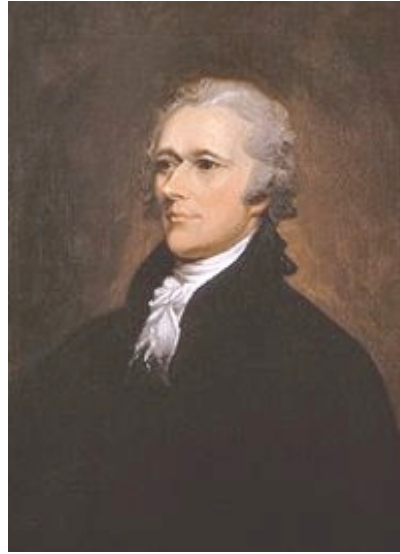




Written by [Jack Kenny](#) on September 19, 2011

## Monetary Crisis a Threat to Liberty, Lawyer Warns

The fiscal and monetary crisis confronting America today is more than an economic problem, it is a threat to our liberties and the nation's sovereignty, constitutional lawyer Edwin Vieira said at a Constitution Day celebration in Portsmouth, N.H. on Sunday. Unless a sound currency is established, the coming economic collapse will result in America "falling victim to a domestic totalitarian police state with the loss of American sovereignty and independence and lead to some sort of regional or global system, i.e. a new world order," he said.



Citing Italy and Germany in the 1920s and 1930s as examples, Vieira warned of the hyperinflation that occurs when a government dramatically increases its printing of dollars to cover its mounting debts. No form of government has ever survived a national debt that equal to more than 41 percent of its annual budget, he said, adding that in the United States today, it is 44 percent. "Our country is set up to fail," he said, as jobs and technology are shipped overseas, artificial "bubbles" are created in the domestic economy and banks and large-scale investors turn to the federal government for relief.

"They get bailed out and who pays? The people who have no jobs. It's a downward spiral," said Vieira, who has authored books on constitutional issues and is a member of the Bar of the Supreme Court. As has happened recently in some European nations, the United States will impose a program of "austerity," leading to social upheaval, he predicted. "They (will) reduce the living standard of average Americans and pay banks and speculators," he said, leading to "social dislocation, civil disobedience and criminal activity." The government is already planning for that, he said.

"That's why we have built up the Department of Homeland security on a national level," he said, warning that the term "homegrown terrorists" may easily be interpreted by federal officials to include "people who criticize them, constitutionalists and Ron Paul supporters." He dismissed the notion that Americans would never succumb to a police state.

"As far as I know, there has never been a claim that Stalin, Hitler or Mao Tse-tung ever arrested anyone or shot anyone in the back of the head," Vieira said. Those tasks were carried out by "vast numbers of ordinary Russians, ordinary Germans, ordinary Chinese who put on a uniform and went to work everyday. Is there something that immunizes the average American (against) what happened to the average Russian, the average German, the average Chinese?" Instances of police brutality are already acclimatizing the public to accept the kind of abuses of authority that prevail in police states, he said, citing a recent case in Fullerton, California, where a homeless man was beaten to death by police.

"The prosecutor said, 'I can't find an intent to kill so I'm not going to prosecute.'" The effect of that and other instances of police abuse that goes unpunished, he said, is "to inculcate in your minds the three rules of subservience: one, know your place; two, do what you're told; and three, keep your mouth shut."



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One way to avoid an economic collapse that would lead to a police state, Vieira said, is to establish an alternative monetary system based not on paper money, but on gold or silver.

Theoretically, private individuals or institutions may do that, he said, but as a practical matter it would require a larger and more permanent entity, like one of the states, to draw enough deposits and transactions for the alternative system to take root. "A state is more or less permanent. It's not going to go out of business or move away anytime soon," he said. The alternative system could co-exist and be convertible with the existing monetary system, just as nations have different currencies and rates of exchange. "We do nothing to the Federal Reserve," Vieira said. "We just leave it alone and see what happens in the marketplace." But with an alternative system in place, people would have a choice that could spread from state to state, making the Federal Reserve system subject to the rigors and discipline of competition. There is little doubt, Vieira said, which system would prevail when people "see the difference between money that is depreciating in value and money that isn't." Eventually people will "walk away" from federal reserve notes, he said, and that will have a restraining effect on a federal government grown large through a formula of "tax and tax, spend and spend, elect and elect," Vieira said, quoting a New Deal slogan. "With a sound currency in place, it's difficult for the politicians to do that," he said.

Vieira, a resident of Virginia, noted that an effort to establish an alternative monetary system was introduced in the New Hampshire Legislature several years ago but was killed in committee. A similar proposal was voted down in Montana, he said. In Virginia, it "went down the memory hole."

"We're having a very difficult time to get it past that legislative hurdle," he said, calling on the New Hampshire audience to carry out an "education mission" on the subject. If they could get it back before a committee of the Legislature, he said, "I'll get more experts up here to testify than you can shake a stick at."

Vieira's talk was part of a daylong program of seminars on constitutional issues offered to the 120 or so participants at the 15th annual Constitution Day celebration sponsored by the New Hampshire-based [National Heritage Center for Constitutional Studies](#). In keeping with the day's theme of "Constitutional Resistance . . . Restoring Federalism," Paul Jehle, pastor of the New Testament Christian Church in Plymouth, Mass, spoke on "Interposition: Federalism Applied." Interposition, or the doctrine that a state may stand between the people and the national government when the latter exceeds its jurisdiction, is a "constitutional doctrine that has been neglected for many, many years," Jehle said. The doctrine has its roots in the Bible, he said, as the judges of the various tribes resisted unjust acts and usurpations by monarchs. American colonists, he said, resisted acts by the English King and Parliament that violated the very charters granted by those same authorities. "Interposition has no meaning unless it means resisting tyranny in one form or another," Jehle said.

Author and historian Larry Schweikart of the University of Dayton (Ohio) delivered the keynote address on "What Can the State Do Now to Restore Their Sovereignty?"

"Stop taking federal money," Schweikart said at both the beginning and end of his remarks "We're well down the road to the end of federalism," he warned, due in large part to the control the federal government exerts over the states through conditions attached to the funding of myriad programs. Block grants, that permit the states discretion as to how the money is spent, still perpetuate a dependency on the federal authority, he said.

The number of states that have sought waivers from the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act,



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commonly referred to as “ObamaCare,” and the fact that 28 states have sued to have the act declared unconstitutional demonstrate the extent of federal overreach, he said. And Arizona’s law empowering state law enforcement agencies to arrest illegal immigrants was enacted because the federal government is not carrying out its responsibilities and enforcing its own laws, he said. Schweikart said a repeal of the 17th Amendment, requiring popular election of U.S. Senators, would restore the balance established in the original Constitution, whereby the House of Representatives represented the popular will and the Senators, elected by their respective state legislatures, defended the interests of their states.

“We must advance the 10th Amendment argument at every opportunity,” he said, referring to the portion of the Bill of Rights stating that all powers not delegated to the federal government by the Constitution no denied by it to the states “are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people.”

“Stop looking for federal money for everything,” he said. Referring to the Hillsdale College, a private liberal arts college in Michigan that accepts no government funds, Schweikart said, “We need more Hillsdales and fewer Ohio State Universities.” He urged the audience to ask candidates for public office, “What specifically will you do to reduce the role of government in my life, in my business in my community?”

“The fight to restore federalism will be long and hard,” he said, but it must be waged and won “so that we speak the truth when we say America is the land of the free.”

*Illustration: Alexander Hamilton, signer of the Constitution, Federalist co-author, and first U.S. Secretary of the Treasury*



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