

Mexico Is Our Enemy and We Should Act Accordingly

By Victor Davis Hanson

I'd like to talk today about the status of Mexican-American, not as a Mexican-American citizen, but [Mexico's](#) relationship with the United States. What is the Mexican-American status quo now? It's very disturbing.

I'll just give you an example of what I mean: We sent deported criminals back to Mexico and they forbid—we were going to, and they would not allow them to land in Mexico. We had people of the cartel shoot an American citizen on U.S. land and shoot at our Border Patrol. So, what is Mexico? Is it neutral? Is it an ally? Is it an enemy? Is it a frenemy?

Here's some data. Right now, we have a trade [deficit](#) with Mexico of \$150 billion. Remember Ross Perot? I was about in my 40s, early 40s, in 1992-96, third-party candidate. He said, "You're going to hear a big sucking sound." What he meant was your jobs are going to go to Mexico. They're going to run up surpluses.

We're going to get hurt. I thought that was, kind of, a little bit dramatic. That's exactly what happened. When he warned that, as soon as NAFTA went in, they had a \$2 [billion] to \$3 billion and then \$10 [billion] and then \$40 [billion] and then \$60 [billion]. The deficit with Mexico will be about \$168 billion per year now. It was in 2024, it'll be bigger. \$167 billion. They—that does not include, that does not include the \$63 billion that Mexican expatriates—the vast majority here illegally—send back to Mexico.

And it's worse than that. How does somebody who's impoverished, from some of the poorest areas of Mexico, free up \$400 or \$500, \$600 of their income to send back to the

Mexican government—I don't say Mexican government directly, but relieving the Mexican government of their responsibilities to have a social network for their own family, for people's family. And the answer is they're on subsidies, local, state, federal, housing, education, food, health care, provided by the American taxpayer.

And, a third thing that's very worrisome—we should all be worrisome—on average, 75,000 [Americans](#) die of fentanyl overdoses per year. And it's been going on for several years, at least a decade. But here's the problem, it's not as [former president of Mexico] Mr. [Andres] Obrador says, "Our fault"; partly an addict, he has to take responsibility.



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els take raw products to make fentanyl, shipped in deliberately by China who wants us to suffer, and then repackages it in special cartel industries and then disguises it for export into the United States. Sometimes by lacing it into fake pharmaceuticals that are prescription drugs and sometimes putting it into opiates, so that the user may get a high but won't be killed, but may be killed because they're inexact or they're deliberate, who knows?

And if you total that up over a decade, that's 750,000 deaths. That's more than all of the wars of the 20th century and the 21st century—World War I, World War II, [Korea](#), Vietnam, First Gulf War, Iraq, Afghanistan—all the people who died by our enemies. The Mexican government or the cartels—and I say

Mexican government by enabling the cartels—have killed Americans.

It's worse than that. In addition to that, the Mexican government votes against the United States on almost every major referendum at the United Nations, especially anything to deal with the [Middle East](#). So, this is my point. They are deliberately exporting their poor, and now we had 12 million people come in. And their way of thinking, this is wonderful.

We have a safety valve. So, if we have internal dissension because we've exploited indigenous people, we send them to the United States. No. 2, they send back \$63 billion. It's our second-largest source of foreign exchange—more than tourism and oil—right next to the trade surplus we get with the United States.

And then the cartels, we don't know how much they make, but that money is fungible. So, between this trade surplus of \$167 billion, plus the \$63 billion and remittances, plus whatever the cartels make—\$20 [billion] to \$30 billion from their opiate sales in the United States—we're getting over \$200 billion off of this asymmetrical relationship. And we pay the United States back by saying, "If you dare deport people who have committed a felony or a crime, we're going to block your arrival."

So, I don't know what Mexico is, but I know what we can do about it. Twenty percent tax on anybody who sends, anywhere in the United States, money back to Mexico. That would raise about \$12 billion. That would send a message. And then we have a tariff. Donald Trump says he's going to do it very quickly and that would tell Mexico, you're not going to run up a \$167 billion under the guise of the North American Free Trade [Agreement]. Not going to happen. And then we're going to tell them, if you don't deal with the cartels we will. And I think Mexico will come to attention.

And we will not have Ms. [Claudia] Sheinbaum, the president of Mexico, saying what Mr. Obrador did, during the Biden administration. It's a beautiful thing that 40 million people have come to the United States illegally. Oh, by the way, I suggest all you people who can vote in the United States, vote against Republican. And he did that again, and again, and again.

It's time for us to be very sober, careful, judicious and say to Mexico, "You have to decide whether you're a friend, an ally, or an enemy. Because right now, you are an enemy of the United States. And we will take the necessary adjustments—make the necessary adjustments for that unfortunate fact."

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