

FOIA MARKER

**This is not a textual record. This is used as an
administrative marker by the William J. Clinton
Presidential Library Staff.**

Collection/Record Group: Clinton Presidential Records

Subgroup/Office of Origin: Speechwriting

Series/Staff Member: Michael Waldman

Subseries:

OA/ID Number: 13660

FolderID:

Folder Title:
NAFTA Speech Texts

Stack:

S

Row:

92

Section:

2

Shelf:

10

Position:

2

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

November 2, 1993

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
TO NAFTA DISTINGUISHED AMERICAN ENDORSEMENT EVENT

The East Room

3:20 P.M. EST

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you very much, President Carter, Mr. Vice President, all the distinguished people who have spoken here today.

I would like to begin by making two observations. First of all, after hearing what has been said I'm pretty proud to be an American today. And I think all of you should be, too. (Applause.) Secondly, I have been sent an extraterrestrial telegram stating that "I, too, am for NAFTA", signed Otto von Bismarck. (Laughter.)

You know, it is something of note that every living President, Secretary of State, Secretaries of Defense, national security advisors, Secretaries of Commerce, leaders of the Federal Reserve, distinguished contributors to the American spirit like John Gardner and Father Hesburgh and other great American citizens all support this agreement -- for economic reasons, for foreign policy reasons. Our own Secretary of State Warren Christopher is in California even as we are here, talking about the foreign policy implications of NAFTA for our government and our country.

Why have all of us declared this issue above politics? Why have we come to agree that whatever else has divided us in the past, this will weld us together in the cause of more jobs for our people, more exports for our markets and more democracy for our allies? Why do we all know down deep inside that this would be such a profound setback for America and the world economy and in the new global polity we are striving we are striving so honestly to create?

Why are we so willing to say no to partisan politics and yes to NAFTA? I think it is because we know, as all of these have said in different ways, that NAFTA reflects this moment's expression of all the lessons we have learned in the 20th century. It reflects this moment's expression of what we learned not to do after World War I, what we learned what we had to do during and after World War II. It reflects the sheer economic weight of argument that Mr. Samuelson referred to, that we have seen even more expressed just in the last few years when a higher and higher percentage of our new jobs in this country are clearly traceable directly to exports.

I see it in my own work here. For years and years and years our allies in Europe and Asia said, well, if America really wanted to promote global growth, you would do something about your deficit and get your interest rates down and quit taking so much money out of the global economy. And so we have tried to do that. And we have low interest rates and the deficit is coming down, and our own deficit this year was much lower, in no small measure because of those lower rates.

But we still have this great global recession. Why? Because we are not trading with one another; we are not buying and selling and investing across national lines and sparking the kind of

MORE

TALKING POINTS FOR SMALL BUSINESS NAFTA RALLY
PRESIDENT WILLIAM J. CLINTON
November 15, 1993

- **CENTRAL MESSAGE:** On Wednesday, Congress will face a choice – whether to create opportunity by opening markets to our exports, or to shrink opportunity by turning inward. Small business supports NAFTA because it is good for small business, opening new frontiers for exports. The Members of Congress know what the right choice is. Let them know that you want them to do what is good for our country.

* * *

- **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

- Two days from now, the U.S. Congress will cast a momentous vote that will tell us if we will courageously grapple with the changing world economy, or seek to turn inward to protectionism. I wanted to talk to you – 400 small business people from around the country who employ thousands of people, who export to Mexico and who will benefit from NAFTA – to spell out the stakes for you and for our country.
- It is altogether appropriate that we gather today at a place that celebrates American ingenuity and industriousness and energy. Look around you: It is clear that the greatest constant in our history has been change.

- Arrayed around us are the machines and products designed by Americans and used by our parents and grandparents to build our nation. From a metal stamping machine that began pressing pots, and finished its 70 year life making parts for our space program . . . to the telephone switching systems once designed for commercial use that eventually revolutionized daily lives . . . every one of these products is emblematic of the progress that we have made.

- America is ever a restless, questing nation, always moving forward, never standing still. The entrepreneurs celebrated at this museum created a world of change. But nothing they wrought, and nothing they saw, could compare with the changes we now face. For the greatest economic challenge of our day – and the greatest of our century – is how to make the global economy work for us.

