

Germany Is Self-Imploding

By Victor Davis Hanson

Today I'd like to talk about the crisis facing Europe, specifically its self-implosion across the spectrum—energy, population, fertility, defense. Germany, for example, has been systematically shutting down its nuclear plants and, for a while, its natural gas electrical generation plants.



It's relying, believe it or not, more on oil and coal. But the net result of all of this deliberate turn to wind and solar, at the expense of fossil fuels and nuclear, is that it costs about four

times more to use electricity [in Germany](#) than it does on average throughout the United States. That's not the only problem.

Germany is deindustrializing. And by that I mean it's losing about 200,000 jobs in its auto industry due to these high energy prices and regulations. Its green mandates, especially [electric vehicle](#) mandates, have revolutionized the car industry, in the sense that they're not selling abroad as they did in the past.

In addition to that, Germany's disarmed. They only have about

125 attack aircraft. They have very few armored vehicles. Their active military is only about 180,000 soldiers.

They have 84 million people in the country. The fertility rate is getting very close to 1.4. I know we have problems here in the United States at 1.6, but 1.4.

And they don't have borders. They have had a million to 2 million [illegal aliens](#) just prance into Germany, especially during the last years of the Merkel chancellorship. In terms of percentage of foreign-born, Germany has more foreign-born than does the United States, which doesn't have a border in the south, at least until [Donald Trump](#) comes in. Twenty percent of the German population is foreign-born.

Why am I mentioning all of this? Because Germany represents the powerhouse, traditionally, of the European economy, and even culture, and it's starting to implode. The euro, the benchmark of European financial health, is about, right now as I speak at the end of December, one dollar to one euro, and sometimes even less for the euro.

That's very strange because when I used to run a travel company to go to [Europe](#)—I remember in 2008, the euro was 1.6, almost 1.7 per the dollar. So what's happening is that Germany is, I guess we would call it, undertaking a slow-motion suicide.

But here's the irony. In September 1944, at the height of World War II, the secretary of the treasury under the Roosevelt administration, Henry Morgenthau, had a plan for postwar Germany when it was defeated.

He didn't want another war—the Franco-Prussian War of 1870-71, World War I, World War II. He said, "Enough." So what did he do? He submitted a plan that was going to deindustrialize Germany, depopulate Germany, change its borders. It was almost as if he was trying to turn it into something like Tacitus' description of first-century A.D. Germany, as a pastoral,

agrarian society. In fact, he explicitly said that.

When Joseph Goebbels heard about this, he said, "Oh my God, this is a gift. We're losing the war. We'll tell all of the German people they want us to be permanently pastoral. We'll starve to death. And even if they don't like the Nazis, as we've destroyed the country, you're losing more, they'll fight."

Thankfully, George Marshall, chief of staff of the Army; ex-President Herbert Hoover; and others went to the Roosevelt administration and said, "If you institute this plan, they're going to fight to the death. And we have bombed Germany. So when we get into Germany, you'll see that it's almost depopulated now."

The net result was they canceled the Morgenthau Plan that would have permanently made Germany depopulated, disarmed, deindustrialized.

What's my point in bringing up this historical example? We the victors of World War II thought imposing a plan of deliberate deindustrialization, depopulization, disarmament, open borders, destroyed borders would be too Carthaginian, and so we backed off. And now we're here 80 years after the rejection of the Morgenthau Plan and the German people, or the German leadership, have essentially updated it and inflicted it on themselves willingly, not by coercion. That's a tragic irony and it's something we should all take a very close look at.

First published in the [Daily Signal](#)