

COMMON SENSE

THE CASE FOR AN INDEPENDENT TEXAS



*This pamphlet is dedicated
to all people of goodwill.*

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CHAPTER I

TWO AMERICAS

There are now two Americas, each with its distinct ethical system, news sources, and version of American history. In a free and tolerant society, two separate nations could co-exist, as the bumper sticker implores.

But the modern United States is not free, and it is certainly not tolerant. The two Americas hate each other with a growing passion, and if unchecked that hatred will soon escalate into widespread violence.

Left-wing progressives still recall in horror the mob of January 6, and are amazed that acceptance of transgender individuals is meeting such resistance, when they view it as obviously the 2020s analog of the Civil Rights struggles of the 1960s. They are dismayed by the unwillingness of so many of their fellow Americans to take the most basic of precautions to reduce the death toll of a global pandemic. They find it very telling that the same people who argue that a business should be able to refuse service to gay couples do *not* think those same businesses should have the freedom to set their own mask or vaccination policies.

On the other side, right-wing conservatives watch in shock as the country they knew disappears; stories appear daily that would have been inconceivable a mere decade ago. A medical school professor apologizes to his students during a lecture for saying the phrase “when a woman is pregnant” (thus implying that only women can become so).¹ A typical peer-reviewed article argues: “Whiteness is a condition one first acquires and then one *has*—a malignant, parasitic-like condition to which ‘white’ people have a particular susceptibility . . . Parasitic Whiteness renders its hosts’ appetites voracious, insatiable, and perverse.”² The CIA advertises its inclusivity and top military brass warn of domestic right-wing militias, while allies are abandoned amidst collapse in Afghanistan. The conservatives are amazed at the reintroduction of segregation, in stark defiance of the plain words from Martin Luther King and other Civil Rights-era icons.

They are dismayed by the willingness of so many of their fellow Americans to let political officials tell them if they are allowed to go to church. And they find it very telling that the same people who argue “her body, her choice” when it comes to aborting fetuses do *not* extend the same logic to vaccinations.

For those refusing to see what is staring them in the face, the NFL has literally begun playing two national anthems before its games. In recognition of the Two Americas, there must be an accompanying political separation. The rest of this pamphlet is dedicated to the proposition that the state of Texas must be restored to its status as an independent republic. Such a restoration is no magic bullet, and will not resolve all of America’s problems, but it will help tremendously. The time to act is now.

CHAPTER II

TEXANS SHOULD SEPARATE FROM THE U.S. FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

Although it is a timeworn tradition in America to decry the nonsense flowing from Washington, in recent years the U.S. government's profligacy and incompetence have long surpassed any reasonable threshold for tolerance. Below we offer a brief sketch of some of the major issues for which federal policies are the problem.

Money: The U.S. Problem

The United States' central bank, the Federal Reserve, has created extraordinary amounts of new money in response to the 2008 financial crisis and more recently the 2020 pandemic. The following chart, taken from the St. Louis branch of the Fed, shows the size of the "monetary base," which is legal-tender money (currency plus bank reserves held on deposit with the Fed itself). The monetary base is directly controlled by the Federal Reserve, and is a common measure to judge whether policy is "tight" or "loose."

Figure 1. U.S. Monetary Base, Jan. 1959 – July 2021



(Shaded areas indicate U.S. recessions.)

Source: St. Louis Federal Reserve (FRED)³

When the financial crisis struck in September 2008, the monetary base stood at \$910 billion. A year later, after the first round of so-called “quantitative easing” (QE) it had *doubled* to \$1.8 trillion. The second and third rounds of QE involved another doubling, pushing the monetary base up to around \$4 trillion where it hovered from late 2014 through late 2015.

The monetary base had been gently falling until September 2019, when it resumed its growth due to a seizing up in the market for repurchase agreements (“repos”). And then when the coronavirus pandemic shocked the world in March 2020, the Fed unleashed a torrent of new monetary inflation. As of July 2021, the monetary base stood at \$6.1 trillion.

Besides the obvious problem of rising consumer prices, the Fed’s policies since 2008 have inculcated a state of dependence in the financial markets to continually “easy money.” If and when the Federal Reserve decides to seriously tighten, the resulting crash will be much worse than if the Fed had adopted more moderate policies from the beginning.⁴

Money: The Texas Solution

A free society would feature a healthy separation of money and state, for the same reasons that it respects a separation of church and state. Although most Americans take it for granted that the government must be in charge of the money supply, historically this was not always so. Indeed, from the founding of the Constitutional Republic up until the eve of the Civil War in 1861, the United States government did *not* issue any legal-tender paper currency at all. (How would they have known whose portraits to put on the bills?) Instead, *the people* decided how many official U.S. dollars existed at any moment, by taking raw gold or silver to U.S. mints where they would be stamped into full-bodied coins marked with the appropriate number of dollars on their face, according to legislated ratios.⁵

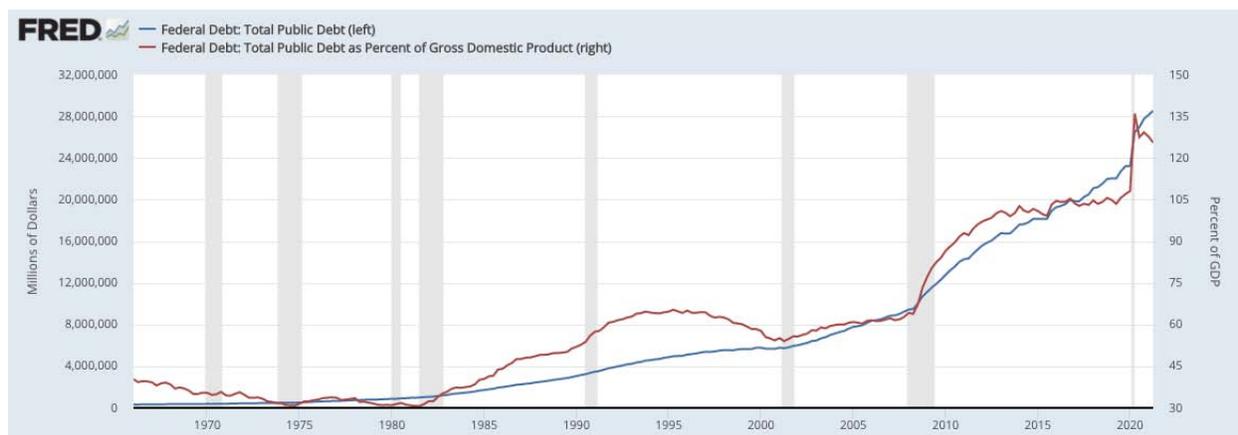
The government of the Republic of Texas doesn't need to tell its people which assets to use as money; they can figure that out themselves. Presumably in the initial years after a formal break, Texans will continue to conduct much of their business in U.S. dollars. Yet the Texan authorities should put no hurdles in the way of their citizens adopting *other* assets as dollar alternatives, whether they be euros, gold coins, or cryptocurrencies.

Fortunately, Texas currently has no state income tax (or associated capital gains tax), which would prove an obstacle to diversifying away from the dollar (because alternative assets would appreciate in dollar terms and be subject to tax when spent). In the case of money, Texas authorities need do nothing special; private citizens can make their own contractual arrangements as they see fit. To the extent that government entities in Texas must receive payments, they of course can specify the acceptable forms, but this is no different in principle from a restaurant in Cancún accepting both U.S. dollars and euros from tourists (at pre-specified exchange rates vis-à-vis its menu prices) while rejecting payment in chickens; nobody thinks such a restaurant is setting Mexican monetary policy with such business decisions.

Debt: The U.S. Problem

As with the Fed's issuance of new dollars, the United States Treasury has unleashed a spigot of new debt starting with the 2008 crisis and accelerating since the pandemic. The following chart shows total U.S. Treasury debt, both in dollar terms (blue, left) and as a percentage of GDP (red, right):

Figure 2. U.S. Federal Public Debt, 1q 1966 – 2q 2021



Source: St. Louis Federal Reserve⁶

As the figure indicates the total public debt (at the federal level) went from about \$9.5 trillion (or 64% of GDP) in early 2008 to \$28.5 trillion (or 126% of GDP) a mere thirteen years later.

The huge increase in federal debt would be tolerable if it were due to one-off events (such as a global financial crisis and a global pandemic) that would soon give way to fiscal responsibility. However, due to rising interest rates and demographic trends, the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) projects that the federal debt as a share of the economy will continue to grow in the long run, and by 2031 will actually surpass its all-time peak set during World War II.⁷

Debt: The Texas Solution

As with any household or corporation, the government of Texas can avoid a debt problem by living within its means. As the analysis in this chapter indicates, the Texan government does *not* need to replicate all of the “services” currently provided by the U.S. government. By resisting the urge to increase spending, the Texas authorities can maintain their current policy of no income tax, thus protecting one of the features undergirding the region’s continued growth in population and economic output.

