

What are the possibilities of America entering another civil war, and how can this be averted?

Quora.com [How can America avoid having a second civil war? By Walter L. Williams](#)

America can avoid a second civil war only by recognizing how close we now are to the outbreak of violence, and with a determination to avoid a war.

In the 1850s, few Americans recognized how close they were to a horrid war. From 1861 to 1865, a bloody four years of warfare left a nation traumatized and battered. The destruction of the South left its mark for generations.

In the interests of all, a top priority should be to avoid a repetition of such a war. Whoever is president should NOT make the same mistake Abraham Lincoln made, when he declared that no state had the right to leave the United States. Since the Southern states wanted to establish their own separate nation in 1861, Lincoln's policy guaranteed conflict.

Today, Americans are divided on so many fundamental issues that compromise is impossible. For example, those who see abortion as murder cannot compromise with those who feel women should have the right to decide if she wants to give birth or not. Those who grieve for the gun violence that infects American cities cannot compromise with those who feel the right to bear arms is absolute and should not be restricted. Those who fear immigrants cannot compromise with those who recognize that immigration is fundamental to American progress. Those who prize ethnic diversity cannot compromise with those who want a return to white domination of society. Those who see same-sex marriage as a violation of god's law cannot compromise with those who recognize sexual minorities as valued and respected members of society.

There are so many issues, on such fundamental levels, that a compromise is simply not realistic. The alternatives are either endless disagreement and conflict, or civil war as one side tries to dominate the other. That will not be easy, given the split between two almost equal divisions. If these divisions lead to war, it will be even more horrible than the bloodbath that engulfed America in the 1860s. The only way to avoid another civil war is by agreeing to a peaceful separation.

This is how it might work:

1. The 8 progressive states of the west coast (California, Oregon, Washington, Nevada, Hawai'i, and maybe Alaska, Arizona, and New Mexico) should secede and form a new nation, called PACIFICA. But Alaskans might have the option to join Canada if they prefer, and if Canada will accept Alaska as a new province.
2. The 12 liberal states of the Northeast (Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York [with New York City becoming its own separate state], New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland, Pennsylvania, and Virginia, should secede and form another new nation, called ATLANTICA.
3. The 6 states of the Midwest (Ohio, Michigan, Indiana, Illinois, Wisconsin, Minnesota) should secede and either form an independent GREAT LAKES FEDERATION, or join ATLANTICA. If they choose to join Atlantica, the conservative southern halves of Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois would likely prefer to split, and remain as part of the United States, while allowing the more liberal northern halves to join Atlantica.

4. Texas and Oklahoma might join to form an independent Texas Republic. On the other hand, if the progressive states of the Northeast and the west coast are gone, conservative Texans might prefer to be the largest state in the remaining United States. Either way, however, Texans would support a peaceful breakup of the Union.

5. With the Northeastern states taking over the national capital of Washington DC, and it becoming a city within Maryland, the national capital of the United States should be moved to the southwest corner of Tennessee, just south of Memphis. This capital relocation will gain the support of the 3 states of Tennessee, Arkansas, Mississippi for the peaceful breakup.

6. Altogether, the states that wish to peaceably leave the Union, along with other 3 new capital states, totals 31 states. The Constitution requires three-fourths of the 50 states to ratify an amendment, so that means only 38 states are necessary to enact this peaceful separation. This means looking for at least 7 conservative state legislatures, which would be overjoyed to be rid of the liberal/progressive states of the west coast and the Northeast.

7. Peaceful relations between the remaining United States and the new nations of Pacifica and Atlantica could be maintained by treaties allowing for free trade across borders, with no tariffs imposed, similar to free trade treaties existing between the United States with Canada and Mexico. Both Pacifica and Atlantica would recognize the economic benefit of immigration, so they would no doubt allow liberal immigration laws to welcome immigrants, while the conservative majority in the United States government would continue its more restrictive immigration laws. Pacifica and Atlantica quickly passed universal healthcare, including birth control and abortion rights, while the United States continued with its private insurance base for healthcare. This meant a steady migration of young women to the liberal nations, and continued population loss in the United States. LGBTQ people, and other sexual minorities, continued to migrate to either Pacifica or Atlantica to take advantage of laws recognizing sexual freedom, while the conservative United States continued to impose prison terms for possession of pornography and for same-sex sexuality.

By this means of establishing different laws, people could migrate back and forth between the nations, depending on their political opinions. Rather than endless conflict over such issues, people in North America can resolve their political differences by migrating to the nation where they feel most comfortable.

While free trade with each other would characterize all the nations of North America (United States, Canada, Mexico, Pacifica, Atlantica), differences would emerge in relations with other nations. Since the main trading partner for the booming Pacifica nation would be China, it is no surprise that Pacifica and China would establish much more friendly relations. Pacifica would renounce American military interference in China's regional dominance in Southeast Asia and the South China Sea. Without any presence on the Pacific coast, the United States would withdraw its naval presence in the Pacific region. Without a US military threat, North and South Korea would become much closer together. Without a strong US military presence, Japan would be forced to recognize China's dominance in East Asia.

Meanwhile, the main trading partner for Atlantica would be Europe, and they would become economically and politically closely tied by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) which the economically-weakened conservative United States would probably withdraw from. Without the economically-prosperous states that now constitute Pacifica and Atlantica, the federal budget of the United States would be much smaller. This would mean less of a military role for the United States in the world. As the United States withdraws from the volatile Middle East and Africa, relations there would be primarily the

European Union and Russia. US foreign relations would shift focus toward its main trading partners in Latin America (especially Brazil).

By recognizing and respecting their differences, the two new nations of Pacifica and Atlantica could enact their progressive programs with their unicameral legislatures based solely on population, while conservatives could remain dominant in the United States government, with its anti-democratic Electoral College and Senate. Rather than continuous conflict between the large urban states versus the small rural states, the shrunken United States can become much more unified and focused on its conservative goals, while progressives will migrate to either Atlantica or Pacifica with their democratic socialist policies.

Peaceful separation is the way a new civil war can be avoided, by the breakup of the United States. A weakened United States will be forced to curtail its military presence in the Pacific region and in the Middle East and Africa. Russia will probably establish a close alliance with Turkey and Syria, but the other Middle Eastern nations would unite against Russian domination. China will establish itself as the dominant regional power in the Pacific Rim, and it and the European Union will become allies to check Russian expansion into the Middle East and Africa. The world will be better off without US military interference in all these destabilized nations. Otherwise, a powerful United States military establishment will continue to clash with Russia and China, and the world will continue in conflict and war. And, at home, the fundamental differences in outlook that now plague the dis-United States will only get worse.

Americans should learn from the disastrous Civil War of 1861–1865, in which over 800,000 Americans died, that the “preservation of the Union” policy of Abraham Lincoln needs to be rejected. While it is fortunate that the US Civil War did, at least, result in the destruction of the institution of slavery, that barbarous institution is no longer a factor. In our own time, a policy of peaceful separation makes much more sense. With the coming era of environmental catastrophe, a nation like the United States cannot afford to be distracted by continued internal conflicts due to its population’s fundamental differences. War is a horrible way to resolve differences. Peaceful separation is the best way to avoid another civil war.

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