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Brian Lamb
C-SPAN
400 N. Capitol St., NW #650
Washington, DC 20001

Dear Mr. Lamb:

The enclosed NAFTA-related materials may suggest knowledgeable persons to invite to phone-in discussions on the subject of NAFTA.

Another subject needing coverage is foreign aid. The press now and then runs an item about foreign-aid giveways, but never a complete discussion of all who receive it, how much they receive, and for what reason.

While we send many $billions of U.S. taxes to other countries, TV panelists wonder where the money is to come from to cover Midwest flood problems. Nobody suggests taking it from foreign aid. But why not put Americans' needs first?

Please invite some panelists to discuss both NAFTA and foreign aid, but please don't have them all be Yale, Harvard, Georgetown and Oxford graduates, or local DC press.

It would be a very enlightening service to have C-SPAN discussions of the above two timely topics.

Your attention to this letter is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

[redacted]
San Diego, CA 92111-7698

OPINION

NAFTA: An Explosive Mine Field For Mexico

By Juan Jose Gloria

The Argentines call their gasoline nafta. In the United States NAFTA or the North American Free Trade Agreement has become as explosive as that petroleum derivative. The Tratado de Libre Comercio (T.L.C.) as it is known in Mexico is a business treaty concocted behind closed doors by the Salinas de Gortari and Bush administrations.

More than anything NAFTA is President Salinas' prize for getting his country out of the economic mess it was in the 1980's. He did this by asking the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, to restructure his country's foreign debt and by ordering Mexican businessmen and workers to "tighten their belts" even when their pants began falling off from the economic starvation tactics applied by the Harvard educated Mexican president.

By pleasing the American banks while starving Mexico's poor, the promising young president went one step further. He promised to pen up the border to let into the country the throat slashing, toxic spewing, transnational companies that have already poisoned our land.

Mexican administrations before President Salinas were, like the U.S. before it, very protective of its borders, even defensive. The dealings of the past American administrations had been less than beneficial to our friends South of the Border. In 1810 the country lost more than half of its northern territory to "gringos" who attacked Mexico (Mexican American War) while it was fighting one of its worst civil wars (Mexican Revolution of 1810).

Likewise the U.S. and other foreign countries such as England have not trusted Mexican administrations for a long time because of what President Lazaro Cardenas did to them. He let them come in to develop the petroleum industry, build up the infrastructure, import valuable technology and when all this was done, President Cardenas ordered the expropriation of all foreign investments, technology and petroleum industry. The U.S. and Shell Petroleum of Britain lost millions. Mexico and the U.S. haven't seen eye to eye since then. There has always been a healthy distance between Mexico and the U.S. mainly because past American administrations felt that Mexican presidents were not to be trusted. One bone of contention has been that Mexico, still supports Fidel Castro's Cuba.

By pushing NAFTA, Salinas is in fact changing the traditional Mexican way of doing business with the U.S. He has opened the doors to transnational businesses who really have no allegiance to any country and whose only motive is profit. By removing all the trade restrictions and tariffs that have long protected his country, Salinas will open up flood gates that will inundate Mexican industry with U.S. products that will be built in Mexico by Mexicans and then resold to the U.S. and Mexican consumers at the same high prices they have always charged while paying Mexican workers less than the minimum wage.

By coming into Mexico transnational businesses and U.S. interests will take the economic reins of the country literally, something it had been doing indirectly through the IMF and the World Bank. Americans should probably say goodbye and good riddance to those companies that have left our land to pollute and plunder other countries, but is it really fair to Mexico?

Advocates for workers, unions, and environmentalists should fight to help stop the Salinas and Bush legacy.

The present NAFTA should be canned. There should be an agreement hammered out by all parties concerned, a new NAFTA that will take into account the rights of both our neighbors to the South, American workers, and the environment.

THE SAN DIEGO UNION-TRIBUNE Friday, July 23, 1993

Inside Mexico

Many fear NAFTA will make life harder

By S. LYNNE WALKER
Cooley News Service

MEXICO CITY — Plácido Medrano has seen plenty of hard times during his 56 years on the farm. But if the North American Free Trade Agreement goes into effect, things are bound to get tougher for the corn producer who depends on the weather and his wits to survive.