Entitlements: The U.S. Problem

In the often poorly named taxonomy of U.S. federal spending, “entitlements” refer to mandatory (as opposed to discretionary) expenditures that are fixed under law. In order to change the trajectory of entitlement spending, Congress needs to alter the original law giving authorization. The biggest ticket items in this category are Social Security and Medicare. For decades, analysts have been warning of the looming (yet always distant) “unfunded liabilities” time bomb due to the aging of the population, where fewer and fewer workers support each retiree drawing benefits from Washington. That time bomb has now detonated, as we explain shortly.

When discussing the solvency of Social Security and Medicare, there are different thresholds one might choose, due to the peculiar fact that historically, these programs ran annual *surpluses* which they lent to the federal government to (partially) cover the deficit in the general fund. (This allowed Social Security and Medicare to build up “trust funds” over the years, consisting of Treasury securities whereby Uncle Sam owes money to himself.) So when we ask, “When will Social Security (or Medicare) run out of money?” there are different ways we can interpret the question, each yielding a different answer.

Yet no matter which threshold we adopt, the situation is dire. For example, if we ask in what year will the annual “contributions” from workers’ payroll taxes fail to cover that year’s benefits payments, the answer is: That already happened! For Social Security (specifically, the Old Age, Survivors and Disability Insurance or OASDI programs) that shortfall began in 2010, while for Medicare (specifically the Hospital Insurance or HI program, also referred to as Medicare Part A) that shortfall began in 2008.

If we treat the respective trust funds associated with Social Security and Medicare as if they were external assets held by a private financial institution, then we can push back the point of crisis. Taking into account the trust funds and the interest income they generate, OASDI will be able to pay obligations according to current law up through the year 2034, at which point the Social Security trust fund will be depleted. The comparable year for Medicare’s HI program is 2026.⁸

If the *timing* of the entitlement shortfalls is alarming, their *magnitude* is catastrophic. According to the government’s own Trustees Report released in August 2021, **over a 75-year horizon, the present discounted value of the funding gap in Social Security and Medicare is a combined \$67.7 trillion**—and that figure includes the respective trust funds as genuine assets held by these programs.⁹

We should be clear on what this number means: The federal government *right now* would need to find a pile of some \$68 trillion in extra money, which it would lend or invest to start earning interest, so that it could draw on this money to plug the mismatch (after 2034 and 2026 for Social Security and Medicare, respectively, when their existing trust funds run out) between incoming payroll taxes from workers versus outgoing payments to retirees and other beneficiaries. After 75 years, the original fund created by the infusion of an additional \$68 trillion would have also been extinguished. And to be crystal clear: **This figure of nearly \$68 trillion is in addition to the roughly \$29 trillion in official outstanding Treasury debt** that we cited in the previous section. The unfunded liabilities of Social Security and Medicare are *not* counted in standard measures of “the public debt.”

This accounting exercise should give the reader some idea of the enormous imbalances built into U.S. entitlement programs. Obviously the federal government isn’t going to obtain an additional \$68 trillion to cover the gap; instead the feds will jack up payroll taxes and cut benefits (perhaps by postponing the retirement age). Americans—especially those under 40—should be under no illusion that Uncle Sam will take care of them in their old age.

Entitlements: The Texas Solution

The U.S. entitlement programs are a “pay-go” system, whereby payroll taxes on current workers fund current payments to beneficiaries. This is why the system is so vulnerable to demographic shifts.

In contrast, citizens of the Republic of Texas could be trusted with their own provision for accidents and old age. Rather than being spent immediately, their

contributions during their working careers would be invested in long-term assets, earning a far higher return than the imputed return on Social Security. Because each beneficiary's payments would have been funded by that person's own prior saving and insurance premiums, demographic shifts would pose no problem for the citizens of an independent Texas.

To the extent that paternalism is deemed necessary, Texas authorities need merely require that their citizens carry the appropriate amount of privately-administered savings accounts and insurance policies. For an analogy, right now states require drivers to carry automobile insurance if they wish to use the roads, but the government doesn't collect premiums or send payments after a crash; private companies handle those tasks.

Health: The U.S. Problem

Health care costs are so much higher in the United States than in other countries because of U.S. government policies. The federal income tax, with its high marginal rates and deductibility for employer-paid health insurance premiums, helps maintain the tie between an American's job and access to affordable care. (Nobody ever stops driving when in between jobs because they temporarily don't have car insurance.)

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) sets up laborious (and often arbitrary) roadblocks to the approval of new drugs, giving Americans the worst of both worlds: Because pharmaceutical companies must spend a billion (with a "b") dollars bringing a new drug to market, they only focus on drugs with mass commercial appeal, rather than niche items that will only help a small segment of the population. This restricts access to potentially life-saving treatments, by making them either outrageously expensive or literally illegal (for Americans). On the other hand, because bureaucrats are reluctant to admit mistakes, when the FDA *does* approve a new drug that turns out to be surprisingly dangerous, it can take years for the FDA to respond to the new information. (The infamous example here is the Vioxx scandal.)¹⁰

It is important to remember that government health agencies are staffed by real human beings who make decisions in the face of uncertainty; they are not textbook

robots who have the benefit of hindsight. They have an incentive to “take charge” of a situation and micromanage decisions, because if they *approve* a certain policy, then any negative consequences will be blamed on them. But if they *withhold approval*, then any negative consequences will first and foremost be blamed on Nature or God.

For a relevant illustration, consider the U.S. government’s response to the outbreak of Covid-19. According to the standard narratives that have been established in American political discourse, the Trump Administration “did nothing” while the pandemic raged. But in reality, the federal government *actively suppressed* the ability of medical professionals to contain the spread.

The following account (from a Bay Area psychiatrist who runs a popular blog) conveys the situation very well. Despite its conversational tone, we have included it in this pamphlet to jolt readers into remembering that *this really just happened* and that the FDA *really did this*.

The countries that got through COVID the best (e.g. South Korea and Taiwan) controlled it through test-and-trace. This allowed them to scrape by with minimal lockdown and almost no deaths. But it only worked because they started testing and tracing really quickly—almost the moment they learned that the coronavirus existed. Could the U.S. have done equally well?

I think yes. A bunch of laboratories, universities, and health care groups came up with COVID tests before the virus was even in the U.S., and were 100% ready to deploy them. But when the U.S. declared that the coronavirus was a “public health emergency,” the FDA announced that the emergency was so grave that they were banning all coronavirus testing, so that nobody could take advantage of the emergency to peddle shoddy tests. Perhaps you might feel like this is exactly the *opposite* of what you should do during an emergency? This is a sure sign that you will never work for the FDA.

The FDA supposedly had some plan in place to get non-shoddy coronavirus tests. For a while, this plan was “send your samples to the CDC in Atlanta, we’ll allow it if and only if they do it directly in their headquarters.” But the CDC headquarters wasn’t set up for large-scale testing, and the turnaround time to send samples to Atlanta meant that people had days to go around spreading the virus before results got back. After this proved inadequate, the FDA allowed various other things. They told labs that they would offer emergency approval for their kits—but placed such onerous requirements on getting the approval that almost no labs could achieve it (for example, you needed to prove you’d tested it against many different coronavirus samples, but it was so early in the pandemic that most people didn’t have access to that many). Then they

approved a CDC kit . . . that the CDC could send to places other than their headquarters, but this kit contained a defective component and returned “positive” every time. The defective component was easy to replace, but if you used your own copy *like a cowboy* then the test wouldn’t be FDA-approved anymore and you could lose your license for administering it.

A group called the Association of Public Health Laboratories literally begged the FDA to be allowed to deploy the COVID tests they had sitting on the shelf ready for use. The head of the APHL went to the head of the FDA and begged him, in what they described as “an extraordinary and rare request,” to be allowed to test for the coronavirus. The FDA head just wrote back saying that “false diagnostic test results can lead to significant adverse public health consequences.”

So everyone sat on their defective FDA-approved coronavirus tests, and their excellent high-quality non-FDA approved coronavirus tests that they were banned from using, and didn’t test anyone for coronavirus. Meanwhile, American citizens who had recently visited Wuhan or other COVID hotspots started falling sick and asking their doctors or health departments whether they had COVID. Since the FDA had essentially banned testing, those departments told their citizens that they couldn’t help and they should just use their best judgment. Most of those people went out and interacted and spread the virus, and incidence started growing exponentially. By March 1, China was testing millions of people a week, South Korea had tested 65,000 people, and the USA had done a grand total of 459 coronavirus tests. The pandemic in these three countries went pretty much how you would expect based on those numbers.

