

The Trump Counterrevolution's Next Moves Abroad

By Victor Davis Hanson

[President Donald Trump](#) caused a stir, again, when he suggested that the recent independence vote in Greenland was good news and that someday, sometime, somewhere, the United States might have to absorb Greenland. I guess he meant militarily.



That's not a wise thing to say because we understand that Greenland is a huge near-continent-sized country with only 56,000 residents. And it's kind of an ossified colonial client of Denmark. But nevertheless, there are ways to partner with the people of Greenland, whether they remain a colony of Denmark or whether they're

independent, that will keep Russia and China out.

The same thing is true of Panama. We don't need to keep saying that we may someday, somewhere need to use force to restore Panama. We don't really want—I don't think we want the Panama Canal back. All we want is—and we have achieved that—is not to have the Chinese controlling the exit and the entrance to the [Panama Canal](#).

And now it looks like American companies will assume those roles at—as I said—the exit and the entrance of the Panama

Canal. It does no good to even suggest the United States would use military force. We have a treaty with Panama. We'll respect it. They have violated it, no doubt, by inviting in the Chinese. They've seen the error of their ways. And I think there's going to be some type of restoration in our relationship. Same thing with Greenland.

But this brings up a larger point. I think, given the radical nature of the Trump counterrevolution, we need to be very careful how we speak. The quieter that we can be, the more effective and more encompassing can be the reforms. The louder you are, the less leverage and clout you'll have.

So, let's take a few examples, very quickly. On the tariffs—and we're in a near tariff war with Canada—rather than keep threatening, “We're going to pay 25%—we're going to have 25%, 50%. And how dare you? We don't need anything you have.” Why not try something different? Such as:

We don't like tariffs necessarily. We didn't want to put tariffs on Canada. The whole idea of our North America Free Trade Association of the past was to eliminate tariffs. But for some reason, you, Canada, insidiously, incrementally have been adding tariffs and the result of that is that you're running a \$50 billion surplus with the United States that comes at the expense of our working class. And we are subsidizing your defense. You have a powerful, wonderful military tradition. So, why don't you, on your own accord, give us some initiatives that would bring back equity, parity? It'd be very easy to do.

Or Donald Trump could act this way on the cuts:

We didn't run up the debt. We owe \$37 trillion. We are running \$1.7 trillion deficits. We are paying interest at \$3 billion every day. We have to make the cuts just for the interest. This is unsustainable.

We welcome all sorts of talks about cuts. We don't like laying people off. But all you do is you give this negative advice to us and nothing is constructive. You tell us where to cut. Maybe you'll have a better idea, maybe a broader idea, maybe a more fundamental cut. [Former President Barack Obama](#) used to give us all sorts of ideas, but he never followed through.

It was not my–Donald Trump–ideas to have to make these fundamental cuts. I inherited an unsustainable situation. And I don't like it, but I have no choice. But I welcome anybody on the other side of the aisle who has a better idea or the public at large, but we have to stop the borrowing.

And as far as Ukraine, Donald Trump is under all sorts of criticism because he, at first, had a legitimate beef with [Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy](#). And then Zelenskyy agreed to a ceasefire.

Now we're trying to woo [Russian President Vladimir Putin](#) into a reciprocal agreement where there might be a ceasefire, we might have a DMZ, we might have American commercial activity, the minerals deal as a buffer, etc., etc. Russia's kind of worn out.

And he's facing all sorts of criticism. All he has to say is:

Vladimir Putin did not invade in my first term. He invaded during Barack Obama's term and Joe Biden's term. Even during George W. Bush's term he invaded. It wasn't I who got us into this mess. We cannot watch aimlessly and helplessly as 1.5 million lives are consumed with death, wounding, capture, missing–these casualties. All we're trying to do is stop the Stalingrad.

We've welcomed all sorts of initiatives, all sorts of suggestions. We have open ears. We have given billions of dollars to help Ukraine. But at this date, the slaughter

continues. And we're going to try to find mutually agreeable solutions to stop the killing and to turn Ukraine from a charnel house, a desolation, a desert into a prosperous, affluent society again.

And we're going to try to make sure that we're not an existential enemy of Russia and, especially, not an existential enemy of China, Russia, Iran, North Korea, and an array of anti-Western societies. That's all we're trying to do. And we're doing it modestly, but we're doing it effectively.

And we are welcome to any suggestions. But the prior solution—as long as it takes, give them as much munitions, money, ammunitions, you name it—it was no solution at all. It was a prescription for mass death.

First published in the [Daily Signal](#)