Medrano, like subsistence farmers throughout Mexico, is concerned the trilateral trade agreement that calls for increased competition between U.S. and Mexican industries will take away the livelihood he ekes from his parcel in the state of Guerrero.

"The government of Mexico says all the Mexican people are in agreement with the free-trade agreement," he said, rubbing a roughened hand across cracked lips. "It is not true."

As an accord on side agreements to NAFTA nears completion, people here are increasingly voicing their opposition to the trade pact that is certain to spur competition between U.S., Canadian and Mexican industries.

Agriculture will face new challenges, as will Mexico's steel, textile, electronics and petrochemical industries. Thousands of workers could lose their jobs as highly mechanized U.S. and Canadian industries take market share from their Mexican counterparts by offering higher-quality products at a lower cost.

That doesn't sit well with Alfonso Torres, a laborer from the town of Tehuantepec in the state of Oaxaca. "The government does not consult with the people of Mexico, with the working class," he said. "The government develops these plans with other countries without thinking about how it will affect the people."

Even without NAFTA, the number of manufacturing jobs has dropped 5.6 percent from last year.

"There are worries in the United States about the free-trade agreement, but there are worries here, too," said Estéban Mireles Martínez, a 40-year-old veterinarian. "The Mexican economy cannot be run in the same way as the strong economies of the other countries."

Mexican economists view NAFTA as a means of forcing their country's industries to become more competitive in the global marketplace.

"We have a very large industrial base, but it's very inefficient," Jonathan Heath, director of Macro Asesoria Economia, an economic research firm in Mexico City, said in a recent interview. "What we have to do is force the industrial base to become efficient. The way to do that is to open up the economy."

But that kind of talk worries Andrés Rosales Aguirre, who says Mexico "does not have the same technical capability" as its neighbors to the north.

"We are still primitive in our technology," said Rosales, 32, who runs a granary in the Tierra Caliente region of Guerrero.

"Here we are sharpening hatchets to clear our land while the farmers in the United States are using sophisticated tractors to harvest their crops," he said. "How could we possibly be in agreement with the free-trade agreement?"

Proponents believe NAFTA will create hundreds of thousands of jobs in both Mexico and the United States. By linking a population of 360 million in Mexico, the United States and Canada, the pact would create the largest trading bloc in the world.

But Mireles isn't convinced that more jobs necessarily translates to an improvement in Mexico's standard of living.

"**It's true that companies** will come here from the United States to give us more work," he said. "The problem is that they will pay us the minimum wage."

Rosales said a U.S. melon farmer paid Rosales' neighbors the equivalent of \$6 to work 10 hours in the fields, while Mexican-owned farming operations paid field hands about \$10 for six hours' work.

"The companies from the United States are arriving to use Mexico's hand labor but it doesn't seem like they are planning to pay us very much money," he claimed. "With the free-trade agreement, this will happen more often and our problems will only get worse."

Don't Rush NAFTA for Salinas' Sake

■ **Mexico:** No harm would be done if the final treaty had to wait for election of his successor—provided the election is fair.

By JORGE G. CASTAÑEDA

To paraphrase an incongruous but apt observation once uttered by a former Mexican minister of agriculture, NAFTA is neither dead nor alive, but quite the contrary. Its fate will be determined largely by factors no one has much control over: the state of the U.S. economic recovery in the coming months, the state of President Clinton's political fortunes, and particularly of his health-care reform, and the state of Ross Perot's popularity and the fervor of his anti-NAFTA crusade.