The nation that made the McCormick Reaper and the Model-T and the Macintosh Personal Computer has nothing to fear from a world marketplace.

- America's small businesses – the men and women who generate the jobs and power our economy – are leading the way by competing and winning in this new economy. You innovate the products. You grow the jobs. And you have

pioneered our new economic frontier: exports. Small businesspeople have been on the cutting edge of economic change, constantly responding to new opportunities and generating prosperity.

- Today over 10,000 U.S. firms export to Mexico – mostly small and medium size.

- Nineteen out of twenty exporting companies in 1987 were small or medium-size firms that employed fewer than 500 workers.

- If you work for a small business, chances are one in five that your business exports. If you work for a medium sized business, chances are one in two that your company export. All told, some seven million Americans earn their bread through exports.

- **NAFTA will open up new frontiers for small businesses by opening up the vast Mexican market to our goods and services.**

- Now small businesses face tariffs averaging 16% on goods going to Mexico. NAFTA would eliminate those tariffs over time – a tax cut on all goods going to Mexico.

- Now, many big businesses can cope with the thicket of rules and requirements erected by Mexico to keep products out – labelling, standards, customs – but many small businesses can't. NAFTA will streamline these so everyone can compete on a level playing field.

- By linking Mexico's economy to ours, NAFTA will help expand a market that is thirsty for our goods. Today, we export \$40 billion to Mexico, more than to any country other than Canada. Since Mexico began liberalization of its economy, we turned a \$5.6 billion trade deficit into a \$5.9 billion trade surplus.

- Exports create jobs – 200,000 new jobs by 1995 alone from NAFTA.

- **Across the country, local Chambers of Commerce have mobilized for this agreement. The Small Business Legislative Council has made it a top priority, too. I want you to let your members of Congress know one simple message: the future of small business is in exports, and NAFTA is good for small business.**

- **The vote on NAFTA is a defining moment for our country. It will tell us what kind of people we are in 1993. The Cold War is over; the threat to our security is not military but economic. Will we face the future with confidence, making the economy of tomorrow work for us? Or will we turn inward to protectionism, clinging to the economy of yesterday? Congress knows what the**

right choice is. Let them know that you want them to do what is good for our country.

- Make no mistake – the history of America tells us anything, it tells us that we only hurt ourselves when we pull inward. As the rest of the world retools to compete in the global economy, I am confident that America won't put itself on the wrong side of history. Americans are winners. For that reason, I am confident that NAFTA will win.

- VP -
- POTUS -

} VP & POTUS MEMORANDA.

- Reich → briefing on the #s.

Labor
Mark &
Dee Dee

GLB

NAFTA - Speech texts

You never win playing defense in politics. We are playing defense on NAFTA, and if we continue, we are going to lose. The defeat of NAFTA will not just be a legislative blip or tactical setback. It will be a major blow to the U.S. and the global economy. It will strengthen protectionist forces in both the developing and industrial world. I think it may make it harder to conclude a successful Uruguay Round because the French and others will believe that for political reasons you cannot afford to sustain another trade failure, and in response they may harden their position on agriculture.

In Latin America, though Latin leaders will be too polite and wary of the United States to say so publicly, the defeat of NAFTA will do enormous damage, not just to our relations with Mexico, but throughout the hemisphere. All of those like Salinas and Menem who took a political risk by building a closer relationship with the United States will be embarrassed and undermined. It will put an edge back into U.S.-Mexican relations it has taken a century to overcome. (The enclosed draft oped piece by a former State Department official describes, I believe accurately, just how much damage NAFTA's defeat will do to democracy and economic reform in this hemisphere.)

We can't choose the fights that define us. A defeat on NAFTA will represent a major blow to your presidency and your leadership, not just with Congress, but around the world. You risk being defined as a president who cannot deliver when it comes to foreign affairs--whether rallying the allies on Bosnia or rallying the Congress to ratify Treaties with Mexico and Canada.

