

Educational Consultant

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TO: C-SPAN, Brian Lamb  
400 N. Capitol St., NW 650  
Washington, D.C. 20001  
September 3, 1993

Re: NAFTA

Dear Sir:

I seldom write to anyone in Washington, considering it a losing game. However, having watched your network, and your conduct while on the air, it became apparent that you are one of the few exceptions<sup>s</sup> to the conspicuous self-aggrandizement among news people, and the adversarial news marketing, on any channel, never mind the network prima donnas. (I met Sam Donaldson during his coverage of the Reagan visit to Korea in 1984, and lived next door to the head of Reuters in Korea, and found them both insufferable.)

Having watched your morning call-in today, with three men who have various professional qualifications in journalism, I wonder what their qualifications might be in social sciences, or at the very least, in the ordinary labor market. There seems to be a genuine lack of understanding on the part of the people both creating legislation, and those reporting news, as to what is in NAFTA, and how it might affect the current economy. I cannot claim to be any better in the above regard, but, then again, I make no pretense of being able to report on its effects good or ill. However, as a doctoral student in higher education at UCLA, I do know something about the "retraining" that Secretary Reich is stating a need for, and the immensity of this task alone should give pause to considering it a panacea for absorbing the shock of NAFTA, and the potential loss of millions of "semiskilled" manufacturing jobs in the U.S.

In *Head to Head* by Lester Thurow, he states that no comprehensive system of training youth to fit into the workaday world exists in the United States; he is right if the contribution of community colleges is discounted. However, community colleges alone cannot absorb the mammoth task of retraining without significant influxes of money to expand facilities, a new linking with industry that is several orders of magnitude better so that the training isn't obsolescent when it is begun, and some deregulation, so that the colleges can respond to the types of industrial shifts so well described by Tom Peters and Peter Drucker.

Mr. Lamb, I am well aware that you are extremely busy, may not have the extra time for detailed research into the state of education, and its ability to provide the social services needed not only for educational retraining, but what might be described as *reacculturation*; having been in manufacturing, fast food, construction, auto mechanics, and a host of other "trades" for 15 years in my youth, I at least know what kinds of mental attitudes exist among these people. I would like to send you the results of some of my research into the problem of reeducation and retraining for American workers. I ask for no personal recognition, no monetary compensation, only that you read it. You may use on the air whatever you see fit, with or without attribution if you so choose. If Drucker's "knowledge worker" is the future support of a successful American economy, we'd better make damned certain we understand what creating that person entails.

Sincerely,

[Redacted signature block]

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