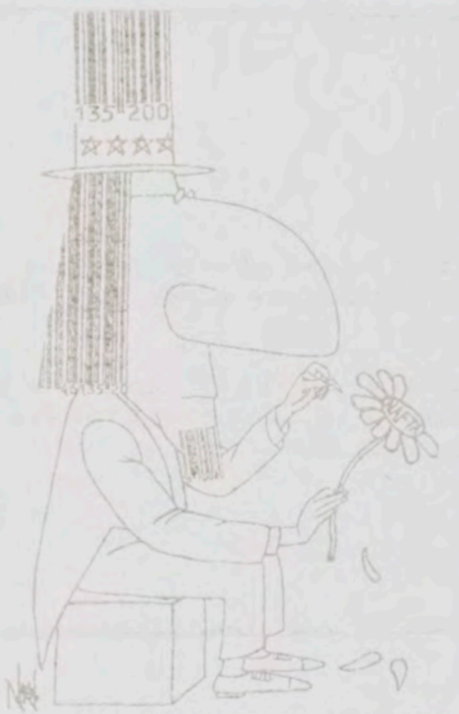
In the meantime, U.S. advocates of the North American Free Trade Agreement have begun to argue that it is a matter of national security, because Mexico would not survive a NAFTA defeat, and the dire consequences would not stop at the border. President Carlos Salinas de Gortari has staked everything on the trade deal; if it were to go down, he and his economic reforms would go up in smoke. To protect Salinas and guarantee the continuity of his policies, NAFTA must be approved this year. That argument is persuasive—and false.

To begin with, NAFTA's delay or rejection can be considered the end of the world for Mexico only if one thinks that its approval would be tantamount to the discovery of a new world. Yet the same proponents of the pact who subscribe to the catastrophic scenario also argue that many of NAFTA's hypothetical advantages are already in place: growing trade between the two countries, very low or nonexistent tariffs, economic reform and guarantees for foreign investors in Mexico. The absence of NAFTA would not, in itself, raise tariffs, shrink trade or expropriate American companies. Furthermore, all of the studies undertaken in the United States regarding NAFTA's impact on the two economies, as overly optimistic as most of them are, indicate that its effect on Mexico would be modest: between half and one percentage point more growth, and between 50,000 and 100,000 more jobs a year in a country that must create 1 million jobs a year just to keep up with population growth.

Clearly, NAFTA's entry into law on Jan. 1, 1994, if all goes well, will not be quite a big bang. If all does not go well, in the long term, little will change.

But, it is argued, postponement beyond January could signify a short-term disaster for Mexico and its peso. Much of the money that has entered the country since 1990—about \$25 billion—is volatile portfolio investment attracted by the expectations aroused by NAFTA, as well as by high yields on Mexican stocks and government securities. If those expectations were to be derailed, the money would leave, or certainly stop coming. Since Mexico is running a current account deficit of nearly \$2 billion a month, it would soon deplete its reserves and have to devalue the currency.

In fact, the Mexican currency is already overvalued, and as nearly all economists have said, its relation to the dollar will have to be adjusted anyway, with or without NAFTA. Mexico's external gap amounted to 7% of its gross domestic product last year, with weak growth of only 2.5%. Before any new expansion, the unsustainable external imbalance must be corrected, and this can be achieved only by a devaluation at some point. The Salinas regime would like to delay that until after the August, 1994, presidential elections. Granted, postponing NAFTA would probably hasten the need for devaluation—a good reason for preferring prompt passage, but not exactly a nightmare scenario.



ROGELIO NARANJO, El Universal, Mexico City

The real problem lies precisely in the ultimately political question of timing. Salinas wants a "fast-track" NAFTA because he has another cat to skin: appointing his successor, ensuring he becomes president one way or other and guaranteeing the continuity of Salinas' policies. Getting NAFTA out of the way of the presidential succession is a real urgency for its proponents in Washington, too, to ensure continuity and preempt the typical end-of-regime crisis that has befallen Mexico nearly every six years since 1940. There is little doubt that without NAFTA, this time around matters would be similar: with a looming devaluation, a stagnant economy, a possibly divided ruling party, President Salinas' succession could sour.

But should that happen, the responsibility would lie not with Congress' rejection of NAFTA or its sinking by Ross Perot. It falls squarely on the succession mechanism that has served, or plagued, Mexico since 1934: the anointment of the new president by the outgoing one, with purely ritual elections to formalize the choice. Placing NAFTA on hold might well destroy this archaic and undemocratic system; whether that would be a tragedy for Mexico is another matter.

Indeed, propping up that system and bailing Mexico out again is probably the worst way to foster continuity and stability. The best way is for the United States to push for a process instead of an outcome: free and fair elections, subjected to United Nations monitoring, that would make the result NAFTA-neutral. Whoever wins, because he would be elected with votes obtained in the center of the political spectrum, would be bound to maintain those facets of current economic policy that have succeeded—among them NAFTA—not by imposition but by democratic political constraints. Certainly a better way than that of Roman emperors who chose their successors and bequeathed them the empire.