The message we are sending on NAFTA today looks and sounds defeatist. We don't sound as if we are confident of the arguments we are making and we are not making the best arguments. The message we are sending, albeit unintentionally, is: "the NAFTA Treaty, itself, wasn't particularly good, but we negotiated side agreements to make it better. They are not everything we might have wanted, but they are good nonetheless. Yes, jobs will be lost, but more jobs will be gained. We want Congress to vote for NAFTA, but we won't be mad at anyone who doesn't, particularly our fellow democrats." Indeed, we almost sound as if we understand, and perhaps even sympathize with those who oppose the Treaty.

This is a formula for failure, and the results are already apparent. House Democrats like Bob Torricelli, who helped lead the fight for fast-track authority to negotiate NAFTA and who Chairs the Western Hemisphere Subcommittee, responsible for Latin America, now says he is undecided. House Republicans are backing away.

[MEMO FROM
B. ARONSON]

We can win this fight, but only if we raise the stakes; only if we appear as convinced that the ratification of NAFTA is central to the ability of the United States to prosper in the 21st century as we are convinced that the health care system must be reformed; only if we are willing and prepared to wage a tough and aggressive enough campaign that our friends in the House democratic leadership start to squirm and feel on the defensive because of their opposition to the Treaty instead of appearing to have a free ride at the Administration's expense.

We need to tell Congress and the American people: this is a contest between the future and the past. This is a fight for the 21st century: whether America will lead it or be left behind. We need to tell the American people that this fight is about whether their kids will take the high wage high tech jobs of the future or be consigned to a dead end, low skilled, low wage existence. You campaigned with a message that change is upon us and we will either harness change for common purposes or be overwhelmed by it. NAFTA is central to that message.

We need tell the American people the truth: We live in a new world. We live in a global economy. We may wish we could return to the safe and secure world that existed after World War II when American workers produced American products for American consumers and trade was just an added frill, but that world is gone forever. Today, one American job out of every five (check) and one American acre farmed out of every three depends on our ability to export around the world. Our kids will come of age in a global economy in which America will either export or fail. If it wasn't for our growth in exports over the last few years, the U.S. economy would not be growing at all.

We need to make it clear that we understand the fears and pain of workers and their families who oppose NAFTA. Americans are being buffeted by economic forces beyond their control and they are frightened. They see symbols of American productive strength like Pan Am disappearing and symbols of American technological prowess like IBM eliminating tens of thousands of jobs. They need to be told that we understand their pain and their fears; these changes are frightening; but they are being sold exactly the wrong medicine by those opposed to a U.S.-Canadian-Mexican free trade agreement.

Mexico is the fastest growing market in the world for American products. We have increased our exports there 17% a year for every one of the last 5 years. Already, the average Mexican citizen who makes one tenth the income of the average Japanese citizen buys almost as much from the United States. As Mexico grows and its economy develops its new middle class will be in a position to make up for long pent up needs for everything from washing machines to autos. This will be a 100 million person market by the end of this decade.

But that is just the beginning. Latin America represents a market of 450 million people ready and eager to buy U.S. products, services, and agricultural goods. They want to buy our tractors and our computers, our automobiles and our telecommunications, our insurance tooth paste and soda pop. In this hemisphere we have a 57% market share; the Japanese have 11%. We have all the natural advantages of geography, history, and increasingly language. By the year 2020, this market will grow to 700 million people. The question we are facing in this debate is: will America claim this vast hemispheric market for the next generation? Or will we turn it over to our competitors.

We need to answer the argument of Perot and others that NAFTA serves "foreign interests" at the expense of Americans by turning it upside down. We need to say that our trading competitors looked on the negotiations for NAFTA while biting their nails. They understood the vast potential first a North American--and then a Latin American free Trade market--offers to the United States, and they hoped the negotiations would not succeed. We need to say: they will be breaking out champagne in Tokyo if NAFTA is defeated. They will breathe a sigh of relief in the EC. Our competitors for these markets will not believe that America could be so shortsighted as to snatch defeat from the jaws of economic victory.

