

The Final Round¹

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State Finals

Wilton High School

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Resolved: NAFTA should be expanded to permit the free movement of labor.

A Note about the Notes

I've reproduced my flow chart for the State Championship Round at Wilton High School augmented by what I remember from the debate. The notes are limited by how quickly I could write and how well I heard what was said. I'm sure the debaters will read them and exclaim, "That's not what I said!" I apologize for any errors, but I hope debaters will appreciate this insight: what a judge hears may not be what they said or wish they had said.

There are two versions of the notes. The one below is chronological, reproducing each speech in the order in which the arguments were made. It shows how the debate was actually presented. The second is formatted to look more like my written flow chart, with each contention running across the page as the teams argued back and forth. It's close to the way I actually take notes during the debate.

The Final Round

The State Championship Round was between the Joel Barlow team of Brendan Coppinger and Nicolo Marzaro on the Affirmative and the Darien team of Cameron Wong and Reed Morgan on the Negative. The debate was won by the Negative team from Darien.

1) First Affirmative Constructive

- a) Introduction
- b) Statement of the Resolution
- c) Plan
 - i) Passports would permit free travel
 - ii) Background checks and tracking
 - iii) Employers would be required to collect income taxes
 - iv) Cost of the program would be funded by eliminating immigration bureaucracy

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- d) A1²: The resolution/plan would solve the immigration problem
 - i) 58% of the 11 million illegals immigrants in the US are from Mexico
 - ii) This will make the remaining immigration problem manageable
 - iii) Other measures have failed, such as Operation Wetback for temporary workers, the DREAM Act, past amnesty
 - iv) The money spent on enforcement will be reduced
- e) A2: The resolution/plan would benefit the economy
 - i) NAFTA increased trade by 3 times
 - ii) Consider the European Union (EU), which increased economic activity and living standards and decreased crime
 - iii) Mexican low income workers match jobs open in US
 - iv) US workers with higher education can work where needed
 - v) Seasonal workers can come and go at need, e.g. for harvests
 - vi) Tax revenue will increase as workers will be on a legal payroll
- f) A3: The resolution/plan would benefit the people involved
 - i) Mexican drug cartels thrive due to poverty
 - ii) Jobs provide income and reduce the power of the cartels
 - iii) Jobs can match the abilities of workers.

2) Cross-Ex of First Affirmative

- a) Are drug cartels profitable? Yes
- b) Would they cease to be profitable under your plan? Yes. Border crossings are now illegal, giving leverage to the cartels to use them for smuggling
- c) If it is easier to cross the border, won't it be easier for drugs? No. Drugs are associated with illegal border crossing. Less reason if not illegal.
- d) Why can't the drug cartel use legal crossings to smuggle drugs? The drugs are illegal, no incentive for legal crossers to carry them.
- e) So 5 million illegals in the US are not from Mexico? Yes
- f) How does the plan solve the immigration problem? Currently overburdened by numbers. Smaller numbers easier to handle.
- g) Is it hard for an American to get a Mexican visa? Easy. It's much harder for a Mexican to get a US visa.
- h) Is the EU happy with the movement of workers? Yes, but some of the circumstances are different.

3) First Negative Constructive

- a) Intro
- b) Resolution
- c) I will present the Neg case then move to Aff.
- d) N1: The resolution eliminates essential border controls
 - i) Plan provides a gateway for non-NAFTA country immigrants
 - (1) Mexico and Canada have easier citizenship rules
 - (2) This provides a free ride to the US
 - ii) Border traffic will be open to the cartels—minimum wage jobs won't reduce the temptation
 - iii) Aff said they will lower enforcement
 - (1) Increased movement into the US

² "A1" indicates the Affirmative first contention, "N2" the Negative second contention and so forth.

