

Victor Davis Hanson: ‘We Never Get Any Thanks for What We Do’

By Victor Davis Hanson | December 16, 2025

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Jack Fowler: [President] Donald Trump tells ISIS we will retaliate after the ambush that killed three U.S. troops in Syria. Victor, anything you want to say about that?

Victor Davis Hanson: I don’t know if we have the whole story, but it seems to be somebody that was supposedly training with them, or they knew, or somebody in the government. That happened a lot in Afghanistan. It just raises the same question.

I think we have 900 soldiers in Syria. And I think the former ISIS members who have now flipped and are trying to form a government in Syria and who ousted the Assad dynasty are supposedly pro-American, and they are supposedly, according to Trump, outraged at this and will punish them. We lost deterrence in Syria during the Biden administration.

I’m not blaming him solely, but for four years they staged over 130 attacks originating in Syria on American bases, security positions, and we didn’t do much of anything. And we basically established this principle that if you want to kill an American, nothing’s going to happen to you.

So, Donald Trump is going to have to find a way to disabuse people of that, and we’ll see what he does. But if he can’t, then you can’t put Americans over there as sitting ducks like we did in Lebanon. And [President Ronald] Reagan took everybody out of Lebanon. That probably was a bad sign, a reaction to the destruction of the embassy and the barracks in 1983.

But if you are going to put Americans over there, then you have to tell their enemies, “If you kill these people, we’re going to make life very uncomfortable for you.”

And there's nothing more uncomfortable for radical Islamists, because we got about a quarter-million of them here on campuses, to tell them, we really have no problem with you. But if you're associated in any way with these movements, or let's just say there's certain countries, and Trump has named them.

I just don't think there's, at this point in this time, there's no need. We have enough people coming in. There's no need to bring in people from Gaza, from the West Bank, from Morocco, Algeria, Libya, I don't know, maybe Jordan, maybe not, maybe some of the Gulf places, but there's no reason. We have enough people. Why would we bring anybody in from Somalia? There'd be no reason to do that. We have enough people here.

And we've already proven that A, we can't vet them, and B, they're not honest, they, as a group, immigrants, about who they are and what they are here for, and that they will all be self-supporting, or they have a patron that will support them. And when you have 75% to 80% of the Somali community on public assistance, and they're committing fraud in addition, then only a [Minnesota Gov.] Tim Walz would say, we want more people like this.

What Tim Walz said last week, Jack, was, basically, if I could translate his gibberish: We have 75% of the Somalia communities on public assistance, and they've created the greatest welfare fraud in the United States, a large group of Somalis. And we want more people just like that.

Fowler: Who refuse to assimilate. Actually, maybe culturally can't assimilate. We certainly know they won't assimilate.

Hanson: Well, if you come over from a country, the difference, as I said before, between a Judeo-Christian country, where that is the majority religion, and an Islamic, where it's the overwhelming religion, is one of tolerance. If you are in an Islamic country, I've been in a lot of them, and you just watch, you can't be an apostate, an atheist, agnostic. It's just almost impossible. You at least have to profess you're devout Muslim.

Here in the United States or a Western Europe, you can do whatever you want. And that's the difference. So, except for these petro sheikdoms that have all this money, that's why people are not flocking to Egypt, they're not flocking to Morocco, Algeria, they're not flocking to Tunisia and Libya, they're not flocking to the West Bank. They're not flocking to any of these places if they're not Muslim and Arab. They're just not doing it.

They're coming here because they have a particular view. They want the security, the freedom, the prosperity of the United States or Western Europe. But they want it in a cocoon, as an enclave, so they can continue to have all of their traditional customs and values, but with the major exception, they won't be poor. They won't be monitored by the government. They won't be attacked by their tribal rivals. They'll be safe. They'll be rich. They'll be healthy.

When they get a problem like I have they just will go right into a university research hospital and, bam, three hundred thousand dollars for a procedure or something that'll be paid for. And then they can vote for somebody like [Rep.] Ilhan Omar, who says this is a trashy country and the dictatorship is worse than the one she left. That's where we are.

Fowler: Yeah, how would you say, "Out of the many one h— no!" in Latin? I know *e pluribus unum*, but I don't know how to say, "H—, no."

Hanson: I get it, you know. I get really upset because I think I've been in two ERs and maybe, I don't know, seven or eight offices, doctor's offices, and maybe 10 scanners the last six months.

And I can tell you this is a wonderful country because in every single place there were sizable numbers of people who did not speak the English language, and they were immigrants. The one that I just got out of Friday night after a procedure had a sign, Jack. It was really ecumenical. It said, "You point to the language you speak." It was at every desk. There were 20 of them. I didn't even know some of the languages, Mongolian, etc.

And for somebody to say this is a terrible country, or it's trashy, or to see people in Los Angeles waving the Mexican flag and burning the American flag, it just sickened me because this country is so ...

Joe Biden let in 12 million people, and then he went to the beach and fell asleep. But he didn't say to himself, "Who's going to house them? Who's going to feed them? Who's going to pay for their [sicknesses]?" And then they all have medical problems.

Are they just gonna go to Cedar Sinai and walk in the door and say, "I don't have any health insurance. I have a kidney stone. Can you give me \$50,000 worth of free treatment? And if you don't, you're a racist"? Yeah, that's what it was.

So, it was a good country. It was generous. It was magnanimous. But we don't ever hear any thanks for what we do.

