



Written by [Bob Adelman](#) on October 1, 2018

NAFTA “Finessed” to Include Canada at the Expense of U.S. Sovereignty

In the rush to include Canada in the USMCA (United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement), now being referred to by some in the press as NAFTA 2.0, before the witching hour of midnight Sunday, [the United States “finessed” the agreement](#), according to various press reports. Last Friday, the liberal *Toronto Star* first leaked about the coming “finesse”: “The dispute resolution impasse [over sovereignty-threatening Chapter 19 in the original NAFTA] *could be finessed.*” (Emphasis added.)



Late Sunday afternoon, the *Wall Street Journal* confirmed that the United States could fold in order to keep Canada in the deal by noting that “there are still ways to *finesse* deadlines and processes to work Canada into the deal before NAFTA 2.0 ultimately takes effect.” (Emphasis added.)

Just before midnight Sunday, another writer at the *Wall Street Journal* wrote that Trump’s demand to eliminate Chapter 19 altogether from the USMCA disappeared entirely under pressure from those who wanted to keep it:

A broad coalition of Republican and Democratic members of Congress, joined by leaders from American business and labor organizations, have made clear in recent days they would be unlikely to support a revised NAFTA that doesn’t include Canada.

In response, Trump officials [including globalist Robert Lighthizer as Trump’s trade representative and Jared Kushner, his son-in-law, who, said various sources, “brokered the deal”] suggested they would try to find ways to *finesse* the procedures and deadlines to leave the door open for Ottawa to be part of Nafta 2.0 before an agreement was submitted to Congress for consideration. [Emphasis added.]

Merriam-Webster defines “finesse” as “a skillful handling of a situation, [an] adroit maneuvering.” Regarding this instance, Merriam-Webster could have added: “utter collapse of previous nonnegotiable demands covered up with pronouncements to the contrary in order to get a deal done.”

And an utter collapse it was, as the *Wall Street Journal* noted in its coverage early Monday morning: “The United States compromised by dropping its demands to scrap the original treaty’s Chapter 19 provisions [creating] the special NAFTA courts allowing member states to challenge trade restrictions imposed by the others.”

This was no compromise. It was an utter collapse — a treacherous sellout of precious sovereignty in order to keep Canada in NAFTA 2.0. The *Journal*’s writers covering the “finesse” of American interests in favor of supporting globalism tried to handle the collapse “adroitly”:

Trump officials argued such courts infringed American sovereignty, but Canada sees the panels [supra-national courts operating under Chapter 19 that essentially allow unelected bureaucrats to



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bypass America's Constitution] as vital to protecting its industries against what officials consider frequent improper tariffs imposed by the U.S. — concerns heightened by the Trump administration's aggressive moves to block a range of Canadian exports from lumber to aircraft.

There's the treachery: giving up essential constitutional guarantees with long-term negative implications for national sovereignty in order to cut a deal with socialists in Canada, Mexico, and supporters inside the Trump administration who cherish a global community in place of sovereign nations making their own enforceable decisions according to the will of their people.

There are other parts to the USMCA related to demands that automakers make sure that much of those vehicles are built by high-paid workers and that unions gain substantial inroads into Mexican industry, all in the name of fairness and equity. But these fade in importance when compared to the retention of the odious Chapter 19.

There remains an opportunity to stop NAFTA 2.0. Noted the *Wall Street Journal*:

Despite the upbeat official rhetoric [President Trump called USMCA a "wonderful new Trade Deal" that's a "great deal for all three countries"], much work remains before a new Nafta takes effect. The agreement must win ratification by the U.S. Congress, where trade deals have become increasingly difficult to pass....

Administration officials said they don't expect the [new NAFTA 2.0] pact to face a Congressional vote until next year, when the House may be under control of Trump-hostile Democrats reluctant to support any of the president's initiatives.

This gives more time for activists who see the sovereignty-threatening dangers of keeping Chapter 19 in NAFTA 2.0 to create awareness among their peers and to pressure their elected representatives in Congress to vote against it. It's not a "wonderful new Trade Deal," Mr. President, but the same old wolf all dressed up in new clothing. You gave away your trump card in order to cut this deal. Shame on you.



An Ivy League graduate and former investment advisor, Bob is a regular contributor to The New American magazine and blogs frequently at [LightFromTheRight.com](#), primarily on economics and politics. He can be reached at badelman@thenewamerican.com.

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