There were so, so many chances to avert this. [The *New York Times*] did a great article on Dr. Helen Chu, a doctor in Seattle who was running a study on flu prevalence back in February 2020, when nobody thought the coronavirus was in the U.S. She realized that she could test her flu samples for coronavirus, did it, and sure enough discovered that COVID had reached the U.S. The FDA sprung into action, awarded her a medal for her initiative, and—haha, no, they shut her down because they hadn’t approved her lab for coronavirus testing. She was trying to hand them a test-and-trace program all ready to go on a silver platter, they shut her down, and we had no idea whether/how/where the coronavirus was spreading on the U.S. West Coast for several more weeks. . . .

I worry that people are going to come away from this with some conclusion like “wow, the FDA seemed really unprepared to handle COVID.” No. It’s not that specific. Every single thing the FDA does is like this. Every single hour of every single day the FDA does things exactly this stupid and destructive, and the only reason you never hear about the others is because they’re about some disease with a name like Schmoe’s Syndrome and a few hundred cases nationwide instead of something big and media-worthy like coronavirus. I am a doctor and sometimes I have to deal with the Schmoe’s Syndromes of the world and every f@\$king time there is some story about the FDA doing something exactly this awful and counterproductive. [Scott Alexander, italics in original.]¹¹

To reiterate, the problem with the federal government's handling of the emerging pandemic wasn't simply one of *inaction* (as the typical progressive critics allege), nor was it solely a problem of the government violating civil liberties in the name of disease control (as the typical conservative critics allege). Rather, right out of the gate the problem was the federal government's *interference* with the ability of outside actors to offer help. Anyone who has seen the authorities "lock down the scene" during a local emergency knows that this is how government personnel behave; this has nothing to do with Republicans versus Democrats.

Health: The Texas Solution

If the Republic of Texas wisely refrains from imposing an income tax on its citizens, there will no longer be any advantage for one's employer to directly pay health insurance premiums. Instead, employees will take their compensation in the form of wages/salary, and then use some of it to pay their own premiums after shopping around for the plan that best suits them. This would give patients far more leverage over the health insurance companies, because a dissatisfied customer could plausibly threaten to take his business elsewhere, which is *not* the case currently when the employer picks the plan.

Under this approach, each employee would have the incentive to carefully investigate the various competing companies, because saving (say) \$50 a month in premiums would mean an extra \$600 a year left in the bank account. Right now, employees on company plans have no reason to pay attention to prices; they have little say over premium payments to the insurer, they don't personally benefit if they save money, and the actual bills from medical providers don't seem real. Right now, people on employer-provided health plans treat medical bills like play money, as opposed to bills from the phone company or department store. All of this will change in the Republic of Texas, if its government adopts policies that treat health care like a business.

By refusing to create an analog of the FDA, the Republic of Texas could immediately bring down the prices of pharmaceuticals for its residents, just as people in foreign

countries currently enjoy much cheaper drugs than Americans. If the authorities feel some responsibility to guide the public, they can organize expert bodies to disseminate information and even product ratings for new drugs. So long as these experts don't have the force of law behind their proclamations, their ability to influence the public will be limited to their credibility and their track record—as it should be. As it stands today, there is only the weakest feedback mechanism for the FDA and the consequences of its coercive proclamations.

With much lower prices, there won't be a need for the Texas analog of Medicare. To the extent that the public wishes to support the elderly, they can at least do so in a program targeting the truly needy. In contrast, the current Medicare approach treats every senior alike, regardless of wealth. This would be like having the government send meals to everybody in the country rather than giving food stamps only to those living in or near poverty.

Military: The U.S. Problem

By one popular estimate, in 2020 the U.S. government spent \$778 billion on its military, which was not only triple the #2 value (China at an estimated \$252 billion), but was higher than China's spending *plus the next nine countries combined*.¹² By one academic's estimate, the U.S. (as of 2014) maintained 800 foreign military bases in more than 70 countries or territories, while Britain, France, and Russia combined only maintained 30 foreign bases.¹³

Yet despite this sprawling global empire, the United States military has been handed humiliating defeats. The most obvious example is the debacle of the Afghanistan withdrawal, in which the 20-year U.S. occupation could not prevent a Taliban takeover, including the acquisition of stockpiles of American weaponry. But there are other examples of the absurd; as a 2016 *LA Times* headline explained: "In Syria, militias armed by the Pentagon fight those armed by the CIA."¹⁴

Military: The Texas Solution

The citizens of an independent Texas would do well to heed the advice of John Quincy Adams in his famous 1821 address, as he speaks of America:

Wherever the standard of freedom and Independence has been or shall be unfurled, there will her heart, her benedictions and her prayers be. **But she goes not abroad, in search of monsters to destroy.** She is the well-wisher to the freedom and independence of all. She is the champion and vindicator only of her own. [John Quincy Adams, bold added.]

And as James Madison warned:

Of all the enemies to public liberty war is, perhaps, the most to be dreaded, because it comprises and develops the germ of every other. War is the parent of armies; from these proceed debts and taxes; and armies, and debts, and taxes are the known instruments for bringing the many under the domination of the few. In war, too, the discretionary power of the Executive is extended; its influence in dealing out offices, honors, and emoluments is multiplied; and all the means of seducing the minds, are added to those of subduing the force, of the people. The same malignant aspect in republicanism may be traced in the inequality of fortunes, and the opportunities of fraud, growing out of a state of war, and in the degeneracy of manners and of morals engendered by both. **No nation could preserve its freedom in the midst of continual warfare.** [Madison, bold added.]

To the extent that the people of Texas wish to support freedom around the world, they can send financial donations but most important they can lead by example. If they wish, the citizens of the Republic of Texas will be the freest on the planet. They can demonstrate the blessings of liberty and tolerance by living them, rather than using tanks and bombs to foist them on foreigners.

Climate: The U.S. Problem

One of the signature moves of the incoming Biden Administration was to undo the actions of President Trump and have the United States rejoin the Paris Climate Agreement. Although climate change has been eclipsed by Covid-19, it remains one of the drivers of U.S. policy, affecting everything from energy to transportation to agriculture, and even influences regulations on the efficiency of home appliances.

Because of the gravity of the subject, one might have supposed that the goals set forth in the Paris Climate Agreement were consistent with peer-reviewed publications. Yet this is not the case. The target objective in the Paris Agreement is far too extreme, according to the bulk of results in the relevant literature, including the work of a recent Nobel laureate.

Specifically, the U.N.'s website says that the Paris Agreement's "goal is to limit global warming to well below 2, preferably to 1.5 degrees Celsius, compared to pre-industrial levels." One would have supposed that such a goal were supported by the literature. But on the contrary, consider the work of William Nordhaus, who won the 2018 Nobel (Memorial) Prize for his pioneering work on the economics of climate change. Although Nordhaus recommends that governments around the world enact a carbon tax to slow global warming, his analysis concludes that the optimal tradeoff between higher energy prices (which make people poorer) and worse climate change would allow about 3.5 degrees of warming.

In contrast to his modest target, Nordhaus' model estimates that the Paris Agreement's ceiling of 2 degrees (let alone 1.5 degrees) of warming would be so draconian that *it would be better for humanity if governments did nothing* about climate change. To reiterate, Nordhaus is not a "denier"; his model uses the standard estimates of the greenhouse effect etc. from the natural sciences as its inputs. But although Nordhaus acknowledges the dangers of man-made global warming, he *also* appreciates the harm caused by aggressive restrictions on economic growth.

Furthermore, Nordhaus' results are consistent with the bulk of the literature; even proponents of the Paris Agreement find it difficult to make a quantitative case that it would do more good than harm. For a different example of the mismatch between the published literature and the goals of the Paris Agreement: In order to justify the 1.5 degree Celsius target, the U.N.'s own analysis admits that the so-called "social cost of carbon" would have to be somewhere in the range of \$135 to \$5,500 per ton. Yet the Biden Administration's EPA in early 2021 estimated the social cost of carbon (for the year 2030) at only \$62 per ton. That means the Paris Agreement rests on assumptions

that the harm from carbon dioxide emissions is anywhere from 2 to 89 times worse than conventional estimates.¹⁵

For the purposes of this pamphlet, the issue here isn't to quibble over ideal temperatures for the year 2100. Rather, the point is to underscore to the reader that the major media and government officials are bluffing: Although they cite "the science" and label critics as "deniers," those pushing for aggressive government policies are not at all constrained by the actual peer-reviewed results on the possible downsides of these policies. Cynics can understandably suspect that the proponents of drastic policies in the name of "climate change" favor them for other reasons.

Climate: The Texas Solution

No matter what they do, the people of Texas will have remarkably little to do with the pathway of global emissions over the coming decades; growth in China and India will swamp any emission cuts in the advanced economies coming from mandates on auto fuel efficiency or subsidies to wind turbines. Those truly alarmed by climate change can donate to the many teams of scientists who are working on various technological remedies should the need arise.¹⁶

Drugs: The U.S. Problem

According to a 2020 estimate, the United States has 2.3 million people behind bars. This works out to 698 prisoners per 100,000 residents, which is the highest incarceration rate in the world—an odious award for the Land of the Free.