We also have to raise the stakes about the foreign policy and national security consequences of NAFTA's defeat. Clearly, you have to be careful about this because you don't want to contribute to potential instability. Still, Americans need to be reminded that we enjoy the security and stability of a 2,000 mile border with Mexico. We benefit enormously by the move in Latin America to democracy and economic growth. We have to make it clear that a return to instability and economic crisis south of our border will cost our nation dearly. Our democratic allies in Latin America are asking for trade, not aid. They don't want to be dependent on the United States; they are not asking for foreign assistance. They want to join us in making this hemisphere grow so all our citizens can share in rising prosperity. To defeat NAFTA is to betray their hopes and dreams and squander this historic opportunity. Perhaps the former Presidents who support NAFTA, and who we hope to assemble to endorse it could help reinforce this point about national security.

TALKING POINTS FOR NAFTA SIGNING

-- Yesterday, one of the most stirring in memory, we heard the sound of trumpets toppling ancient walls. The walls of anger and suspicion between Israeli and Palestinian, between Arab and Jew.

-- That sense of walls coming down is almost a metaphor for our times. In just a twinkling of history, we have seen a wall collapse around Berlin, we have seen the walls disappear around the communist bloc, and we are beginning to see walls of hatred tumble down in South Africa.

-- But just as barriers can and must come down in so much of our politics, they can and must come down in commerce as well. A free and fair world trading system is fundamental to the future prosperity of our people.

-- That is why we are here today: to launch a campaign for one of the most important trade agreements in a generation, an agreement that will create a free trade zone stretching from the Arctic to the tropics. If we are successful here, we will create the largest free market in the world, bringing together 370 million people who produce \$6.5 trillion in goods and services every year. It holds immense possibilities for creating more jobs and raising the standard of living for our people.

-- In recent months, the airwaves have been filled with distortions and demagoguery about this agreement. We must not let such fear mongering kill this historic opportunity. Let's start here and now in setting the record straight.

-- First, this agreement will create jobs. Yes, some of those jobs will be in Mexico; some will be in Canada; but many of them will be here in the United States.

-- Consider: in 1987, Mexico began lowering trade barriers against the United States. We were then exporting some \$12 billion a year to Mexico. Since then, our exports of American goods and services to Mexico has boomed upwards to \$40 billion a year. Experts believe that increase in our exports has created as many as 450,000 new jobs in this country.

-- Has Mexico also increased its exports to the United States? Of course it has, and more Mexicans are working today as a result. But these initial efforts to open up trade have been a terrific bonus for the United States: in these past few years, we have wiped out a \$5 billion trade deficit with Mexico and now we are running an annual surplus of \$6 billion.

-- The fear mongers won't tell you this but the truth is that Mexico has become the fastest growing market for American goods anywhere in the world. And with this agreement, American exports -- and American jobs -- will grow even faster.

-- I cannot promise that under NAFTA, every American job will be protected. Inevitably, some jobs will be lost, just as tens of thousands more will be created. That is a fact of everyday life, with or without NAFTA. But I can promise you that we will keep faith with America's workers, ensuring that those who face dislocations will be offered serious training and serious opportunities for new work. We will not leave people behind.

-- Now for a second truth: because of the safeguards that our trade ambassador, Mickey Kantor, has so skillfully negotiated, this agreement will discourage American companies from moving to Mexico in search of cheap wages or lax environmental rules.

-- I know that many Americans worry that if NAFTA is passed, Mexico will become a magnet for our companies relocating for the wrong reasons. That is exactly why we bargained so hard over these side agreements that I am signing here today.

-- But these side agreements provide exactly the protection we need. That is why so many environmental groups -- ranging from the Audubon Society to the Natural Resources Defense Council -- now support NAFTA. Many of them are here today to endorse these accords.

-- A third truth: Mexico is America's gateway to the rest of Latin America. Once we enact this agreement, we face an ever brightening prospect of opening up better trading lanes throughout the hemisphere, creating literally millions of new jobs for our people.

-- Surely, we should learn something from what we see happening around the rest of the world. Across Europe, nations have lowered their trade barriers with each other and some believe that when the current recession ends, Europe could become

the world's economic powerhouse. Across much of the Pacific, Japan and its neighbors are rapidly bringing down trade barriers between them and nations there are the fastest growing in the world.

-- Are we in this hemisphere to go in reverse? Are we going back to the protectionism of the past? Surely, our motto must be: let us compete, never retreat.

