Debating the Great Wall of Trump

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America First Economic Policy is, technically speaking, Mercantilism, a medieval doctrine that assets a nation can prosper by beggaring its neighbor. Mercantilism was discredited in 1817 by David Ricardo, when he developed the Law of Comparative Advantage, which justifies free trade. Ricardo's theory is the something that doesn't love a tariff wall.

The discredited doctrine was resurrected in 1930 when our federal government implemented Smoot Hawley Tariffs. After other nations retaliated in kind, the final result was the worst worldwide economic collapse in modern history.

Grossly underfunded vocational training programs and infrastructure deterioration are more consequential problems than trade imbalances. Massive deferred maintenance in America's highways and bridges, which now amounts to $3.7 trillion, will significantly degrade our future economic competitiveness.

Right-wing politicians are now trying to divert public attention from their failure to resolve America's fundamental problems by proclaiming: it's not the economy, stupid; it's Mexican Marauders.

Since national crime statistics indicate illegal residents in America are substantially more law abiding than native born residents (Cato Institute finding), the incompetent politicians are engaged in scaremongering. Folks should heed Franklin Roosevelt's admonition: The only thing we have to fear is fear itself.

Robert Frost doubts "Good fences make good neighbors." Yet they remain for now a necessary evil. A high-tech fence along relevant sections of our southern border would be more effective and less expensive in keeping aliens out of America than a trumped-up version of the Great Wall of China.