And, in a similar vein, Oklahoma News Channel 4 reported 41 percent of Biden voters want to split the US up as well!

Those numbers are sufficient to at least ask the question: Why not let those states that want to leave do so without violence?

As for the states who remain, imagine how happy Californians would be to know that all elections going forward would be fair and free; that we could spend as much as we needed to immediately address the worst ravages of climate change; that our vaccination rates would be so high that Covid would at last come under control; that our schools could teach real history and not some sanitized version that omits all awareness that slavery was the cause of the Civil War; that we could build a healthcare system second to none; could adopt national paid family leave for at least four weeks; could revise our tax code to fairly tax the top five percent and corporations; and could, in a word, be able to create the just society Martin Luther King, Jr. described (“The arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends toward justice.”) but never lived to see.

What keeps us chained to each other, Red and Blue States, when we’re really two different nations that have craved separation for almost 200 years? President Regan and the conservatives figured out a long time ago, though the rest of us didn’t really listen, when they said the US was suffering from a “culture war”. Alas, we didn’t take it seriously.

We have had, and continue to have, a culture war that is growing more distasteful and dangerous every day. Why isn’t Shapiro’s “friendly separation” our best hope? Violence is growing daily in the US. It will inevitably continue to get worse until we enable the two cultures to separate and go their own way. Those of us who are neutral can see this coming. The big question is how?

For those who want a non-violent resolution to the culture war, there is an easy way to achieve separation. When Texas joined the Union, it was already an independent republic. As part of their agreement of accession, Texas retained the right to non-violently withdraw at any time with a majority vote of Texans. (The hashtag #TEXIT is trending in case you’re interested.)

Well, let’s encourage them to have that vote. Let’s also encourage all the Red States to join Texas in a new Confederacy that isn’t a pluralistic democratic republic that permits women to control their own bodies, doesn’t want to have fair and unbiased elections, doesn’t believe that education should be free to all (as it is in most other industrialized countries), doesn’t want to finally surrender white supremacy, and doesn’t want immigration to further dilute the slim white majority despite the fact we are a nation of immigrants—and that is what has made us so strong.

It should be obvious to anyone who has read this far, that it would be a stretch to think I agree with Marjorie Taylor Greene on almost anything. But, on this one issue of “leaving” the Union, she actually got it right. Gandhi himself tried through every non-violent tool he could command to end the slaughter of the Muslim-Hindu civil war until finally he relented and agreed to the separation of India and Pakistan. If no less a moral force than Mahatma Gandhi came to realize the inevitability of separation when culture wars define a society, what makes us think we are wiser, more humane, or more accurate in our assessment of our options than he?

Yes, Marjorie, we agree you should leave.

*Published in the 11/04/2021 edition of the Montecito Journal*