-- Indeed, I would urge those who would bring this agreement down: think again about the consequences of what you are doing. Think about the protectionism you will unleash across the Americas. Think of the political radicalism that may be unleashed, think of the immigration pressures that will surely grow. And think, too, how easily we could wreck prospects for a new GATT agreement and opening up Japan to our goods and services.

-- Finally, this point: NAFTA is about more than trade with Mexico and Canada, as important as that is. NAFTA is a test of what kind of people we shall become.

-- Our great struggle today is to make change our friend, to learn how we can embrace it and bend it in our direction.

-- The tide of history is moving swiftly. We cannot hold it back forever; we must learn to ride with it, knocking down the walls and the barriers that divide us. NAFTA is an historic opportunity to ride the waves of history.

-- People ask: am I really for NAFTA? Is this something I really care about? Let the word go forth today: I firmly believe NAFTA is in the highest national interest of the United States, and as your president, I intend to fight hard for its passage. Indeed, the fight has just begun.

-- That's why I am especially pleased today -- that at this launching -- we have such strong and sturdy allies here in the White House.

-- Here on this stage, we have the leaders of both parties in both chambers of Congress, vivid testimony that the coalition for NAFTA is bipartisan.

-- And of course, I am deeply honored that three of our former presidents have come here to express their support as well. After I sign these agreements and send them on their way to Congress, I would like to ask each of them to speak to you and to the nation:

-- Jerry Ford, a man not only of healing but of vision, who negotiated the Helsinki agreements some years ago and now is a passionate believer in this NAFTA agreement;

-- Jimmy Carter, whom we honored yesterday for negotiating the Camp David accords and whom we remember today as a president who completed an historic agreement in this hemisphere;

-- And George Bush, whose efforts in the Middle East laid the groundwork for the historic agreement signed yesterday at the White House and whom we honor today for his wisdom in bringing this NAFTA agreement so close to its fulfillment.

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT IN NAFTA BILL SIGNING CEREMONY

Mellon Auditorium
Washington, DC
December 8, 1993

Thank you very much. I'm delighted to see all of you here. I thank Speaker Foley and the Republican Leader Bob Michel for joining us today. There are so many people to thank, and the Vice President did a marvelous job. I do want to mention, if I might, just three others -- Laura Tyson, the Chair of the Council of Economic Advisors; Bob Rubin, head of my national economic team; and one Republican member of the House that wasn't mentioned, Congressman David Dreier, who went with me on a rainy day to Louisiana to campaign for NAFTA. There are many others that I might mention, but I thank all of you for what you have done.

I also can't help but note that in spite of all the rest of our efforts, there was a -- that magic moment on Larry King -- (applause) -- which made a lot of difference. And I thank the Vice President for that and for so much else.

In the campaign, when we decided to come out for NAFTA, he was a strong supporter of that position in our personal meetings, long before we knew whether we would even be here or not. I also would be remiss if I did not personally thank both Mickey Kantor and Mack McLarty for the work they did, especially in the closing days with the Mexican trade representatives and the Mexican government. I'd also like to welcome here the representatives from Mexico and Canada and tell them they are, in fact, welcome here. They are our partners in the future that we are trying to make together. (Applause.)

I want to say a special word of thanks to the Cabinet because we have tried to do something that I have not always seen in the past. And we try to get all of our departments and all of our Cabinet leaders to work together on all the things that we all care about. And a lot of them, therefore, had to take a lot of personal time and business time away from their very busy schedules to do this. I thank the former leaders of our government that were mentioned and our military. I can't help but noting, since General Powell is here, that every senior military officer with whom I spoke about NAFTA was perhaps -- they were as a group perhaps the most intensely supportive of any group I spoke with. And I think it is because they have in their bones the experience of the world of the last several decades. And they knew we could not afford to turn away from our leadership responsibilities and our constructive involvement in the world. And many of them, of course, still in uniform, were not permitted to say that in public and should not have been. But I think I can say that today. I was profoundly personally moved by the remarks that they made. (Applause.)

I do want to say, also, a special word of thanks to all the citizens who helped us -- the business leaders, the labor folks, the environmental people who came out and worked through this; many of them at great criticism, particularly in the environmental movement and some of the working people who helped it. And a group that was quite pivotal to our success that I want to acknowledge specifically are the small business people, many of whom got themselves organized and came forward and tried to help us. They made a real difference. (Applause.)

