

Nate Smith: “Texas won its independence from Mexico in 1836 and became an independent nation”

written by Mercè Feliu | 27 de novembre de 2016

Nate Smith. (Houston, TX). Executive director of TNM, [Texas Nationalist Movement](#), a peaceful association that promotes the political, cultural and economic independence of the nation of Texas.

[Llegir l'entrevista en català](#)

What are the main reasons—historical, cultural, economical,...—that feed the Texas Nationalist Movement?

The main reason that we work every day toward independence is that we feel the best people to decide what is best for Texas are Texans.

Historically, Texas won its independence from Mexico in 1836 and became an independent nation, the Republic of Texas, recognized by the United States, Great Britain, and France. The reason Texans declared their independence from Mexico was very similar to the reason the United States declared their independence from Great Britain and a major reason we seek independence again today. Texas opposed a strong centralized government. The Texas revolution started by asking for state sovereignty within Mexico and for the government of Mexico to honor the terms of the 1824 constitution. Ironically, Texans find themselves again under a strong centralized government that does not adhere to the few powers delegated to it by the States in the US Constitution. Fortunately, we have the opportunity today to express this will through a vote and have a peaceful path to follow within the existing political

systems.

Texas culture is recognized around the world. Although it is often stereotyped into the old west and cowboys, which makes up only a portion of the Texas culture today, really these traits emphasize the Texan desire for limited governance on the individual. Boots, rodeos, cowboy hats, two-step dancing, cattle ranching, pickup trucks, hunting, country music are all still a vibrant part of Texas culture. However, there is so much more that goes into being a Texan from tacos to outdoor recreation to fine arts and advancements in innovation and technology. Texas culture cannot truly be summarized, but it can ultimately be expressed in single word: pride. While countless songs, magazines, and films about Texas will provide a myriad of reasons people are proud to be Texans, it is the perspective of a foreigner, a non-Texan, that grasps the contrast between Texas and other States. The 'American' author John Steinbeck set out to discover what made America so American and when he got to Texas he found something quite contradictory to his travels through the other States. "Texas is a state of mind. Texas is an obsession. Above all, Texas is a nation in every sense of the word."

Economically, Texas also offers an abundance. With a GDP in the global top 10 (roughly the size of Italy's economy), Texans have prospered and grown when other States have not because the Texas people and their government favor less restriction and regulation of business. The result is entrepreneurship and innovation that has prospered despite ever-expanding federal restraints. Even when the US economy suffered a tremendous recession, Texas remained strong with a growing job market and attracted many new companies to the State. It may come as little surprise that Texas is an energy leader especially in oil and natural gas production and refining. However, few realize that Texas is also a leader in renewable energies with massive wind farms, solar energy, and renewable energy research. With an economy as diverse as its

people, Texas is also a leader in agriculture, manufacturing, technology, financial services, healthcare and more. In fact, Texas is the number one exporter in the US to the tune of \$280 billion a year surpassing California, the second largest exporter, by more than \$100 billion. Texans want to continue their strong economy by advancing a low tax, low regulation business environment that continues to foster job growth, innovation and the wealth of the Texas people that is currently restricted by federal policies and regulations.

How has the support of the Texan society towards the secessionist movement developed?

Support for independence has steadily grown over the last two decades and has been accelerating. The more often people from other states criticize or blame Texas and its culture for holding back the US, the more that the Texas spirit grows. Our previous Governor was quick to point out in 2009 that we could leave the US if we desired when facing increased growth in federal powers over Texas. The current Governor was elected on campaign not only of federal criticism, but he continues to rely on his extensive track record of suing the federal government over its unlawful expansion of power. It's a recurring theme from the top elected state officials that the greatest threat to Texas is the federal government. The people of Texas have certainly expressed more than just an interest and while fear and misinformation are often propagated by the opposition and media in attempt to slow the progress, its effectiveness weakens every day. There are a limited number of polls on the issue but we have seen steady growth since polls in 2009 with recent polls indicating nearly half of Texans in support. Even as media outlets criticize efforts toward Texas independence, they frequently point out how strong Texas would be as a nation.

You are promoting a bill for the Texas Legislature to allow a referendum on independence. How are you working to reach this referendum? What will this referendum imply?

The Texas legislature can pass a bill calling for a statewide referendum on Texas independence. The TNM is working with elected representatives to get a bill filed and passed. Additionally, TNM is identifying and organizing Texans who would vote for independence to put direct pressure on their representatives to support this bill. The referendum when passed will express the self-determination of the people of Texas and can be used by the Texas state government to begin the process of separation from the US. Article 1, Section 2 of the Texas Constitution acknowledges "The people... have at all times the inalienable right to alter, reform, or abolish their government in such manner they may think expedient." The referendum supported by a majority of the Texas people instructs the Texas government that they are exercising their right "to reassert Texas status as an independent nation".

