

What Are the Left's Solutions for the Problems They Created?

By Victor Davis Hanson

The *Wall Street Journal* has consistently criticized Trump's economic policies, particularly his ongoing "trade war" with Canada, over the past several weeks. And certainly, the tensions are regrettable. Trump's trolling of the insufferable Justin Trudeau, with talk of Canada becoming the "51st state," perhaps only galvanized the Canadian left. It unfortunately may ensure that the only real hope for a Canadian return to normality, the election of Pierre Poilievre, may be lost.



That said, does the WSJ truly believe that the current \$1.7 trillion budget deficit stacked on top of \$36 trillion in national debt and an annual \$1 trillion trade deficit are sustainable in any fashion? Do they believe any Republican president would have survived the midterms if he cut or "reformed" Social Security? If so, consult the fate of the recommendations of left-wing Barack Obama's 2010 Simpson-Bowles commission ("The National Commission on Fiscal Responsibility and Reform").

DOGE, the effort to demand either symmetrical or no tariffs, closing the border, the rare minerals agreement, etc., are all controversial, even desperate efforts to stave off insolvency.

NAFTA was sold on the promise of trade equilibriums, eventually leading to no tariffs and rough parity. Yet Canada currently runs a \$60 billion surplus largely because of its energy sales and selective tariffs on U.S. agriculture and some manufactured goods. That sum might be tolerable from a friend and not worth the acrimony, even with the present massive trade and budget deficits—if it had occurred in isolation.

But it did not. The Canadian surplus is force multiplied by its chronic refusal to spend a measly 2 percent of its GDP on defense. Canada could have easily offered a partnership with the U.S. to explore joint missile defense or shared Arctic Ocean naval patrols with a new fleet of Canadian and American icebreakers.

But it did nothing of the sort.

Worse still, no Canadian leader can offer any defense of their policies, such as: “We believe a \$60 billion surplus with our free-trade American partner is justified, and we also believe we are further correct in not spending our promised 2 percent of GDP on defense.” Their veritable retort of “Trump is a monster” is no defense at all.

And there is wider context still. Mexico currently siphons off \$63 billion in remittances from the U.S. economy, most of it from illegal aliens. Most of them enjoy some sort of subsidy from the American local, state, and federal governments.

Its trade surplus has ballooned to over \$170 billion, largely because of opportunistic partnering with the Chinese to avoid US duties on imported Chinese-produced goods.

No one truly knows the full cost of an open border paid in

American blood and treasure to Mexican cartels—70,000 lives and \$20 billion annually?

Add up our northern and southern neighbors' various surpluses and one could argue that \$300 billion flows out of the U.S. to our so-called best friends and supposed partners in a so-called free-trade agreement supposedly designed to promote "free," if not truly "fair," trade.

Did any of the appeasements from the prior somnolent Biden administration—printing money, open borders, kindred socialist and green programs, USAID reckless generosity, and no concern over massive trade deficits—have any effect on either Canada or Mexico?

Or was Biden's appeasement interpreted as weakness to be exploited rather than magnanimity to be reciprocated?

All Mexico has to do is promise to reduce its surpluses down to say \$20-30 billion, patrol its side of the border, and bar the importation of raw fentanyl product from China. It could also stop its citizens from swarming the border and accept a 20 percent U.S. tax on remittances. But once reciprocity is lost, any attempt to restore balance is often mischaracterized as aggression, allowing the former victimizer to recast themselves as the blameless victim.

We are also currently watching massive demonstrations in New York to protest the ongoing deportation effort of Mahmoud Khalil. He is not a U.S. citizen, currently residing in the U.S. as a green card holder/former student visa resident alien.

He has led protests, often turning violent, at Columbia and in New York on behalf of radical Palestinian groups, including Hamas, which is designated a terrorist organization by the U.S. State Department.

Surely, he knew that, as a guest on American soil, he has no

inalienable right to enter and remain in the U.S., especially if the State Department believes there is “a reasonable ground to believe that [his] presence or activities in the United States would have potentially serious adverse foreign policy consequences for the United States.”

It would be difficult to imagine a more anti-American group than Hamas, which currently holds several U.S. hostages and openly boasts of the mass murders it carried out on October 7, 2023. That awful date sparked mass protests from both Americans and Middle Eastern students in support of Hamas killers. The slaughter and, along with Israel’s response to it, ignited the worst epidemic of anti-Semitism in a hundred years, predominantly driven by American campuses and, in particular, tens of thousands of guest students from the Middle East.