- (2) Since Mexican visas easy to obtain now, no benefit to US workers
 - e) N2: Integration of the labor systems will lead to massive compatibility issues.
 - i) Bureaucratic inefficiency means we need border controls
 - ii) Consider problems like:
 - (1) Where do you collect unemployment insurance?
 - (2) How do you transfer health care between countries
 - iii) US is unlikely to turn power over to NAFTA
 - f) N3: The resolution will be detrimental to the NAFTA economies
 - i) Clashes directly with A2
 - ii) Plan destroys Mexican labor force—workers will flow out but not in
 - iii) Additional competition in US and Canada will increase unemployment
 - iv) US workers can already go to Mexico, so flow will be Mex to US
 - v) Aff said Mexicans will take low-paying US jobs
 - (1) The EU parallel is Romanians/Bulgarians going to the UK
- 4) Cross-Ex of First Negative**
- a) You said there would be complications due to sovereignty? Yes. The US won't yield to NAFTA
 - b) You mean the US won't give up sovereignty? No
 - c) Didn't it already do that with the UN? NATO? NAFTA? No. It did not give up sovereignty to NAFTA
 - d) Didn't the US agree to forgo the right to impose tariffs? Resolution gives other countries the right to do things in US. If Mexico gives someone citizenship, they could then work in the US
 - e) Is it important to change US immigration policy? No
 - f) Can't we change Mexican immigration policy? US can't change it
 - g) What if NAFTA, I mean FAFSA (joke), I mean NAFTA does it?
 - h) Aren't Americans afraid to go to Mexico? No. The issue is no job opportunities.
 - i) You mean they don't want to go to cities controlled by drug cartels? No
 - j) If the cartels were gone, would they go? Yes
- 5) Second Affirmative Constructive**
- a) Intro
 - b) I'll go over the Neg, then Aff
 - c) Plan: funding from inefficient government jobs will go to immigration enforcement
 - d) N1: Will Canada and Mexico serve as a gateway to the US?
 - i) Entry to Mexico is harsher than into US due to the drug problem, e.g. from Columbia or Nicaragua
 - e) N1: Drugs come into the US now with illegal immigrants
 - i) No illegals, less opportunity
 - ii) Vehicles are checked at legal border crossings
 - iii) Workers with legal jobs and right to cross won't risk prison to smuggle drugs
 - f) N2: Sovereignty?
 - i) US has joined many international organizations and yielded sovereignty to gain other benefits: UN, NATO, NAFTA
 - g) N3: Labor benefits?

- i) Mexico will be more attractive to Americans, with fewer cartels and less poverty
- ii) US has many educated adults who are unemployed, or working at McDonald's, not Google
- iii) Some of these could find good jobs in Mexico
- iv) In the EU, making illegal workers legal led to prosperity
- h) A1: We would certainly solve half the immigration problem
- i) A2: Economy would be from additional workers
- j) A3: There would be less violence and crime

6) Cross-Ex of Second Affirmative

- a) Do you think now is the time to turn over immigration policy? Yes, to improve things
- b) Now is the time? Yes, to replace a failed program
- c) Won't the influx of workers impact the US job market? In what way.
- d) Would you answer my question? US high-wage workers could go to Mexico and Canada
- e) How hard is it for them to go to Mexico or Canada now? They have quotes. It's not easy to get a work visa
- f) How much immigration is there from Canada? Less than there would be under the resolution.
- g) Isn't trade legislation different from labor legislation? Our plan works on both
- h) Aren't trade and labor separate? They are similar
- i) Is labor a commodity? It's human capital
- j) Isn't it more than just economics? We considered that in the Aff case

7) Second Negative Constructive

- a) Intro
- b) Resolution
- c) Aff then Neg
- d) A1: Aff only deals with the economic and labor issues
 - i) They cut the problem in half, but leave a very large problem unaddressed
 - ii) And they don't solve the immigration problem, they just make some current illegals legal—problem is we don't want the influx
 - iii) Comparing A1 to N1, we still will need the border controls
 - iv) Aff plan justifies all the current illegal immigration
- e) A2: Let's consider the EU versus the US
 - i) EU has a parliament
 - ii) NAFTA change would violate the commerce clause of the Constitution by ceding control of immigration
 - iii) Program would require a complex international bureaucracy to work
 - iv) Low income workers in the US would be unemployed
 - v) Aff overestimates Mexico's need for highly skilled workers
 - vi) Aff also overestimates Mexican government's ability
 - (1) Very corrupt
 - (2) Immigration will go to the lowest common denominator, so controlled by Mexico
- f) N1: US will be bound by Mexican/Canadian policy

- (1) Canada has a low population and is very immigrant friendly
- (2) E.g., the Schengen Zone has encouraged North African and Middle Eastern immigrants to use Greece as a gateway France and Denmark, so it isn't working
- (3) East Germany is still in a ditch—problems of the East are just moving West

