



## Why Every U.S. State Needs a Well-trained Defense Force

Contemporary events are confirming a timeless, universal principle that our nation's Founders understood, but which we lost sight of for so long: Liberty cannot exist independent of autonomy.

High tensions between the political Right and Left in America have, in turn, prompted tensions between the states and the federal government. In the midst of this, there is renewed interest in the idea of states having their own defense forces independent of both the U.S. military and the National Guard — which is always ultimately subject to the federal government.



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The Left, which today fears a reversal of the centralization that the United States has gradually undergone over the centuries, is extremely suspicious of the Right for wanting to have defense apparatus that cannot be controlled by Washington, D.C.

In a sense, the fact that the side of more government and less freedom is against the idea of state defense forces is a signal that the idea is at least worth looking into.

In fact, developing competent state guards is precisely the action the states must take as a means to restoring the rightful balance of power that should exist under the Constitution.

One of the primary reasons freedom has been eroded so severely and government has become so expansive is because we have effectively abandoned the proper governmental framework that the Framers sought to preserve through the Constitution.

That is, the federal government was never intended to be a national, centralized government. The United States of America was supposed to be precisely what the name communicates — a union of states.

And in the time of the Framers, the word “state” was widely understood according to its regular academic usage: in reference to a sovereign political entity. It was not meant to be synonymous with “province” or “territory,” words that imply a political unit's auxiliary status to a superior governing body. When the Founders spoke of the “United States,” the implication was that each of the member states of the union was the equivalent of what we generally call a “country” today.

And if we truly accept that each of the states is a “state” in the real meaning of the word, then the logical conclusion is that these states have the powers rightfully belonging to any “state.” That includes maintaining forces for their defense.

This is something no one can argue with legally. After all, 22 states already have their own defense forces — even California. But what *does* need pointing out and emphasizing is the role these state defense forces should play and their vital importance to true constitutional government.

No state, as in “country,” can be free without the means to defend itself against those who would



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violently rob it of its freedom. History has shown time after time that a nation's freedom only lasts so long as it can successfully defend itself against invasion.

Our own contemporary experiences show the sad condition of nations that lack the means to ward off aggressors. Just look at the constant fear and uncertainty gripping Taiwan — they live in the knowledge that their free way of life could end any day because their defense capabilities are no match against China's military might.

The only reason Taiwan is currently not a Chinese province is because western nations have sworn to defend the small republic. But make no mistake — China [will invade](#) the moment it is confident that the pledges of western support for Taiwan are mere bluffs.

In short, Taiwan may want to believe it's free, but, in reality, it is hostage to greater powers.

In a similar way, the American states and their respective citizens feel free, but our freedom is likewise hostage to the whim of the Washington, D.C., political class. And one of the greatest instruments of D.C.'s control is the very same institution we are constantly told is there to "protect our freedoms" — the U.S. military.

This is not to take anything away from all the brave men and women who do and have valiantly served in the military. It is merely an acknowledgement of political reality: The same military the federal government uses to defend the states and the people is the one it will unhesitatingly use to compel to obedience any state Washington deems to be out of line.

The only way to counterbalance the threat of tyrannical military aggression from D.C. is for a state to have the capability to defend itself against such aggression. This is why it is vital that states not only have their own state guards, but actually make them a priority.

Although a number of states have defense forces, they are given a back seat to the National Guard as far as funding and resources and are often used for disaster response rather than being treated as a competent force for actual martial purposes.

The use of the National Guard, in fact, is another instance of how the federal government has debilitated the states by creating the illusion of freedom. States believe they have their own defense programs in the form of the National Guard — and proceed to pour millions of dollars into it each year. But at the end of the day, D.C. can activate a state's National Guard and turn it against the state's own people at any moment.



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