At any given time in the United States, there are some 450,000 people in confinement for nonviolent drug offenses. Of these, 100,000 are held at the federal level, under the auspices of the Bureau of Prisons or the U.S. Marshals.¹⁷ Putting aside the obvious impact on the prisoners themselves, mass incarceration—particularly in the case of so-called "victimless crimes"—has devastating consequences for the community at large. Besides the narrow economic cost (where prisoners must be housed and fed

rather than out working), the cycle of crime and other social problems is amplified when so many fathers are absent.

Drugs: The Texas Solution

Putting aside the standard debates over drug prohibition, the Republic of Texas should liberalize these markets out of the desire for self-preservation. By demilitarizing in the War on Drugs, the Texan government would eradicate Texas-based gang warfare and implode the Mexican-based cartels.¹⁸ Especially as it would need stable allies in standing up to its big brother to the north, the Texan government would benefit tremendously from drastically reducing the corruption currently plaguing the Mexican political system.

Education: The U.S. Problem

According to the annual surveys conducted by U.S. News & World Report, in the category of “National Universities” the average tuition for a private college in 2020 was some \$41,000, jumping 144 percent over the previous 20 years. Tuition at out-of-state public colleges averaged \$27,000, representing a 165 percent increase since the year 2000. In-state tuition at public colleges averaged \$11,000, which was a whopping 212 percent hike compared to 2000.¹⁹

The sharp rise in tuition at U.S. universities hasn’t corresponded to a comparable increase in legitimate education. In fact, many campuses have become breeding grounds for particular ideologies that are hostile to traditional American society. As but one example of the brewing conflict, in June 2021 the Department of Education’s Office for Civil Rights officially confirmed that “it will enforce Title IX’s prohibition on discrimination on the basis of sex to include: (1) discrimination based on sexual orientation; and (2) discrimination based on gender identity.”²⁰

As of this writing, the fallout from such decisions remains to be seen. Yet both foes and fans alike agree that taken at face value, the Biden Administration’s policy means that any institution receiving federal money (including through federally-backed

student loans) cannot restrict the ability of traditionally male students to join women's sports teams, use women's restrooms, or live in women's dormitories, so long as these students identify as female. Whether or not the reader agrees, it is undeniable that large segments of Americans deem this stance to be outrageous, and would make many families reluctant to send their daughters to college.

Education: The Texas Solution

By removing the federal subsidies to higher education, tuition prices in Texas would fall to more reasonable levels, while those parents wishing to send their children "abroad" to schools in the United States would have much more disposable income after severing ties with Washington.

The government of Texas need not oversee education; look at how badly that approach has fared in the U.S. Parents, students, and schools can determine among themselves how best to educate either in the private sector or at most through local government channels. Parents have far more influence when they control the money or at least can see the relevant officials in person at school board meetings.

Conclusion: Texans Should Separate from the U.S. Federal Government

As our brief survey makes clear, the federal government is out of control, wreaking havoc on everything it touches—and it now touches virtually every aspect of American life. At this late date, with mountains of evidence staring them in the face, it would be foolish for Texans to continue their association with such a reckless and dangerous organization.

It is high time for the Lone Star State to be restored to the Lone Star Republic. It lies beyond the scope of this pamphlet to suggest specific legal and political mechanisms for the people of Texas to implement a formal withdrawal from the U.S. federal government. Our modest goal is to convince Texans that such a withdrawal is vital, and that interested citizens should begin serious discussions to make it a reality.

We close this chapter with an observation on the importance of legitimacy in the eyes of the other 49 states and the rest of the world: Both for moral and pragmatic reasons, it is critical that any formal declaration of Texan independence genuinely reflects the will of its people. For example, if a statewide referendum is held, then those favoring independence should outnumber those opposed by at least a two-to-one margin (thus winning at least 67 percent of the vote versus 33 percent opposed).

In order to achieve such an unambiguous margin of victory, the proponents of Texan independence may have to devote their efforts to outreach and education, and they might need patience as droves of disaffected Americans make the move to Texas to participate in future referenda. Yet such investment on the front end will be important for the long-run stability of the restored Republic of Texas.

CHAPTER III

THE REST OF THE COUNTRY SHOULD LET THEM GO

Many of those reading this pamphlet strongly oppose the type of person who will be motivated to move to Texas and implement the plan described in the previous chapter. Because Chapter II made the case that it would be good for *those people* if they were to break away from the rest of the Union, it would be natural to assume that *the enemies* of those people should bitterly *oppose* the restoration of the Republic of Texas.

However, this thinking is simply wrong. *Both* of the “Two Americas” we described in Chapter I would be much better off if Texas were to return to its independent status.

There is nothing paradoxical about our claim. In wartime, it is common for both sides to agree to certain rules or practices; there are “win-win” arrangements. For example, opposing armies might agree to an exchange of prisoners, or they might sign a treaty prohibiting the use of poison gas.

By the same token, even though the Red and Blue tribes (for lack of better terms) are nearly at each others’ throats, there are procedures that simultaneously help both sides; it would be petty and self-destructive for the Blue tribe to oppose such measures, merely because the Red tribe supports them also.

The restoration of an independent Texas is just such a procedure. Yes, it benefits the gun-toting, unvaccinated Trump supporter who isn’t sure climate change is real. But it *also* showers benefits on the latte-sipping, double-masked Biden supporter who isn’t sure reverse racism is real. The rest of this chapter will be aimed at convincing such a stereotypical Biden supporter of these benefits.

Consistency

Strictly speaking, we don't even need to argue that a liberal Democrat should welcome Texas secession. Rather, we are merely claiming that *if two-thirds of Texan voters* opt to leave, *then* American liberals can't possibly deny them this right, while claiming to support democracy. How would the U.S. retain any moral legitimacy regarding (say) Russian or Chinese oppression of dissidents while using its own military to occupy American neighborhoods?

Pandemics, Present and Future

As of this writing, by far the most divisive government policies are mandates to fight Covid-19. There is a huge overlap between the type of person who would move to an independent Texas and the type of person who will refuse to wear masks properly and will falsify booster shot records in order to enter restaurants. Rather than using the coercive power of the state to try and force such people to act hygienically, *let them go*. If small pockets of the unvaccinated, initially distributed among the 50 states, were instead to concentrate in the southern region of the current United States, surely that would slow the spread of viruses (associated with new pandemics) in the remaining states, and would arguably slow the proliferation of vaccine-resistant strains.

The Progressive Agenda

To the extent that certain progressive measures are supported by large majorities in a Blue state, but bitterly opposed by a small and vocal minority, an independent Texas will allow both sides to win, and thus reduce the need for constant conflict at every election. The Republic of Texas, with its relatively light regulation and especially no IRS, will be a magnet to the type of person who currently throws sand in the gears of social change, both cultural and political.

The American electorate in 2016 elected a man that the typical progressive regards as a cartoonish villain. Allowing Texans to go their own way would ensure that no such debacle recurred anytime soon, as the overwhelming proportion of "refugees" to an

independent Texas (at least in the early years) would be Trump supporters. By renouncing their U.S. citizenship, they would lose the ability to influence U.S. presidential elections.

Minimizing Violence

The current culture wars are not far removed from deteriorating into actual street battles between extremist groups. Rather than plunge headlong into this chaos, it would be far preferable for all parties to allow one side safe passage to a friendlier territory.

The typical progressive underestimates the passion with which the typical conservative will defend his guns and children. Furthermore, the average right-wing American is not as stupid as CNN would have us believe, and can be very hardy. Although they are outnumbered, in an actual physical altercation one right-winger is worth several left-wingers. In fact, it can be shown (though we omit the proof here) that

$$\frac{T_R}{T_B} > \frac{I_B}{I_R}$$

where

T_R = toughness of the Red tribe, I_B = intelligence of the Blue tribe, and so on.

If a supermajority of Texan voters declare their independence, the rest of America should *let them go*.

CHAPTER IV

CONCERNS & OBJECTIONS

In this final chapter we will address common questions that the previous discussion will have raised among many readers.

“Is this legal?”

The modern federal government established by the U.S. Constitution was originally formed as a compact among sovereign States, rather than as a national plebiscite among the citizens at large. Many scholars, including Thomas Jefferson and James Madison, concluded that the individual States retained the right to “nullify”—by not enforcing or even actively undermining—unconstitutional federal edicts (such as the notorious Fugitive Slave Act²¹), and ultimately to withdraw from the Union if the federal government’s violations of its constitutional limits were egregious enough. Under this interpretation, **the ultimate arbiter of whether Uncle Sam had violated his promises to the States would be the States who had agreed to the compact.** No State would have been foolish enough to subordinate its sovereignty to the federal government *and then allow a “Supreme” Court hand-picked by that federal government* determine whether the feds were playing fair.²²

Yet interesting as these historical and legal debates may be, they are largely moot:²³ Because of its unique history, Texas *clearly* joined the Union (though the story is complex and nuanced) starting from a position of independence and political sovereignty; this was a matter decided by Texans, not “the American people.” To be sure, at the time of annexation the existing Americans had to reciprocally agree—through their representatives and senators in the U.S. government—to allow Texas *in*, but the point is that the Texans were clearly a separate group, who themselves had to agree to join the Union. By simple logic, a decision to *leave* the Union would likewise be

up to the people of Texas and/or their delegated representatives; it wouldn't be up to a majority of Americans living among the 50 states.

