

Unexpected blow to Constitution-wreckers

by Leo F. Scanlon

The Conservative Revolution was dealt a significant setback when organizers of a proposed "Conference of the States" cancelled the long-planned event, and admitted that popular opposition has stonewalled all efforts to tamper with the U.S. Constitution. As opposition to budget austerity measures grows, state legislatures have begun rescinding support for the conference, which was designed to showcase the signature issues of the Conservative Revolutionaries: balanced budget amendments, privatization schemes, and tax cuts for financial speculators.

"It clearly has run into difficulty in a number of the states," said Bill Pound, head of the National Conference of State Legislatures. "We were surprised. We expected some opposition, but not one as well-organized as it was."

Two elements of the opposition shocked conference organizers. The first was the depth and vehemence of opposition from the populist movement, primarily the Liberty Lobby. Even more damaging to the scheme was the fact that the AFL-CIO (whose membership includes the growing number of working Americans who smell something rotten in the anti-government rhetoric of the "Contract on America"), joined in the lobbying to halt approval for the conference.

Origins of the conference proposal

The conference proposal is the brainchild of a network of organizations which oppose the U.S. Constitutional system, foremost among them, the American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC) and the National Taxpayers Union (NTU). These organizations, which speak for the financial interests of the international cartels that provide their funding, have been aggressive in advocating a Constitutional convention, because they see that as the only way to break resistance to fascistic budget cutting and austerity.

The target of such a convention would be the General Welfare clause of the Constitution, which allows the federal government to address large-scale social and economic matters which are beyond the power of state and local economies. ALEC and its allies argue that the source of various incompetent or abusive federal programs is the government itself, and are working to eviscerate that government's powers, not to reform its policies.

A lead article in the magazine of the American Enterprise

Institute spelled out the strategy only weeks before the conference was cancelled. Russell Hittinger, a philosophy professor at the Catholic University of America, explained that "tinkering with the status quo will not work. . . . The reason these repair efforts have failed is because the real problem in many cases is not policy but jurisdiction." Hittinger warned against an open call for a Constitutional convention, and advocated the proposed " 'Conference of the States,' where local leaders from across the country would gather to develop a political, legal, and Constitutional plan, and consolidate sufficient power to challenge federal domination." In other words, attack the Constitution, but don't get caught.

A 'one-world Confederacy?'

It is most instructive to examine Hittinger's argument against the structure of the federal government, by asking, "Who benefits, if his advice is followed?" *EIR* has established that there is not a single evil policy or program being enacted by the government today, which cannot be traced to the "Club of the Isles": the complex of financial and political organizations which created the United Nations, its environmentalist apparatus, and the International Monetary Fund.

The enabling legislation which would have called the Conference of the States into existence was written and popularized by a group of organizations including the National Council of State Legislatures (NCSL), the Council of State Governments (CSG), and the National Governors' Association. These taxpayer-supported groups were originally founded to advance the "reform" agenda which the U.N. attempts to impose on all sovereign governments.

Headquartered at the "1313 Building" at the University of Chicago, and backed by the resources of the Ford and Rockefeller Foundations, the NCSL, CSG, and NGA quickly became a tax-supported, quasi-official lobbying apparatus for all manner of legislative and parliamentary reforms. Today they are the center of efforts to pit state governments against the Congress and citizen against citizen in a fight for diminishing tax resources.

Gov. Mike Leavitt of Utah, a leader of the NCSL conference plan, made clear in a recent speech that the agenda items proposed for the conference would include proposals for Constitutional reform. Other supporters of the conference argue that since the delegates to the conference would be elected officials, formally delegated to the conference under the auspices of enabling legislation drawn up by the NCSL, the conference would have the authority to operate as a bona fide Constitutional convention.

Pouring fuel onto this inflammatory mix, the conference was scheduled to begin with a May pre-meeting in Richmond Virginia, the former capital of the Confederacy, to be followed by a July meeting in Annapolis and a national convention in Philadelphia, in mock repetition of the conventions which produced the U.S. Constitution.