



## The 51st State?!?!

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“What I’d like to see?” [confessed](#) the president. “Canada become our 51st state.”

Why?

“We give them military protection,” he offered.

Then things got weird.

“We don’t need them to build our cars,” Donald Trump added. “We don’t need their lumber. We don’t need them for anything.”

Shocking? Yes. But not just for the disrespect shown to our northern neighbors.

What’s most shocking is our president’s ignorance of economics. While we don’t “need” Canada for any of the things Trump mentioned, *we’re better off trading with Canada than not*. The sending of “billions of dollars” up north is neither charity nor waste; the gains both sides make are apparent in the voluntary

trades themselves.

It’s as if he thinks if “we” must pay anyone, it should be to *ourselves*, that is, to our fellow countrymen.

Behind this is that old crank notion, protectionism: “we have big deficits with Canada, like we have with all countries.”

Now, it’s true that Canadians send more raw materials to the U.S. than we send to them, and that we send them more dollars than they send us theirs: that’s what “trade deficit” means.

But how is this bad for us?

Trump doesn’t explain. “I look at some of the deals made and I say, ‘Who the hell made these deals?’ They’re so bad.”

Mr. Trump identifies no specific trade rules or agreement; he doesn’t say which are unfair, or why; nor does he say who made them. But the trades that pile up to that overall deficit, each was made by Americans and Canadians who thought the deal best *for them*.

Trump’s seemingly goofy idea of adding Canadian provinces to the U.S. as new states would have one great benefit: more trades with these good people than ever. This belies Trump’s far, far more troublesome notion that we need nothing from Canada. We need everything. As Canadians do.

That is, freedom.

This is Common Sense. I’m Paul Jacob.