But we have more than “simple logic” to make our case: As part of the process of converting the Texas Republic into the 28th state, Texas President Anson Jones called for a convention (to be held on July 4, 1845) that would approve the annexation offer from the U.S. government, and would also (as required) draft and submit a new Texas *state* constitution. Both the citizens of Texas and the U.S. federal government (then under the Polk Administration) formally approved the 1845 Constitution of Texas. The first page of this document is extremely relevant to the present discussion:

CONSTITUTION

WE, the people of the Republic of Texas, acknowledging with gratitude the grace and beneficence of God, in permitting us to make a choice of our form of government, do, in accordance with the provisions of the joint resolution for annexing Texas to the United States, approved [by the U.S. government under the Tyler Administration] March first, one thousand eight hundred and forty-five, ordain and establish this Constitution.

ARTICLE FIRST

BILL OF RIGHTS.

That the general, great, and essential principles of Liberty and Free Government may be recognized and established, we declare that—

SECTION 1. All political power is inherent in the people, and all free governments are founded on their authority, and instituted for their benefit; and they have at all times the unalienable right to alter, reform, or abolish their form of government, in such manner as they may think expedient. [Bold added.]²⁴

And if the letter of the law is on the side of the Texans, the *spirit* is even more so. Anyone with common sense can see that the U.S. federal government has brazenly flouted its Constitutional limits for many decades; they no longer even *pretend* to care. To illustrate the rapid change, consider: During the Eisenhower Administration, proponents of his interstate highway system actually had to argue that it would help with military defense, since troops could more easily be moved around the country. At

that time, plenty of people genuinely doubted whether the federal government had the authority *to build roads*.

In contrast, in 2009 a conservative reporter asked Nancy Pelosi where the Constitution gave Congress the power to compel Americans to buy health insurance, as the Affordable Care Act (“ObamaCare”) required. Rather than citing “the general welfare clause” or a Supreme Court precedent, Pelosi simply retorted: “Are you serious? Are you serious?” (Listening to the audio establishes that her tone was one of incredulity and amusement, rather than sincerity.)²⁵

The federal government’s stark violations of the Constitution do not involve mere matters of “public policy” but also outright crimes. For example, in March 2013 the National Intelligence Director, James Clapper, appeared before the U.S. Select Committee on Intelligence. Senator Ron Wyden (D-OR) first explained that a statement the year before by the NSA director had been ambiguous, and so he wanted a simple yes or no answer to this question: “Does the NSA collect any type of data at all on millions, or hundreds of millions of Americans?”

Clapper replied, “No, sir.” Wyden followed with, “It does not?” Clapper elaborated, “Not wittingly. There are cases where they could inadvertently, perhaps, collect, but not wittingly.”²⁶

As the Edward Snowden leaks would demonstrate later that year, Clapper was lying when he gave this knowingly false answer; the NSA *was* collecting information on millions of Americans, and as the Director of National Intelligence, Clapper knew it. Yet rather than being prosecuted for perjury, Clapper would still be placed on a federal panel to review surveillance programs, and years later would still be welcomed as an expert guest on cable news shows, especially if his remarks contradicted statements by Donald Trump.²⁷

For an even more shocking illustration of the federal government’s criminal behavior, consider the following, which is an actual *New York Times* front-page headline from 2012: “Secret ‘Kill List’ Proves a Test of Obama’s Principles and Will.”²⁸

The article explains that the Obama White House had a list of individuals—including American citizens—who could be intentionally targeted for killing in a drone strike, without any judicial oversight. The actual language used by the *New York Times* reporters leaves no room for misunderstanding:

It is the strangest of bureaucratic rituals: **Every week or so, more than 100 members of the government’s sprawling national security apparatus gather, by secure video teleconference, to pore over terrorist suspects’ biographies and recommend to the president who should be the next to die.**

This secret “nominations” process is an invention of the Obama administration, a grim debating society that vets the PowerPoint slides bearing the names, aliases and life stories of suspected members of Al Qaeda’s branch in Yemen or its allies in Somalia’s Shabab militia. . . .

That record, and Mr. Awlaki’s calls for more attacks, **presented Mr. Obama with an urgent question: Could he order the targeted killing of an American citizen, in a country with which the United States was not at war, in secret and without the benefit of a trial?**

The Justice Department’s Office of Legal Counsel prepared a lengthy memo justifying that extraordinary step, asserting that while the Fifth Amendment’s guarantee of due process applied, it could be satisfied by internal deliberations in the executive branch. [Bold added.]

In sum, the agents of the federal government have brazenly ignored their Constitutional restrictions for decades, and not just in procedural matters, but while administering explicitly criminal enterprises. When the citizens of the Republic of Texas agreed to U.S. statehood in 1845, it wasn’t akin to a Biblical covenant, or even to a marriage (“till death do us part”); in this respect, the common label of a “national divorce” is a misleading term for state secession. Today’s Texas residents may consider severing ties with the U.S. government a bad idea, but they should feel no moral nor legal *obligation* to remain in league with such a blatantly lawless organization.

“Didn’t the Civil War settle this question?”

Although this glib rejoinder invariably accompanies any public discussion of U.S. secession, its implicit ethical framework is monstrous, and would be obviously seen as such in other contexts. For example, if a Native American activist made a case for more

autonomy of tribes vis-à-vis the federal government, nobody would rhetorically ask, “Didn’t the Trail of Tears settle this question?”

Losing on the battlefield bears little on the underlying legality or morality of the cause for which the losers fought. Now to be sure, the prospect of a military defeat greatly affects the wisdom and prudence of *pursuing* the cause; we address this concern in the next item. Our simple point here is: **Might doesn’t make right.** Everybody understands this principle when applied to most areas of human affairs, but many seem to forget it when it comes to the topic of Americans living in southern states.

“If Texans were to actually do this, wouldn’t this cause a civil war—like the last time?”

When Texans vote to sever ties with the U.S. federal government, it is crucial that they do so in a peaceful manner. It is critical that Texans—both as private citizens and as agents of government—respect the body and property of any U.S. loyalist who chooses to remain in Texas. There can be no pretext by which the U.S. government can invade while claiming to be acting in “defense.”

We can distill the discussion down to a simple statement, because the necessary condition for a peaceful withdrawal is quite simple: When Texans leave the Union, the sitting U.S. president chooses *not* to drop bombs on them in retaliation. That’s all that needs to happen, to ensure that Texan secession won’t lead to another civil war.

Consider: Although there was talk of a potential *trade* war, nobody worried that continental Europe would launch cruise missiles into London because of the Brexit vote. Likewise, in this day and age of guerilla media and ubiquitous smartphones, it would be difficult for an American administration to justify images of children in Dallas having their limbs blown off, just because their parents had read the Declaration of Independence and apparently took Thomas Jefferson literally.

In any event, it is precisely to *reduce* the scope of violence that this pamphlet has been written. Bloodshed among Americans is imminent; a restoration of the Republic of

Texas will provide a relief valve to cool conflicts in the remaining states. Furthermore, by placing a spotlight on the possibility of Texas secession, proponents can get American public intellectuals “on record” regarding the appropriate U.S. government response. Presumably even writers at the *New York Times* and *Vox* will admit—however grudgingly—that it would be unethical to slaughter their fellow citizens merely for wanting to dissociate from Washington.

But suppose progressive pundits *do* call the secessionists’ bluff, and declare—even when the notion is still an abstract hypothetical—that any U.S. state with the temerity to believe in self-determination should be bombed into submission. Even so, that would be all the more reason for every Texan to support secession, if not openly, then at least in the privacy of one’s thoughts. The moment a woman realizes she is only staying with her boyfriend because she fears he’ll beat her if she tries to leave...is exactly the moment she needs to begin planning her escape.

“Hasn’t secession historically been associated with slavery?”

The precise degree is up for legitimate historical debate, but unquestionably the U.S. Civil War had much to do with slavery. However, secession itself is merely a procedural device implementing the simple exercise of political independence. The difference between a secession and a revolution is that the former involves a breaking away, while the latter usually connotes a *takeover*. (Incidentally, this is why many fans of the Old South prefer the term *War Between the States* rather than the more conventional *Civil War*, since Confederate forces weren’t trying to subjugate the North.)

