



Marjorie Taylor Greene's 'Divorce' From Reality | Opinion

Description

Representative Marjorie Taylor Greene on Monday issued a tweet calling for a “national divorce,” dividing “red states and blue states” into separate nations. According to Greene, this great separation is necessary due to “the sick and disgusting woke culture issues shoved down our throats and the Democrat’s [sic] traitorous America last policies.” The lawmaker insisted that her views are quite common: “Everyone I talk to says this.”

Greene has floated this idea before, and she is hardly the first person to suggest a national split. Intense partisan polarization has been a defining feature of American politics for years. And, for the last several months, supporters of Donald Trump have increasingly mentioned the possibility of civil war on social media.

As others have pointed out, a national divorce isn’t a serious policy proposal. There is no constitutional mechanism for states to secede (remember that Civil War thing?). The economic, diplomatic, and military complications would be disastrous. And there is not even a coherent plan to divide the nation. Indeed, as a resident of Georgia—a state represented by two Democratic senators that supported the Democratic candidate in the last presidential election—it’s not clear that Greene herself would end up in one of the “red” states. Obviously, Greene isn’t making a sincere suggestion, she is trolling to attract attention and provoke a response.



U.S. Rep. Marjorie Taylor-Greene (R-GA) holds up a poster of a Twitter announcement of suspending her account during on Feb. 8, in Washington, DC.

Alex Wong/Getty Images

But even if a breakup isn't in the cards, it's disturbing to think that so many Americans are ready to call it quits on our national union. Living together in a pluralistic, democratic society requires citizens to respect differences, compromise, and strive for common ground. Like any marriage, couples counseling rarely works if you're already meeting with divorce lawyers.

Fortunately, Greene's vision of dividing red and blue America doesn't have as much support as she imagines. The phrase "national divorce" implies a peaceful, if not amicable, separation. But because there is no legal mechanism for secession, any attempt at splitting the states would inherently involve violence. In a [recent poll](#), conducted by the Rooney Center for the Study of American Democracy at the University of Notre Dame, less than 3 percent of the public is personally willing to use violence for political ends. Nor are the "sick and disgusting woke culture issues" as universally condemned as Greene believes they are. Cancel culture is viewed as a serious threat by less than 35 percent of Americans; less than 30 percent view critical race theory as a serious threat.

Even if Greene's rhetoric is unrealistic, it's still quite dangerous. Despite the unlikelihood, impracticality and downright absurdity of the United States officially breaking up, many Americans think it is a real

possibility. According to the same Rooney Center poll, more than 40 percent of Americans agreed that the U.S. is on the brink of a new civil war, and those who do tend to support a variety of antidemocratic beliefs. Participants who expect an imminent civil war were more likely to support banning disfavored groups from holding rallies and teaching in colleges. They are more likely to support banning books in local libraries and less likely to support the universal right to vote. And, not surprisingly, those who expect civil war are more likely to support the use of political violence.

Ultimately, Greene's idea of a national divorce is a nonstarter. And, like any marriage, throwing around divorce talk isn't helping the relationship.

by Matthew Hall is the director of the Rooney Center for the Study of American Democracy and the David A. Potenziani Memorial College Professor of Constitutional Studies at the University of Notre Dame. Hall specializes in interdisciplinary research that spans the fields of American politics, organizational behavior, and law and society.

Category

1. Crime-Justice-Terrorism-Corruption
2. Main
3. Politics-Geopolitics-Gov.-Events
4. Society-Family-Education

Date Created

02/25/2023