

In Sept, 2017, the Left-leaning magazine, *The Nation*, published this article (first page below, key quotes continue on back)

"The hordes have broken through the gates of Washington, DC, and now we should tear the structure down."

—Mark Meckler,
president of Citizens
for Self-Governance

The Nation.

by RICHARD KREITNER

Why the left should embrace the movement for a new constitutional convention.

Conventional Wisdom

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T NOON ON TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 12, 71 delegates gathered in the chamber of the State House of Representatives in Phoenix, Arizona. A sign near the entrance featured an official logo that bore a gold-plated inscription: ARTICLE V: HISTORY IN THE MAKING.

Nominated by 19 Republican state legislatures, the men and women in Phoenix—all of whom, the *Arizona Republic* said, "appeared white"—assembled to organize a convention of the states, a never-before-tried method for amending the US Constitution.

"Some are saying about us, 'They are no Hamilton. They are no Jefferson,'" said Kelly Townsend, the Arizona state representative who served as chair of the Phoenix convention, speaking to a reporter. "No, we are not. But we are the stewards now. They found the courage to stand up, and now it's our turn."

The US Constitution is the most difficult to alter of any in the world. Article V lays out two ways to propose amendments: with the support of two-thirds of both houses of Congress, or by a convention of states called by Congress upon the request of two-thirds of the states. Whichever way it's put forward, an amendment then has to be approved by three-quarters of the states—either by special conventions



Citizens United foe:
Lawrence Lessig
says we shouldn't
fear a "runaway
convention."

"Last January, [Mark] Meckler [President and Co-Founder of Convention of States] explained the Article V movement to a conservative paper: "The hordes have broken through the gates of Washington, DC, and now, at this very moment, is the time we should tear the structure down.'" [emphasis added]

"As the writer Daniel Lazare described in his 1996 book *The Frozen Republic: How the Constitution Is Paralyzing Democracy*, constitutional change was at the center of the original Progressive agenda."

"Rather than ridicule the efforts to adapt the Constitution for the present day, small-D democrats ought—with eyes wide open—to join them"

"A convention of states, therefore, is the best remaining option for sorely needed constitutional reforms."

"Another piece of such a package could be the abolition of the antidemocratic Electoral College."

Throughout American history, there have been hundreds of attempts to abolish the Electoral College. All began in Congress, and all failed. It's time to try another way

"My partner is my friend, and someone I've worked with for a long time, Mark Meckler."

Other issues now pressed by the left—the right to health care, education, housing, the vote, even a basic income—could also be raised in a convention of states.

"There's no reason that bold progressive ideas can't be introduced and advocated with just as much tenacity and organizational panache as the Kochs bring to the balanced-budget crusade. The left shouldn't be afraid of a "runaway convention." It should welcome one."



Above: Larry Lessig and Mark Meckler as teammates at Intelligence Squared Debate on Article V Amendments Convention, 2017

In his chapter on an Article V convention in *Republic, Lost: The Corruption of Equality and the Steps to*

End It (2015), Lessig suggests a grand bargain: "The key is a simple compromise. We get to consider our proposals if you get to consider yours."

"North Carolina native and a professor at the University of Texas School of Law, [Sanford] Levinson argues that we should put "our undemocratic Constitution," as he termed it in the title of a 2006 book, up to a vote. If a majority voted against it in a national referendum, there would be a new convention to reconsider the whole structure."

Read the full article here: [The US Constitution Is Over 2 Centuries Old and Showing Its Age | The Nation](#)