Strictly speaking, the American Revolution itself was an act of secession from Great Britain; yet most Americans (at least before the recent flare-ups in the culture war) don’t associate the 4th of July with chattel slavery. In modern times, the independence movements in Quebec, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Catalonia, and of course Brexit are all examples of secessionist movements. The people involved in these movements do not instantly earn our suspicion as racists who want to reintroduce slavery.

“If Texas left the protection of the United States, wouldn’t it be vulnerable to foreign invasion?”

No, it wouldn’t. According to the World Bank’s ranking, as of 2020 the Texas economy was the world’s 9th largest,²⁹ just behind Italy but ahead of Canada. Nobody argues that Canadians can’t enjoy political independence due to military vulnerability, and Texas outproduces Canada. It might be argued that Canada enjoys the protection of the British armed forces, but then consider the case of Switzerland, which is famously neutral in international affairs: In 2020, the Texas economy was *more than double* that of Switzerland, and moreover it is protected by oceans from many of the potential threats that land-locked, Europe-based Switzerland has successfully resisted all these years (including the Nazis and the Soviets).

The only invading force that a Republic of Texas would need to worry about, would take its orders from Washington, D.C. If the Texans want international opinion on their side, they must resist the urge to foster a standing army, as this would give the U.S. government a pretext for claiming self-defense.

An independent Texas doesn’t need a professional military to defend its citizens from outsiders. Especially given the time it would take for an outside government to build a case for invasion, the Texans would be able to amass even larger stockpiles of privately-held weapons than their famous gun culture currently exhibits. Whether he actually said it, the quote often attributed to Admiral Yamamoto is correct: “You cannot invade mainland United States. There would be a rifle behind each blade of grass.”

An attempted U.S. occupation of Texas would be significantly more expensive (in both lives and money) than the Afghanistan debacle, as the Texans are far more resourceful and numerous than the Taliban. To keep aggressors at bay, Texans need only convince the world of a modified slogan: “Don’t mess with Texas—and *Texas won’t mess with you.*”

“Why focus on Texas? Shouldn’t other states consider secession?”

Most of the arguments advanced in Chapters II and III would apply to the case for other states besides Texas to sever ties with the federal government. However, in this pamphlet we have singled out Texas because it has the strongest case for independence.

For logistical reasons, it would be far less practical for an *interior* state to secede rather than a state with access to either a foreign country and/or an ocean. (We rule out Wisconsin, Illinois, Michigan, Ohio, and Pennsylvania because the U.S. government could so easily seal off the Great Lakes.) Furthermore, the Eastern Seaboard states north of Georgia are located too close to New York and Washington, the cities serving as the power-centers of the U.S. empire.

Of the remaining eligible states, most have small populations and economies, making the prospect of a bold declaration riskier. Hawaii, for example, has fewer than 1.5 million residents, while Alaska only has half that. Montana, though it would be viable on other criteria, only has about a million.

This still leaves California (40 million), Texas (29 million), Florida (22 million), Georgia (11 million), Washington State (8 million), Arizona (7 million), Minnesota (6 million), and Louisiana (5 million) as contenders.

(Oregon is too small: With a population of 4 million,³⁰ this state is comparable in size to Croatia. To be sure, Oregon could comfortably exist as a sovereign country *in a sea of medium-sized neighbors*, but it would be difficult to expel American hegemony from its internal institutions if Oregon were the *first* U.S. state to secede.

Alabama, like Louisiana, has a population of 5 million—actually the rounding obscures the fact that Alabama has about 400,000 more people—but it can be ruled out, since its link to the outside world is not sustainable: If Alabama were the *sole* state to secede, its access to the Gulf of Mexico could be blocked if federal troops merely shut down the 50-mile stretch of southern Alabama running from Mississippi to Florida.)

Of our eight remaining contenders, those states that have direct access to Canada or Mexico enjoy a significant advantage over those states with only water on their external border. Specifically, Florida, Georgia, and Louisiana could be sealed off from the rest of the world through a U.S. naval blockade, which would presumably be less of a diplomatic affront than closing down large stretches of the land border with Canada or Mexico.

This leaves California, Texas, Washington State, Arizona, and Minnesota. There's nothing ruling out the last three, and indeed, given the political unrest in the Pacific Northwest, Washington State *might* in practice be the first to break away. But of our remaining five, clearly California and Texas have such a huge size advantage—each being more than triple the population of the next contender, Washington State—that they become the obvious choices.

The reason in this pamphlet we have chosen Texas rather than California is simply one of culture. Of the few U.S. states that enjoyed a period of political sovereignty before joining the Union, the Republic of Texas (1836-1846) was one of the longest-lived and received the most international recognition. Any driver familiar with U.S. bumper stickers knows that to this day, Texans have an identity tied to their state that is unusual for Americans.

For a final cultural consideration, there is the obvious fact that the type of person who is going to be repulsed by the edicts flowing from U.S. authorities—whether in the federal government, academia, or the major media—will feel more at home in Houston than in Los Angeles. Yet had *Trump* retained power after the 2020 election, this pamphlet might very well have been aimed at Californians.

“What about alternative strategies?”

This pamphlet doesn't offer a silver bullet to safeguard liberty and resolve all American political conflicts. Besides “Texit,” there are many strategies that complement the considerations we have raised in this document. For example, intellectuals who focus on educating the public on the blessings of freedom may find a more receptive audience

when there is a real-world case study staring them in the face. Reclusive individuals who advise “going off the grid” will find it much easier to do so if they first move to a newly-independent Texas. And even those liberty activists who focus on the conventional American political process may gain more traction with their messaging when entire states are fleeing D.C. policies.

“Won’t people left behind in the other states suffer?”

It is true that a mass exodus of liberty-minded Americans from the other states into Texas may darken the short-term conditions for those who sympathize with the movers but choose themselves to remain behind. Even on its own terms, this is no reason to abandon the project of an independent Texas. (For an analogy, parents shouldn’t leave their own children in a failing school just to cushion the disaster for the students who remain in it.)

Yet there is a countervailing force that may actually help those Americans who support an independent Texas but, for whatever reason, cannot make the move. Specifically, when a political minority has just the *option* of “voting with their feet,” this can restrain the abuses of their governments even if the minority has no chance of winning at the ballot box.

Currently, Americans who are alarmed at government overreach can move from Blue states to Red states, and this does provide a modest check on the totalitarian impulses of politicians in (say) New York and California. However, no matter which state they go to, right now Americans are everywhere subject to federal income tax, the regulations of the FDA and CDC, the Federal Reserve’s reckless inflation, and so on. In order to escape the *federal Leviathan*, currently Americans have to move to Canada, Mexico, or even more foreign destinations.

In contrast, after the restoration of the Republic of Texas, there will be a nearby and quintessentially “American” destination for those fleeing the draconian U.S. welfare-warfare system. The mere existence of this convenient escape valve—even when not

exercised—will provide a serious constraint on the abuses that can be showered upon those who remain in the United States.

Finally, considering purely financial factors, it is in the interest of all Americans for the Texans to create a zone of economic freedom and sound money. When Wall Street and the U.S. dollar crash, the citizens of an independent Texas will be in a much stronger position to send remittances to their friends and family left behind in the carnage.

“If Texas breaks away, how would we handle immigration from Mexico?”

This question can be posed from the perspective of either the U.S. federal government or the (newly restored) government of the Republic of Texas. From the U.S. perspective, the answer is conceptually simple: Rather than regulating the flow of people over the *southern* Texas border as it runs along Mexico, U.S. authorities would regulate the flow of people over the *other* Texas borders as they run along New Mexico, Oklahoma, Arkansas, and Louisiana. Because Republic of Texas officials will likely do a better job of maintaining “law and order” than their Mexican counterparts, policing the U.S./Texas border will be much easier for U.S. border agents than their current job.

It is a much more complicated problem to determine what the newly-empowered officials of the Republic of Texas ought to do, regarding their young country’s borders with Mexico and the United States. For reasons of both political liberty and economic efficiency, the citizens of Texas should want to preserve their ability to cross freely into and out of the U.S., without having to (typically) stop and talk to a federal agent. However, depending on the Texas stance regarding its southern border with Mexico, U.S. officials might be reluctant to maintain an open border with Texas.

Trying to resolve such thorny problems lies outside the scope of this pamphlet. We leave this issue with one final observation: If the people of Texas choose the correct path, their new country will be an economic powerhouse and a bastion of liberty. Most migrants from Mexico—whether legal or illegal, according to Texas policy—will cross the border into Texas *and stay there*. In the early years of the Republic of Texas, as the

American empire collapses, U.S. border agents won't have to worry about hordes of foreigners trying to sneak in via a leaky Texas.

“How would we handle Social Security and Medicare for the Texans who have been paying into these systems their entire careers?”