Jorge G. Castañeda, a graduate professor of political science at the National University of Mexico, is a visiting professor at Princeton University this year.

Los Angeles Times 6/6/93

Following NAFTA

NAFTA Opposed by National Mexican - Latino Coalition

Open Letter to President Clinton

We, members of the U.S. Latino community, are writing to express our strong opposition to the North American Free Trade Agreement ("NAFTA") as it currently is constituted. After careful review, we have concluded that this agreement is not in the interests of our brothers and sisters in Mexico, and also will have adverse economic consequences for Latinos in the United States. The problems we have identified result not only from what the text contains, but also from what has been left out.

The most significant failures of the proposed NAFTA are:

1. NAFTA will not improve the wages and living conditions for the majority of Mexico's workers.

Past experience demonstrates that the export-led development strategy which NAFTA represents will provide few, if any, benefits to the Mexican working class and peasantry in the absence of strong worker rights and standards for Mexican workers. The 1980's saw a steady increase in trade between Mexico and the United States, yet violations of worker rights increased and the per capita income of Mexico's workers declined rapidly to the point where nearly half of the population now lives in poverty. In 1980, the compensation of U.S. workers was about three times that of Mexican workers; today, despite the fact that the real wages of U.S. workers have fallen, that ratio is nearly ten to one. We see nothing in NAFTA to militate against Mexican "development" that merely replicates the deplorable living conditions of Mexican workers (most dramatically evidenced in the maquilas) and the dramatic gap between their productivity and their wages.

We note that an analysis of NAFTA done by the leading Mexican "citizens coalition" on the trade is in accord with our view. Manual Garcia, President of the Frente Autentico del Trabajo, Mexico's largest independent labor union and a coalition member, has been vocal about Mexican workers; opposition to NAFTA. They, too, are skeptical that NAFTA, as it is currently constituted, will provide decent jobs with wages that bear some relation to the enormous profits that Mexico's workers will be securing for U.S. and other foreign companies.

We, thus, believe that a key component of any U.S.-Mexico trade agreement must be the establishment and the trade-linked enforcement of these internationally recognized worker rights and standards: the right to organize and bargain collectively, the establishment of strong workplace health and safety standards; appropriate minimum wage structures; the elimination of child labor; a prohibition on forces labor; and the guarantee of non-discrimination in employment.

2. Conspicuously absent from NAFTA is any acknowledgment of Mexico's lack of democracy and blatant disregard for political and human rights. In addition to these concerns, U.S. Latinos complain of civil rights abuses in and by the U.S.

We cannot lose sight of the fact that Mexico remains a defacto dictatorship. Since its founding in 1929, the Institutional Revolutionary Party ("PRI") claims not have lost a national election. The PRI's "sweep" in key local legislative elections last year placed the issue of electoral fraud at center stage, prompting calls by opposition parties for international supervision to assure fair elections. If the U.S. is eager to promote economic integration with Mexico, it should be just as eager to promote democracy through fair elections. NAFTA represents an opportunity missed to do that.

NAFTA also ignores Mexico's horrifying record on human rights. In 1990, Amnesty International reported that more than 80 percent of Mexican citizens who are detained by the police are tortured, concluding that "human rights abuses in Mexico have become institutionalized," and that "Mexico today is a human rights emergency." Americas Watch has characterized the human rights policy of the Salinas Administration as a "policy of impunity." While President Salinas has acknowledged the existence of human rights abuses in Mexico, we remain concerned that this acknowledgment signals little more than cosmetic change. It is our view that we should not be integrating our economy with a country that is not free. Particularly because NAFTA's "accession clause" specifies that other countries or group of countries may join the agreement, it is essential that the U.S. now establish a clear linkage between free trade agreements and free societies.

3. NAFTA will adversely affect Latino workers in the United States.

We are hard pressed to see how NAFTA will benefit the majority of Latinos in the United States. Generally speaking, we do not own stock in those corporations that stand to profit from NAFTA. Indeed, the average ownership of stocks and business equity by Latino households remains less than 40 percent of the average holdings by white households.

