



Jamaica Considering Independence From Great Britain

“Of the various forms of government that have prevailed in the world, a hereditary monarchy seems to present the fairest scope for ridicule.” — Edward Gibbon, *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* (1776-1788)

Jamaican Prime Minister Andrew Holness may have just finished reading Gibbon’s seminal account of the end of the empire of Rome, as he said a few days ago that his country intends to become a republic.

“We are moving on. We intend to ... fulfill our true ambitions and destiny as an independent, developed, prosperous country,” he said.



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According to reports out of the small Caribbean island, Jamaica’s government plans to hold a referendum before 2025 on whether to become a republic, but recent surveys reveal that only a slight majority of respondents favor leaving the British empire and setting out as an independent nation.

Monarchists such as Jason Green insist that having a monarch provides political stability that republics can’t guarantee.

“The republican argument is we get rid of the king, have a president and we’ll move forward and become a developed country — that’s what has been sold to us,” Green said, as reported by SBS News.

“There is often this perception out there that patriotism means that you have to support a republican form of government. To me, patriotism means supporting whatever is in the best interest of your country. And as a monarchist, I believe that retaining the constitution we have now is in the best interest of Jamaica,” Green added.

What he fails to comprehend is that Jamaicans had no role in drafting the British Constitution that he wants to be governed by and it would seem to be a maxim common to mankind that the only legitimate foundation of government is the consent of the governed.

As was the case with the American colonists in the 18th century, Jamaicans of the 21st century are not represented in the U.K. Parliament. Jamaica does, however, have its own legislative body, and the laws passed by that body must be approved by the representative of the King, an official known as the Governor-General.

As the people of Jamaica prepare to express their sense of sovereign supremacy, larger — perhaps more pertinent — questions are being asked around the globe.

Do people retain a right to separate themselves from a larger political entity? If so, when may that right be rightly exercised?

The American answer to these questions is set out in the Declaration of Independence. This proclamation by our patriot forefathers was meant to lay before the world the moral and legal justifications for the severing of the political ties that for more than 150 years had bound the American



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colonies to the crown of England.

As James Madison wrote in *The Federalist*, No. 39, the particular political tenets professed by Americans are unique to the “genius of the people of America.”

Our sense of secession and its lamentable necessity has been given a voice by Englishmen and Americans from Algernon Sidney to Thomas Jefferson and their reasons, though sound to our minds, may seem selfish or seditious to the understanding of those descended from other social and political traditions.

The question to be decided by the people of Jamaica, as well as the other subjects of the crown who are considering breaking away from Britain, is how and when is secession justified.

Supposing the majority of a population wants to withdraw from the larger society to which they have been bound politically. What becomes of the minority of that people who wish to remain a part of the greater government?

There are at least two possible answers to that important inquiry.

First, assuming that an independent Jamaica would be a socialist state (many of those supporting secession from the British Empire are calling for reparations for slavery and a more aggressive redistribution of wealth in the name of equality), the would-be citizens of the country of Jamaica who didn't wish to be robbed of resources in the name of social justice could emigrate to some other nation with something closer to their own conception of a good government.

This solution would rid Jamaica of that segment of their population who would obstruct the new government's goal of establishing a socialist economic system. Additionally, those departing for other shores would be free from the fetters that a socialist scheme would place on their property.

Next, there is the paradoxical fact that the perceived problems of secession are solved by more secession. As Ryan McMaken explains, “a larger number of states is preferable to a smaller number. A larger number of small states provides more practical choices to taxpayers and citizens in choosing a place to live under a government that more closely match their personal values.”

In other words, that government functions best that is closer to the ideal perceived by the people who live in that society.

How much sunnier would the current political and social climate become if those who wished to live in a country such as the one the so-called progressives are trying to create in the United States were empowered to seek such “equality” and those who prefer to live in a land where liberty is given its fullest expression and traditional values are held dear were able to enjoy such a society?

Finally, there is the irrefutable fact that any segment of a population who finds that their values and governmental goals are not being pursued in their present country — who are forced to remain under that nation's regime — are hostages.

As humans, it is our inherited right to create governments, create confederacies, create coalitions, and it is our right to abrogate those things when they begin destroying our lives, liberty, and property, rather than protecting those things.

These are truths that, as Americans, we hold to be self-evident. Jamaica? Maybe not so much. Therein, though, in the right of self-determination, lies the solution to the question of Jamaica and to deciding once and for all whether to be a subject of the realm of King Charles or a citizen of the Republic of



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Jamaica.



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