8) Cross-Ex of Second Negative

- a) Why do you need to cede sovereignty to another party? The needed regulations will require a cooperative body
- b) Aren't leaders and their aides able to decide on a treaty? You need regulations and controls to implement it
- c) Doesn't NAFTA give us more say? It gives the US, Mexico and Canada equal say, and this isn't acceptable
- d) Illegals enter the Schengen zone through Greece? Yes
- e) Weren't the economies growing prior to the financial crisis despite these illegals? The prosperity was misleading, and couldn't withstand the crisis. This is where the US is now.
- a) Is immigration bad? Regulated immigration is not bad
- b) Immigration with checks? With checks established by the US to US standards it isn't bad
- c) Don't we have those in Aff plan? It would allow additional immigrants to enter through Mexico

2) First Negative Rebuttal

- a) Intro
- b) Immigration?
 - i) Now it's regulated because we want to limit the numbers
 - ii) Aff lets those here illegally stay and removes the deterrent to many others
- c) US workers in Mexico and Canada?
 - i) This is easy to do now compared to flows in the other direction
 - ii) It isn't happening because US workers prefer to stay here
 - iii) US won't just get low-skilled workers from Mexico. High skilled workers from Mexico and Canada will come to the US for the opportunities
 - iv) Mexico will use quality workers, harming their economy and increasing crime
 - (1) Mexico would be better off if they stay home
 - v) So no benefit to people or the economy
- d) Gateway access
 - i) Harms US, and others use Mexico as a gateway for others.

3) First Affirmative Rebuttal

- a) Intro
- b) Three issues: Economics, practicality and morality
- c) Economics--Neg ignores benefits of an open market
 - i) Labor can go where it is needed with no complicated visa process
 - ii) Criminal background checks, but most workers can move
 - iii) US/Canada trade exceeds all EU trade
 - iv) Resolution adds labor to NAFTA
 - v) A little sovereignty is ceded for a big benefit

- vi) The Commerce Clause only applies to activity between US states
- d) Practical
 - i) Mexican problems are US problems
 - ii) Cartels focus on border in order to smuggle drugs
 - iii) Fewer illegal immigrants mean fewer channels to smuggle drugs
 - iv) Mexico and Canada are not that soft on immigration
 - (1) Only citizens can move freely under resolution
 - (2) Mexican corruption due to drugs, which we reduce
- e) Moral—best person should get the job
- 4) Second Negative Rebuttal**
 - a) Aff then key issues
 - b) A1: Aff doesn't solve half the problem
 - i) They legalize half of the problem and ignore the rest.
 - ii) Result will be increased influx of workers
 - c) A2: EU example refutes the economic advantage
 - i) East Germany shows many won't move, like most US workers
 - d) A3: Moral plea depends on A1 and A2 being true
 - e) Economics
 - i) Open market argument assumes the problem is economic
 - ii) Immigration is driven by social and political issues, especially in Mexico
 - iii) More competition for jobs in the US will be detrimental for US workers
 - iv) Depletion of labor force in Mexico will harm Mexico
 - f) Practicality
 - i) Plan provides a Canada/Mexico gateway where the lowest common denominator will apply
 - ii) Cartels will not be curbed
 - (1) Members could apply for small jobs in US and then travel freely
 - g) Moral
 - i) Can't cede US sovereignty
 - ii) This is no reenactment of the fall of the Berlin wall
- 5) Second Affirmative Rebuttal**
 - a) Neg then Aff
 - b) Neg world looks like today, with an increasing immigration problem
 - i) Neg doesn't want to see the fall of the Berlin wall
 - ii) Neg would leave same immigration problems with illegals and drugs
 - iii) E.g., costs for the ER when sick
 - (1) Aff wages and tax revenue would pay for insurance and care
 - iv) Neg—more illegal immigrants as work visas are scarce
 - v) Neg—no jobs for college graduates, even though Mexico needs skilled workers
 - (1) We would continue to waste human capital
 - c) Aff—no illegals mean no drugs due to background checks
 - (1) Schengen zone saw a drop in unemployment
 - ii) Aff—gives up sovereignty to get jobs, save lives, reduce crime