Right now, if a 60-year-old American citizen living in San Antonio renounces his U.S. citizenship and moves to France, there are procedures in place for how he can still receive his Social Security benefits when they come due (provided he has satisfied certain qualifications during the U.S.-based work history). Strictly speaking, he would also still be eligible for Medicare, though only if he traveled back to the United States for care based there. Yet even here, this isn't an extra hurdle to going ex-pat; even those who retain U.S. citizenship can't travel to France and have Medicare cover an operation performed in that foreign land.

Conceptually, there is nothing more complicated involved if a U.S. citizen living in San Antonio decides to renounce his U.S. citizenship after the state of Texas becomes an independent country. In this case, our hypothetical San Antonion would once again be an ex-pat of the U.S. who had relocated to a different country: namely, the Republic of Texas (rather than France). And those Texas residents who *retain* their U.S. citizenship would stand on even firmer ground, with respect to their Social Security; if there were a problem with their payments, it would be due to the fiscal hole (discussed in Chapter II), not to the logistical difficulty of U.S. citizens living abroad.

In fairness, our discussion highlights a potential problem for older U.S. loyalists currently residing in Texas, who would (under existing procedures) lose Medicare coverage for their existing Texas-based medical care were the state to become a foreign country. This is a legitimate concern that shouldn't be dismissed, but so long as Texas authorities don't recreate their own versions of the FDA, Medicare, and Medicaid, the prices of medical services in Texas would fall drastically, so that most residents—whether rebels or loyalists—would be able to afford routine care.

“What about the national debt? Do seceding Texans just get to walk away from it?”

To repeat the line of argument from the prior question: Currently American citizens are allowed to renounce their citizenship and move to a foreign country. They have to settle up with the IRS for any back taxes, of course, but they *don't* have to pay a pro rata share of the federal debt on top of that.

But on the flip side, current American citizens who renounce all ties to the U.S. government don't get a severance package for their pro rata share of federal *assets*, either, which include large parcels of Western real estate, offshore mineral deposits, the crude oil stockpiled in the Strategic Petroleum Reserve (around 620 million barrels as of this writing³¹), and whatever gold is still being held in Fort Knox and the New York Fed.

In light of the above considerations, a critic could refine the objection to run like this: *“The U.S. federal government has more liabilities than assets, and so it's not fair to the rest of the Americans if the people of Texas are allowed to walk away.”* Yet this formulation would entail a surprising theory of political sovereignty, in which citizens born into an entity that had been formed centuries earlier, have more financial obligations to the organization than even the stockholders who voluntarily buy into a corporation. When a publicly listed company becomes insolvent—meaning its liabilities exceed its assets—the shareholders just lose their original investment of whatever they paid to obtain the stock; the creditors of the corporation can't come after their personal assets just because the managers drove the organization into bankruptcy. Is the loyalist argument really going to be, “This ship of state is underwater, and nobody is allowed to swim away”?

For a final consideration, realize that in practice the U.S. government will effectively restructure its debts by defaulting on its Treasury securities (either explicitly, or implicitly through monetary inflation) and by reducing the payouts for Social Security relative to the current benefit schedule. To the extent that citizens of the new Republic of Texas retain (perhaps indirectly) Treasuries in their portfolios and receive Social Security benefits, they too will participate in Uncle Sam's “Chapter 11.” Furthermore, as

discussed with the previous question, Texas secession would undoubtedly reduce Medicare claims, and on that score would *shrink* the current level of U.S. insolvency.

“What about the federal military bases and other buildings currently located on Texas soil?”

For reasons of both justice and diplomacy, the restoration of the Republic of Texas must not infringe on the property rights of any person or legal entity, regardless of the owner’s support or opposition to the secession. Were Texas officials to “nationalize” (say) ExxonMobil assets located in the Permian Basin, this would not only give Washington, D.C. a legitimate grievance, but would alert global investors that the new country was a banana Republic to be shunned.

By the same token, existing U.S. government property located in Texas would remain U.S. government property. Having said that, sovereign governments are under no obligation to endure U.S. occupation forces against their will. The new government of Texas could negotiate a withdrawal of U.S. troops from its land if this were important to Texas voters (which it presumably would be, if they opt for secession). Now if the U.S. government *refuses* to withdraw its forces *despite* the clear desires of the Texan people, this objection reverts to the previous ones concerning a new civil war.

“Isn’t this surrendering most of the country to the progressive Left?”

The progressive Left has already conquered the United States; it is simply acknowledging reality for the members of the Resistance to strategically retreat to Texas.

Right-wing constitutionalists who still hold out hope for a “true conservative”—not like those dastardly RINOs!—to sweep the Republican Party and restore limited government to the land, don’t appreciate how much the system is rigged against them. For example, during the George W. Bush presidency, the Republicans controlled the House from 2001-2007, while the Senate was either exactly or close to a 50-50 split from 2001-2003, and was solidly held by the Republicans from 2003-2007.³² If the

gameplan of Sean Hannity made sense, the W. years should have been the time when the federal Leviathan was rolled back.

Yet that didn't happen at all. Let us put aside the so-called PATRIOT Act and creation of the TSA with its body scanners, the global network of secret CIA prisons,³³ and John Yoo's infamous "torture memo"³⁴ associated with the War on Terror, as those are admittedly military/intelligence matters that right-wing hawks often favor. Even if we consider only inflation-adjusted *non-defense, discretionary* expenditures (i.e. excluding mandatory items such as interest on the debt and "entitlement" programs like Social Security), then such spending during the George W. Bush years grew an average of 3.6 percent annually; the comparable figure for the Bill Clinton Administration was only 1.7 percent.³⁵

Moreover, despite the Republican control, the George W. Bush legacy included the passage of the No Child Left Behind Act (increasing federal control over state standards in education), Sarbanes-Oxley (a surge in SEC financial regulation in the wake of accounting scandals), a huge expansion in entitlement spending by adding the option of prescription drug coverage to Medicare ("Part D"), the American Dream Down Payment Act (expanding federal subsidies to the then-inflating housing bubble), and the Energy Independence and Security Act (which included a federal Renewable Fuel Standard that would later become literally impossible for refiners to obey without damaging car engines—the so-called "ethanol blend wall").

And if the *establishment* elements of the Republican Party have no interest in taming Big Government, the case of Donald Trump—whether the reader loves or despises him—shows what the system will do to a genuine outsider. For just one example, the FBI engaged in jaw-dropping tactics in its applications to the FISA Court for permission to continue spying on members of the Trump campaign. Yet when the Inspector General's own report confirmed as much (though not using those words, to be sure), major media touted it as a refutation of Trump's "paranoid conspiracy theories."³⁶

The current system is irreparably broken—or rather, it's *working just fine* for a certain group who despise traditional America. It is foolish for genuine constitutional

conservatives to continue playing this rigged game, always hoping that the *next* election will bring reform.

“Your arguments make sense, but I love America.”

Current American readers of this pamphlet will always be American, just like someone who moves from Dublin to New York will always be Irish. That would be true even if Ireland were conquered by another government (or kingdom). Anybody with an American accent and cultural literacy—including a basic understanding of the rules and biggest stars in football and basketball, and the ability to identify photos of Courtney Cox and Rihanna—will forever be “an American” to everyone else on Earth.

Now it’s true, after secession the very young (or as-yet unborn) *children* of today’s Americans in Texas, will grow up not as Americans, but as *Texans* (or *Texians* for the purists³⁷). Although that concept already has deep significance for Texans today, it will become imbued with even more affection and pride for the citizen of an independent Republic.

The distinctly *American* brilliance of our Founding Fathers had its roots in British history, common law tradition, and political philosophy. (Indeed, English-born Thomas Paine didn’t even move to the American colonies until late 1774.) But from its British roots, the American system emerged as the world’s best attempt so far to bring the kingdom of God to earth. The attempt failed, to be sure, as all manmade political systems rely on coercion in an attempt to safeguard liberty, and thereby suffer from an internal contradiction.

This moment in history gives Americans the opportunity to try again. The founding fathers (and mothers) of the new Republic of Texas can learn from the failures of their predecessors and exercise leadership with greater wisdom and morality. As the decadence of the late-stage American system grinds to a halt, the world desperately needs a new shining city on a hill.