When the ACLU and liberal congressional representatives protest and work on behalf of Khalil, what is their rationale? Are they at all worried that Hamas murdered American hostages and still holds several? Is it really in the U.S.’s best interest to welcome students from radical, anti-American countries, such as Syria, Iran, or Gaza, to American campuses, to see them champion anti-American terrorist groups like Hamas and Hezbollah, and help fuel a climate of anti-Semitism and attacks on Jewish-Americans? Does the ACLU realize that our elite universities are fanning the worst anti-Semitic outbursts in memory? If black students were targeted in the same manner as Jews, would it remain similarly silent?

So, is this really what the left is fighting for? Why doesn’t the new Democratic Party and its street brigades simply be honest and say, “We support the efforts of radical Palestinian foreign students even when they openly champion Hamas and intimidate Jews, and so welcome their constructive presence and protests on American campuses”?

There are many problems with leftist-inspired immigration

protests. The foremost is hypocrisy, usually couched in anti-Americanism. In places like Los Angeles, protestors burned the flags of the country they demanded to remain in while waving the flags of countries to which they seemingly refuse to return.

If America is such an intolerable place, why did 12 million knowingly break the law to enter it? The entire theme of today's ethnic studies programs on U.S. campuses is a story of how awful America is, was, and will always be. And yet these are the very university loci that are the most strident about welcoming into the U.S. illegal aliens. Should they not be down at the border warning of the white toxicity that awaits any illegal migrant?

There is another sort of hypocrisy at work.

Left-wing elites in Washington, on campuses, in the media, and among the foundations and NGOs are rarely subject to the consequences of their own open-borders philosophies. It is one thing to virtue signal a world without borders that welcomes in millions of its impoverished, but quite another to help feed and house them when they show up in Martha's Vineyard or Malibu rather than in the Rio Grande Valley, the San Joaquin Valley or the inner city.

The latter places do not traffic in cheap rhetoric but deal with swamped healthcare faculties, housing shortages, insolvent social service budgets, spiking crime, overcrowded schools, increased gang activity, and overtaxed infrastructure—issues one would expect with the sudden addition of 12 new San Franciscos in just four years under Biden.

Finally, regarding Ukraine, Trump is receiving a lot of criticism for the hot-cold treatment of Ukrainian President Zelenskyy. He used both verbal and policy leverage in hopes of forcing Ukraine and Russia towards negotiations—a task that

has historically proven to be impossible without U.S. coercion. One can easily criticize Trump for being overly naive about Vladimir Putin's ultimate intentions or any strategic resolution of the war that only Trump seems to wish to end.

But again, what is the alternative to his efforts?

Is to keep feeding the ongoing current Stalingrad desolation where 1.5 million dead, wounded, and missing Ukrainians and Russians have fought for three years without any end in sight? Do we really want an endless war that has created a new alignment of anti-Western Russia, China, Iran, North Korea, and, at times, a number of Middle Eastern, South American, and Asian opportunists?

What is the European alternative plan to Trump's?

The old Biden notion "as long as it takes"—as if the Europeans may finally mobilize and send two million soldiers the way the U.S. did in 1917-18 to break up the deadlock of the World War I Western Front?

Do Ukrainians have a secret reserve of manpower to send another 10 divisions to the front?

A new wave of 5,000 drones to hit Moscow and do the sort of damage it is now suffering?

Non-U.S. NATO fighter aircraft number around 2,000. So, is it the plan of France and the UK to spearhead some 1,000 European jets and send them to Ukrainian bases, where they will fly ground support missions and conduct strategic attacks on Russian infrastructure to stop the stasis?

The answer is no.

There is no other plan but the current one of a 500-million-person proximate Europe screaming at the 335-million-person distant U.S. for not doing more to aid the now 30-million-

person Ukraine fighting against the 145-million-person Russia.

Before one can fault the herky-jerky, art-of-the-deal Trump effort to find a stable peace and stop the slaughter, his critics must at least chart a plan for victory, explain the cost in lives and treasure, and outline exactly the eventual goals of reclaiming all the 2022 borders or the 2014 borders. Instead, we hear only 'this won't work,' 'that can't work,' 'this is stupid,' 'that is naïve,' but never a comprehensive defense of the EU/Biden/Zelenskyy policy or some enlightened replacement for it.

On matters of trade, immigration, and foreign policy, we are witnessing a counter-revolutionary effort to erase the madness of the Biden revolutionary years. Then unnamed and largely unknown radicals, under the veneer of a waxen effigy president, hijacked the country and imposed upon it the most radical and nihilist agenda in the past century.

The current correctives are not easy or pretty. But the alternative to the prior status quo was not the status quo at all, but a Jacobin nihilism that had led only to insolvency, civil strife, the destruction of the southern border, at least two theater-wide wars abroad, and the end of the U.S. as we once knew it.

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