

# **A Limited Article V Convention—**

## **Taking A Lesson From The Present**

**By Bill Walker**

Sometimes a lesson can be learned by studying history. Other times the lesson can be learned by studying the present, the here and now. While many people do not realize it conventions to alter constitutions are quite common in the world. The rest of the world does not fear conventions as we do in this country. Least of all they do not fear a “runaway” convention, a strictly American contrivance created by opponents of a convention.

The fact is that some countries such as China for example, hold annual conventions and while their form of such a convention surely cannot be compared to the level of democracy we enjoy in this nation, nevertheless the Chinese hold a convention. They are not the only example. Indeed it is far easier to list those nations who have not held conventions in recent times than to list all the nations that have held in conventions in recent times.

Right now the main argument about a convention seems to be on “same subject” application-convention which is the incorrect theory that the states can limit a convention thus preventing a “runaway” convention. By the way, I suggest if you want to find out how truthful the myth of a “runaway” convention is, ask any of the advocates and critics of an Article V Convention to provide a single quote by any 1787 contemporary alleging the convention was a “runaway.” Many of these people say they support such a convention and appear to believe that such a convention will serve this nation best because of their overriding fear of a “runaway” convention, an event history shows, never occurred. None of them ever bother to consider the other side of the coin: what will be the result of such a “limited” convention?

Present experience and the words of those now holding conventions, that is, actually in the process of having a convention in their country, speaks otherwise. Discussions of the upcoming [Irish convention](#) which has been limited by government decree prove the dangers associated with a limited convention. The comments of the news story I have linked to speaks volumes and show the greatest danger of a “limited” convention—that it might not do the job.

Since I’m discussing conventions around the world I thought a discussion of a convention in [Somalia](#) might also be in order. This news story contains pictures as well as text regarding a convention now underway in that country. For those who fear a convention that only can amend what we already enjoy, and not write a new constitution, please take note of the faces of hope of those attending a convention and the fact they show no fear. Indeed it appears they are quite proud to be part of a obviously historic event taking place

in their country because the convention is resolving problems in that nation and bring peace and stability to that region. We might learn something from this.