Is the TNM a party or a movement? Which one is your ideology and how is the Texas that do you want?

TNM is a peaceful movement of the Texas people. The organization is neither left nor right nor has a political ideology. When Texas regains its independence and sovereignty, then the people of Texas will decide what policies and ideologies are best to govern Texas. The majority of Texans have always favored a limited government and a vote to separate again from a strong centralized government will infer that Texans will maintain this aspect of their character. While our supporters have varied beliefs in particular changes they would like to see, those can usually be distilled down to restoring liberty at the individual level.

Which is the position of TNM in relation to the 2016 US presidential election? Which are the parties are you working with to build up synergies?

The TNM had no position in the presidential election and the outcome which was surprising to many does not affect our mission. On the chance the new president works to restore some sovereignty to Texas, it still does not change the fact that

Texans are best to govern themselves. We are working with supporters of independence in all Texas political parties. Polling data and recent events at the Republican party's state convention indicates 54% or more support from Texans identifying as Republicans. Close to a third of Texans that identify as Democrats support Texas independence as well as half of those that identify as politically independent. Approximately half of elected Republican delegates to the 2016 state convention supported a party platform calling for Texas independence and the Libertarian Party of Texas voted in 2016 to strengthen the party plank supporting the nationhood of Texas.

What do you think should be the status for the Spanish language in the future Republic of Texas?

Spanish is spoken in nearly a third of Texas households. Texas has no official language, but state business and a majority of commerce in the state is conducted in English. In a post-independence Texas, the Spanish language will continue to be an integral part of Texas history and culture.

The image of Texan secessionists is quite stereotyped, pro-arms and racist. Are you trying to reverse this cliché and how?

All Texans are stereotyped that way, at least in the US, and in general they are also stereotyped as pro-secession. That being said, let's address the issue of race. It is commonplace for those opposed to the idea of self-determination to resort to name-calling as a result of a weak argument in favor of remaining in the union and calling someone a racist or trying to stereotype them that way seems to be a favorite of the unionists. We are absolutely working to reverse that cliché, because it is completely untrue for Texas nationalists. TNM is a diverse organization and we have actively removed and will continue to remove and disavow any leader in our organization that expresses bias for or against anyone based on their race or national origin. The TNM believes that anyone who wants to

be a Texan can and should be one regardless of where they were born, how they look or even what they ate for breakfast. The Texan culture is represented by a few guiding principles to which most Texans adhere, however, the only requirement is enough pride in being a Texan to call yourself one.

As far as the pro-arms stereotype, the Texan desire for a strong defense and the right to own weapons is often confused as a desire for aggression. Texas was founded when Mexico decided that this area of land was a wild frontier and lured current Mexican citizens and new settlers (the majority from the nearby US) to the land under the guise of economic opportunity and personal freedom. Those that accepted the challenge did so at great personal risk. Firearms were a necessity to hunt for food, defend from predators, and as we saw during the Texas revolution defend itself from oppressive centralist regimes. Texas won its independence and became a nation in 1836 after trying to peacefully negotiate more sovereignty as an individual Mexican State and hold the Mexican government to its constraints of the constitution of 1824.

Texans have earned a reputation as a friendly people and those that move to Texas from other States often point out the contrast. The name Texas is taken from the Caddo language that translates as friend or ally. To this day, Texans are still distrustful of strong centralist governments that erode their sovereignty and individual freedoms. Because Texans believe that all political power is inherent in the people and not the government, they feel a strong need to maintain personal arms. This sentiment is also represented in the US Constitution's 2nd amendment.

This desire for self-defense can also be misinterpreted as relating to foreign policy positions. It would be a mistake to perceive the US foreign policy with the will of Texans. Neither Texans nor the Texas government they elect set or choose US foreign policy. US media and federal politicians

often advocate for actions that many Texans find egregious and unnecessary. At the core, Texans believe in the freedoms and rights of individuals which includes the rights of people to determine their own future. An independent Texas will have a foreign policy that varies from the US and it will give Texans a real opportunity to discuss and determine what actions, if any, Texas military forces should take in the world.

Catalonia, next state on the world, what is your opinion about?

The TNM supports the natural right of self-determination for all peoples. According to the UN charter, it is the duty of the signers to the UN treaty to recognize and support this right. As such TNM hopes that a referendum is given international recognition and that the Catalonian people and their elected government can begin a peaceful path of separation from Spain.