ENDNOTES

1. Katie Herzog, “Med Schools Are Now Denying Biological Sex,” Common Sense With Bari Weiss, July 27, 2021, available at: <https://bariweiss.substack.com/p/med-schools-are-now-denying-biological>.
2. Donald Moss, “On Having Whiteness,” J Am Psychoanal Assoc. 2021 Apr; 69(2): 355-371. doi: 10.1177/00030651211008507, available at: <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/34039063/>.
3. Monetary base graph taken from: <https://fred.stlouisfed.org/graph/?g=GjWw>.
4. For in-depth treatment of the issues raised in this subsection, see Robert P. Murphy *Understanding Money Mechanics*, available at: <https://mises.org/library/understanding-money-mechanics-0>.
5. See Robert P. Murphy, “After the Gold Standard, We Got Bigger Government and a Smaller Dollar,” The Hill, August 18, 2021, available at: <https://www.independent.org/news/article.asp?id=13722>.
6. Treasury debt chart taken from: <https://fred.stlouisfed.org/graph/?g=GMF8>.
7. CBO’s 2021 long-term budget outlook available at: <https://www.cbo.gov/publication/57038>. Note that many budget analysts often use public debt *held by the public* as the relevant measure, rather than total public debt as we have shown in Figure 2 in the main text. We chose to highlight the larger number out of consistency; later in this chapter we will take the Social Security “trust fund” at face value as an asset held by the Social Security Administration, meaning we must include it as a liability when discussing the Treasury’s total obligations.
8. Trust fund projections for OASDI and HI taken from Table 5 at: <https://www.ssa.gov/oact/trsum/>. Accessed September 2021.
9. See the 2021 Medicare Trustees Report, pages 221-222, available at: <https://www.cms.gov/files/document/2021-medicare-trustees-report.pdf>.
10. See Doug McGuff and Robert P. Murphy, *The Primal Prescription: Surviving the “Sick Care” Sinkhole* (Primal Nutrition, 2015).
11. See Scott Alexander “Adumbrations Of Aducanumab,” Astral Codex Ten blog, August 4, 2021, available at: <https://astralcodexten.substack.com/p/adumbrations-of-aducanumab>.
12. Diego Lopes Da Silva et al., “Trends in World Military Expenditure, 2020,” SIPRI Fact Sheet, April 2021, available at: https://sipri.org/sites/default/files/2021-04/fs_2104_milex_o.pdf.

13. See David Vine, “Where in the World is the U.S. Military?” Politico Magazine, July/August 2015, available at: <https://www.politico.com/magazine/story/2015/06/us-military-bases-around-the-world-119321/>.
14. Nabih Bulos, W. J. Hennigan, and Brian Bennett, “In Syria, militias armed by the Pentagon fight those armed by the CIA,” LA Times, March 27, 2016, available at: <https://www.latimes.com/world/middleeast/la-fg-cia-pentagon-isis-20160327-story.html>.
15. All of these issues are explained in Robert P. Murphy and Ross McKittrick, “OFF TARGET: The Economics Literature Does Not Support a 1.5C Climate Ceiling,” Fraser Institute, 2021, available at: <https://www.fraserinstitute.org/sites/default/files/economics-literature-does-not-support-1.5c-climate-ceiling.pdf>.
16. For examples see Robert P. Murphy, “The Benefits of Procrastination: The Economics of Geo- Engineering,” EconLib, Dec. 7, 2009, available at: <https://www.econlib.org/library/Columns/y2009/Murphygeoengineering.html>.
17. Incarceration statistics taken from Wendy Sawyer and Peter Wagner, “Mass Incarceration: The Whole Pie 2020,” Prison Policy Initiative, March 24, 2020, available at: <https://www.prisonpolicy.org/reports/pie2020.html>.
18. For an explanation of the connection between drug prohibition and gang violence, see chapter 20 in Robert P. Murphy, *Lessons for the Young Economist* (Mises Institute, 2010), available at: <https://mises.org/library/lessons-young-economist>.
19. Tuition data taken from Farran Powell and Emma Kerr, “What You Need to Know About College Tuition Costs,” US News & World Report, September 17, 2020, available at: <https://www.usnews.com/education/best-colleges/paying-for-college/articles/what-you-need-to-know-about-college-tuition-costs>, and from Briana Boyington and Emma Kerr, “20 Years of Tuition Growth at National Universities,” *ibid.*, available at: <https://www.usnews.com/education/best-colleges/paying-for-college/articles/2017-09-20/see-20-years-of-tuition-growth-at-national-universities>.
20. See: <https://www.ed.gov/news/press-releases/us-department-education-confirms-title-ix-protects-students-discrimination-based-sexual-orientation-and-gender-identity>.
21. For a quick explanation of state nullification regarding the 1850 Fugitive Slave Act, see Michael Boldin’s post: <https://blog.tenthamentcenter.com/2017/07/nullifying-the-fugitive-slave-act/>.
22. For a short discussion among historians of whether state secession is legal, listen to Tom Woods’ 2013 interview of Brion McClanahan: <https://tomwoods.com/is-secession-legal/>. For a longer case, listen to episode 52 of the Tom Woods Show: <https://tomwoods.com/ep-52-secede/>. For a comprehensive treatment, consider Albert Taylor Bledsoe’s 1866 book, *Is Davis a Traitor? Was Secession a Constitutional Right Previous to the War of 1861?* The arguments for nullification also cover those for the legality of

secession; see Thomas E. Woods, Jr., *Nullification: How to Resist Federal Tyranny in the 21st Century* (Regnery, 2010).

23. Actually, a case could be made that if the *original* U.S. states had the authority to nullify unconstitutional federal edicts and/or to secede from the Union, then Texas did as well. This is because the Joint Resolution for Annexing Texas to the United States, adopted by the U.S. Congress and signed by President Tyler on March 1, 1845, states, “Be it resolved, That a State, to be formed out of the present Republic of Texas, with suitable extent and boundaries, and with two representatives in Congress, until the next appointment of representation, shall be admitted into the Union, by virtue of this act, **on an equal footing with the existing States**, as soon as the terms and conditions of such admission . . .” [Bold added.] Text of the annexation resolution accessed August 2021 and available at: <https://www.tsl.texas.gov/ref/abouttx/annexation/march1845.html>.

24. The text of the 1845 Constitution of Texas accessed August 2021 and available at: <https://tarlton.law.utexas.edu/c.php?g=787754>.

25. The exchange was reported in The Hill; see <https://thehill.com/blogs/blog-briefing-room/news/64547-pelosi-to-reporter-are-you-serious>. As of August 2021 the audio was available on YouTube at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wxXy-r7aatA>.

26. Transcript of the Wyden/Clapper exchange taken from Steve Contorno, “James Clapper’s testimony one year later,” PolitiFact, March 11, 2014, available at: <https://www.politifact.com/article/2014/mar/11/james-clappers-testimony-one-year-later/>.

27. See Jonathan Turley, “James Clapper’s perjury, and why DC made men don’t get charged for lying to Congress,” USA Today, January 19, 2018, available at: <https://www.usatoday.com/story/opinion/2018/01/19/james-clappers-perjury-dc-made-men-dont-get-charged-lying-congress-jonathan-turley-column/1045991001/>.

28. Jo Becker and Scott Shane, “Secret ‘Kill List’ Proves a Test of Obama’s Principles and Will,” New York Times, May 29, 2012, available at: <https://www.nytimes.com/2012/05/29/world/obamas-leadership-in-war-on-al-qaeda.html>.

29. World Bank 2020 ranking accessed in August, 2021 and taken from: <https://databank.worldbank.org/data/download/GDP.pdf>. Texas GDP from BEA and accessed from St. Louis Fed at: <https://fred.stlouisfed.org/graph/?g=GhOD>.

30. State population data from: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_U.S._states_and_territories_by_population (accessed in August 2021), and refers to the 2020 Census figures.

31. The inventory of the Strategic Petroleum Reserve accessed in August 2021 from: <https://www.energy.gov/fe/strategic-petroleum-reserve>.

32. House Party divisions documented at: <https://history.house.gov/Institution/Party-Divisions/Party-Divisions/>. Senate Party divisions documented at: <https://www.senate.gov/history/partydiv.htm>.

33. See Don Gonyea, “Bush Concedes CIA Ran Secret Prisons Abroad,” NPR All Things Considered, September 6, 2006, available at: <https://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=5776968>.

34. See Andrew Cohen, “The Torture Memos, 10 Years Later,” The Atlantic, February 6, 2012, available at: <https://www.theatlantic.com/national/archive/2012/02/the-torture-memos-10-years-later/252439/>.

35. Data taken from White House Historical Table 8.8 available at: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/historical-tables/>. Specifically, we are using Fiscal Year 2001–2009 for the George W. Bush years, and FY 1993–2001 for Clinton. The comparable figure is actually –1.1% annual growth for Barack Obama (FY 2009–2017), but we didn’t report that in the main text because it could be unfair to attribute all of FY 2009—which ran through September 2009—to George W. Bush (since the incoming Obama Administration spent large sums right out of the gate in response to the “Great Recession”). If we assess Bush on just the first seven fiscal years, annual growth in inflation-adjusted, non-defense discretionary spending was 2.7%, still much higher than under Bill Clinton.

36. See the Bob Murphy Show episode 92 for links and discussion, available at: <https://www.bobmurphyshow.com/episodes/ep-92-fbi-spying-and-the-gaslighting-of-america/>.

37. Historically, citizens of the original Republic of Texas referred to themselves as *Texians*. Furthermore, there is a legitimate argument that the Republic of Texas never ceded its land to the United States government, and as such, “secession” is not an appropriate term for recognition of the independence of Texas. For more details, see: <http://www.thetexasrepublic.com>.