



## WHO'S MORE RADICAL: THE LEFT OR THE RIGHT? WILL WITT

There are crazy positions on the far left and crazy positions on the far right.

On the left, there are people who believe a man can get pregnant; that the world is going to end in a decade if we don't cap carbon emissions; that the real purpose of the American Revolution was to preserve slavery.

On the right, there are people who deny the Holocaust happened; who believe that whites are inherently superior to other races; that no one should pay taxes.

But there's an important difference between these two extremes: The crazies on the right have *no* voice—they are shunned. They live mostly on the far fringes of the internet. The crazies on the left have a *loud* voice—they are celebrated. They live in the halls of Congress, in state legislatures, and in governors' mansions.

In light of this distinction, it might be interesting to ask ourselves this question: Which group, the left or the right, is more radical?

We can arrive at a commonsense answer by posing this thought experiment: What would America look like if the left got everything it wanted, and what would America look like if the right got everything it wanted?

Let's start with the left.

Taxes would go up on individuals and corporations to pay for more social programs—everything from universal childcare to free college tuition. Many on the left call for income taxes as high as 70%. Private health insurance would be abolished; the government would provide all health care services. Everyone in the medical field—doctors, nurses and administrators—would be government employees. Americans would pay for this government health care through much higher taxes.

Illegal immigration would be decriminalized. It would still be illegal to enter the country without proper documentation, but no one who made it into the US would be prosecuted for doing so. Illegal immigrants would also receive free health care, free education, and free housing.

The Green New Deal would be adopted. Hundreds of billions of dollars of subsidies for wind and solar power would be added to the federal budget. Drilling for fossil fuels, the current source of 80% of our energy, would be sharply curtailed or eliminated altogether. So would nuclear power. As a result, consumers' electric bills would be much higher.

Reparations would be paid for the past injustice of slavery. How it would be paid—and exactly to whom—is not clear. Legally acquiring a gun would become much more difficult. College debt would be cancelled. Those who had already paid for college would get nothing.

Transgender women—biological men who identify as women—would be allowed to compete against women in sports. America's military budget would be slashed by 25 to 50%. Speech codes would be enforced throughout American life.

And that's just a partial list.

Now let's ask what would happen if the right got what it wanted.

Income taxes would be cut. Capital gains taxes would be cut. Corporate taxes would be cut. And those cuts would be made permanent. All regulations that make doing business unnecessarily difficult and don't protect public health would be repealed. The issue of abortion would be sent back to the states for each state to decide its own abortion rules for itself.

Many more charter schools would be opened, and it would become much easier to fire bad teachers. In order to vote, citizens would need to present a valid ID. The border with Mexico would be secured. The only way to enter the United States would be through designated border crossings. In order to qualify for welfare assistance, you would have to prove you could not work.

The health care system would be opened to free market reforms. For example, insurance companies could sell policies across state lines. Students in elementary school would recite the Pledge of Allegiance at the start of each school day.

So what can we conclude from our experiment? It's not hard to figure out.

If the right got everything it wanted, the government would get much smaller. The citizen would have more freedom.

If the left got everything it wanted, the government would get much bigger. The citizen would have less freedom.

You're not radical if you want America to be what it's always been: committed to individual liberty. You're only radical if you want to fundamentally transform America into something it's never been.

Which country do you want to live in?

I'm Will Witt for Prager University.