Latinos in this country tend to be at the bottom of the economic ladder. (In 1988, the median net worth of Latino households in the U.S. was $5,524, compared to $43,279 for White Americans. In 1990, the percentage of Latinos living below the poverty line was 28.1% and in January of this year, unemployment in the U.S. Latino community stood at 11.6 percent --four and a half percentage points above the national average.) Yet, rather than creating economic opportunities for U.S. Latinos, NAFTA is likely to destroy the few we have.

Latinos are disproportionately represented in those sectors of the U.S. economy, i.e. apparel and food processing, that will suffer the greatest job loss and downward wage pressure. A study commissioned by the Southwest Voter Research Institute shows that even in South Texas-- an area expected to benefit greatly from NAFTA -- any job gains for Mexican-American workers will be offset by job losses. This study also found that the benefits of NAFTA will accrued only to Mexican-Americans with the education and technical experience to take advantage of resulting opportunities, while others will experience downward mobility. (In 1990, just 3.1 percent of all bachelors degrees awarded in this country went to Latinos.)

4. NAFTA fails to address the issues of migration.

Because of the size and working conditions of Mexico's labor force, one of NAFTA's most immediate impacts likely will be on migration. While Mexicans should not have to leave their country to find jobs in the U.S., NAFTA is likely to result in increased emigration.

Between 1940 to 1980, Mexico's population tripled from 20 million to 67 million; today Mexico has a population of 88 million, with one million Mexicans entering the labor market each year. We do not see how Mexico can sustain enough growth to absorb this dramatically growing workforce along with the millions of peasant farmers who will be thrown off their land with no means of subsistence when their farms suddenly are forced to compete in the world commodities market. As Señor Cuautemoc Cárdenas, arguably the true victor over Salinas in Mexico's 1988 Presidential "election," observed last year:

According to all accounts, over the last years, since Mexico's economic liberalization started, migration to the United States has substantially increased... All empirical evidence shows that the single most important economic factor influencing the decision Mexicans to migrate are wages, i.e., higher wages. Today, the typical profile of the new economic migrant coming from Mexico is not the illiterate unemployed, but the semi-skilled worker moving from a very low paying job in Mexico to a substantially higher paying one in the U.S. By itself, a simple free trade deal could hardly change this.

The failure of NAFTA to raise the standard of living for Mexican workers (as discussed above), brings the issue of migration to the fore. With tremendous repercussions for all North American workers, migration is too critical an issue for NAFTA not to directly address.

5. NAFTA does not adequately address the environmental degradation and threat to public health among the U.S.-Mexico border and within Mexico.

The environmental and public health nightmare that is spreading both north and south from the U.S.-Mexico border has been well documented. The concentration of U.S. Latinos along the border means that the problems of this region disproportionately are, and will remain, our problems. The stories are horrifying. Mothers in Brownsville -- the largest incidence seen in the United States, if not the world. Each day, nearly 300 million gallons of untreated wastewater are discharged from the cities of El Paso, Juarez, Laredo and Laredo Nuevo Laredo directly into the Rio Grand River, detections of fecal coliform contamination in a portion of the river have exceeded Texas water quality standards by 100,000 times. It is no wonder that the American Medical Association has characterized the border as "a virtual cesspool and breeding ground for infectious disease."

While leading environmental organizations estimate that clean-up of just the existing problems could cost $5 to $12 billion, the U.S. and Mexico have suggested providing well less than $1 billion. This amount is clearly inadequate.

Within Mexico, numerous U.S. firms routinely illegally dump toxic waste and violate laws that require them to ship this waste back to the U.S. for treatment. When the General Accounting Office conducted a random sampling of twelve U.S. companies operating in Mexico, it found that all twelve failed to comply with Mexico's environmental laws. NAFTA, however, fails to ensure that companies will not continue to use Mexico as a toxic dumping ground. A key component that is lacking in this agreement is the trade-linked enforcement of environmental laws.

In our view, these deficiencies are fundamental flaws of NAFTA, not simply side issues or peripheral matters. Whether and how they are addressed will determine whether NAFTA will advance the common good of the North American people or benefit a few at the expense of the many.

We thank you for your consideration of our views and would welcome the opportunity for further discussion of these issues.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Jaime Martinez,
Executive Board Member
International Union of Electronic, Electrical, Salaried, Machine and Furniture Workers, AFL-CIO, an Antonio, Texas

(The letter contains the following signatures: Dr. **Rodolfo Acuna,** Professor, Chicano Studies, California State University, Northridge, California; **Sam Tabet Alvarado,** National Vice President, National Association of Government Employees (SEIU, AFL-CIO), San Antonio, Texas 78204; **Jose Bravo,** Co-Chair, Southwest Network for Environmental and Economic Justice, San Diego, California; **Mario Caballero,** President, Bexar County Legal Aid Employee Union, San Antonio, Texas; **Maria Carmen Dominguez,** La Mujer Obrera, El Paso, Texas; **Tupac Enrique,** Director, Maricope Project, Tona Tierra, Phoenix, Arizona; **Maria Flores,** La Mujer Obrera, El Paso, Texas; Jose Angel Gutierrez, Democratic Candidate, U.S. Senate, Dallas, Texas; **Sylvia Herrera,** Committee on Health, Education & Environment, Austin, Texas; **Chavel Lopez,** Director, Southwest Public Workers Union, San Antonio, Texas; **Carlos Mareates,** Agricultural Farm Workers Union, Texas, New Mexico, Chihuahua; **Peter Olney,** Service Employees International Union, AFL-CIO, Los Angeles, California; **Maurillo Sanchez Pachuca,** Presidente, Federación de Comités Colonias Populares, Tijuana, Baja California; **Ruben Solis,** Southwest Network for Environmental and Economic Justice San Antonio, Texas; **Jose Trevino,** Presidente, Obreros Sin Fronteras, San Antonio, Texas; **Irena Reyna,** Fuerza Unida, San Antonio, Texas.)

Hablando—

(con't from page 1)

inexistentes sobre el control de contaminantes.

Estas son las ideas complejas y explicaciones que el Profesor Cobb trata en su artículo de 13 páginas las cuales he tratado de simplificar un poco, pero que usted podrá leer en su totalidad en su artículo. Sin embargo puedo decirles que el Profesor Cobb recomienda a los cristianos que son sensibles al provenir de los pobres y los trabajadores de este país que pugnen activamente contra el modelo neoliberal y contra el Tratado de Libre Comercio, pues de acuerdo con él favorece sólo al capital internacional y a través del NAFTA creará aún más pobreza en México, y en Estados Unidos.

En cambio dice que deberíamos de considerar y apoyar el modelo "nacionalista" porque éste toma en cuenta los principios cristianos que abogan por el bienestar del pobre, su participación más amplia en las decisiones de su gobierno y no destruye ni contamina las comunidades y familias.

El Medio Ambiente

Un último punto que hace el Profesor Cobb es que el Tratado de Libre Comercio no ve como prioridad la preservación del medio ambiente y el opina que si el Presidente Clinton aprueba el NAFTA los inversionistas extranjeros que vayan a México harán lo mismo que han hecho en sus países. Destruirán y agotarán la productividad de la tierra y la envenenarán con fertilizantes salándola con químicos y pesticidas que además contaminarán los ríos, presas y norias con substancias tóxicas como lo han hecho ya con el Río Bravo y el Río Colorado.

Finalmente aconseja cuidarse de aquellos "profetas del libre comercio" que dicen que es muy tarde parar la aprobación del tratado y que es nuestro destino, "porque no podríamos vivir sin el libre comercio internacional." Cobb dice que debemos cuestionar: ¿a quién sirve el libre comercio internacional? No a los pobres, ni a los trabajadores, sino al señor capital y al afortunado rico que lo posée y quiere aún más sin importarle quien sufra.

La Prensa San Diego

Founded 1976

EDITORIALS/OPINIONS

Daniel L. Munoz, Publisher
Daniel H. Munoz, Jr., Editor

La Prensa Munoz Inc., Publications

Hispanic Business/Professionals Out of Step On NAFTA

In the heady days, when President George Bush was riding high in the polls, and after taking a sucker-punch at Sadaam Hussein, it appeared that the President would be invincible and would easily win re-election in '92. No self-respecting Hispanic Businessmen or Professional would dare to go against the President no matter what the issue was. After all the "thirty something crowd" was conditioned to go with the sure winner regardless of what impact it would have on the Mexican American-Latino community or the country.

When the President sent out marching orders to the major Hispanic Business and Professional groups demanding their support for the proposed "North American Free Trade Agreement and for "Fast-Track" approval, they fell all over themselves issuing press releases and pronouncements stating that the Hispanic community "supported the Fast-Track authority" in order to guarantee passage of NAFTA.

Those of us that weren't in the "loop" sat in amazement as leader after leader committed to the Fast-Track hysteria without ever having read or been informed what was in the Treaty! Having publicly spoken, the business and professional community abdicated their responsibilities to the Mexican American /Latino communities, to the people of America, or to the Mexican people of Mexico.

Patience and some simple research into the proposed treaty would have exposed who or whom really was pushing for the North American Free Trade Agreement. Was it middle class working America? Was it the working class representatives; the Unions? Was it the 20 million Latinos of America? The environmentalist or the back bone of America, the millions of small businessmen that would be deeply impacted? Fact of the matter is the whole handling of the proposed North American Treaty was handle in a manner more befitting a banana republic. The citizens of this country were never in the "loop" on this issue. They were never consulted or asked. Instead, they were told to set aside all our precious protections in our Constitution and in our Republican form of government.

Who was involved? Recently the shroud of mystery has begun to be lifted. Not surprising U.S. MAJOR BUSINESSES, CORPORATIONS AND FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS WITH INTERESTS IN MEXICO, MULTI-NATIONAL AND TRANS-NATIONAL ENTITIES! Hardly the kind of folks who cared were "our bottom line" is at.

Those involved included some of the largest Trans-National Corporations in America. Trans-National is a nice way of saying that they have little or no loyalty to any particular country. The only loyalty they have is to the almighty Dollar, Yen, Deutsch Mark or Peso or some other currency.

Some of the major supporters of NAFTA included: American Express, Eastman Kodak, General Motors, American Telephone & Telegraph, Bank of America, Coca Cola to name a few. Some operated under the umbrella of the "Coalition for Trade Expansion" a 600 member lobbying operation created just for promoting NAFTA.

Where did this leave 250,000,000 Americans? Mostly out in the cold. Our only power to protect our interest was the Congress. President Bush and his cronies took care of eliminating our input by getting the "FAST-TRACK authority approved. Congress could only accept or reject. With an almost guaranteed Bush victory, after Desert Storm, NAFTA was perceived as sure bet and the herd instinct took over.

In the case of America's 20 million Hispanics/Latinos, a well financed campaign was launched to create a myth of support. The Hispanic Business and Professional community bought into it and the myth was created that America's Hispanic/Latino community was in total support.

On the way to the polls, something strange happened. America decided it wanted a change in the ways things were being handled in Washington D.C. The voters rejected President Bush and elected Bill Clinton and the ball game took on new meaning.

Those of us who had struggled in the vineyards attempting to alert our people and leadership of the pitfalls of NAFTA, are now seeing signs of an awakening. It is now becoming very evident that NAFTA will be great for the Multi-National Corporations and the Trans-National Corporations, whose interest in America doesn't go any further then the next dollar. The Mexican financial Oligarchies and the ruling political dictatorship of Mexico would once again rape their country at the expense of millions of Mexican citizens who would be condemned to becoming slave-wage workers and see their country torn apart by the greed of the ruling upper class.

For the millions upon millions of Americans whose lives depend on a prosperous America, all they will get from NAFTA will be a diminishing labor market, reduced salaries, efforts to make labor equal to labor in Latin America Taiwan, and other third world nations and seeing America become just another resource to be exploited by the International Cartels.

We say its time to send a message to Congress, to the President, and to the world at large. Enough is enough, we refuse to participate in reducing our country to becoming a nation of slave-wage laborers for the Transnational-Multinational Corporations.

The North American Free Trade Agreement, in its present form, must be rejected. We the people demand a right to have a say on our future. As it stands now, NAFTA is nothing but a betrayal of the United States and its people. As it stands now, NAFTA will become the tool of enslavement of the people of Mexico.

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