And they've been mentioned, but I couldn't let this moment go by without thanking my good friend Bill Daley and Congressman Bill Frenzel for their work in helping to mobilize this effort. Congressman Frenzel wrote me a great letter the other day and sent me one of his famous doodles that he doodled around the NAFTA legislation, which I am now having framed. But they sort of represented the bipartisan spirit that encaptured the Congress, encaptured the country in the call to change. I hope that we can have more than that in the days and months and years ahead. It was a very fine thing.

This whole issue turned out to be a defining moment for our nation. I spoke with one of the folks who was in the reception just a few moments ago who told me that he was in China watching the vote on international television when it was taken. And he said you would have had to be there to understand how important this was to the rest of the world; not because of the terms of NAFTA, which basically is trade agreement between the United States, Mexico, and Canada, but because it became a symbolic struggle for the spirit of our country and for how we would approach this very difficult and rapidly changing world dealing with our own considerable challenges here at home.

I believe we have made a decision now that will permit us to create an economic order in the world that will promote more growth, more equality, better preservation of the environment, and a greater possibility of world peace. We are on the verge of a global economic expansion that is sparked by the fact that the United States at this critical moment decided that we would compete, not retreat.

In a few moments, I will sign the North American Free Trade Act into law. NAFTA will tear down trade barriers between our three nations. It will create the world's largest trade zone and create 200,000 jobs in this country by 1995 alone. The environmental and labor side agreements negotiated by our administration will make this agreement a force for social progress, as well as economic growth. Already the confidence we've displayed by ratifying NAFTA has begun to bear fruit. We are now making real progress toward a worldwide trade agreement so significant that it could make the material gains of NAFTA for our country look small by comparison.

Today, we have the chance to do what our parents did before us. We have the opportunity to remake the world. For this new era, our national security we now know will be determined as much by our ability to pull down foreign trade barriers as by our ability to breach distant ramparts. Once again, we are leading. And in so doing, we are rediscovering a fundamental truth about ourselves: When we lead, we build security, we build prosperity for our own people.

We've learned this lesson the hard way. Twice before in this century, we have been forced to define our role in the world.

After World War I we turned inward, building walls of protectionism around our nation. The result was a great depression and ultimately, another horrible world war.

After the second world war, we took a different course -- we reached outward. Gifted leaders of both political parties built a new order based on collective security and expanded trade. They created a foundation of stability and created in the process the conditions which led to the explosion of the great

American middle class, one of the true economic miracles in the whole history of civilization. Their statecraft stands to this day -- the IMF and the World Bank, GATT and NATO.

In this very auditorium in 1949, President Harry Truman signed one of the charter documents of this golden era of American leadership -- the North Atlantic Treaty that created NATO. "In this pact we hope to create a shield against aggression and the fear of aggression," Truman told his audience, "a bulwark which will permit us to get on with the real business of government and society, the business of achieving a fuller and happier life for our citizens."

Now, the institutions built by Truman and Acheson, by Marshall and Vandenberg, have accomplished their task. The Cold War is over. The grim certitude of the contest with communism has been replaced by the exuberant uncertainty of international economic competition. And the great question of this day is how to ensure security for our people at a time when change is the only constant.

Make no mistake, the global economy with all of its promise and perils is now the central fact of life for hardworking Americans. It has enriched the lives of millions of Americans; but for too many those same winds of change have worn away at the basis of their security.

For two decades, most people have worked harder for less. Seemingly secure jobs have been lost. And while America once again is the most productive nation on Earth, this productivity itself holds the seeds of further insecurity. After all, productivity means the same people can produce more or, very often, that fewer people can produce more. This is the world we face.

We cannot stop global change. We cannot repeal the international economic competition that is everywhere. We can only harness the energy to our benefit. Now we must recognize that the only way for a wealthy nation to grow richer is to export, to simply find new customers for the products and services it makes. That, my fellow Americans, is the decision the Congress made when they voted to ratify NAFTA. (Applause.)

I am gratified with the work that Congress has done this year, bringing the deficit down and keeping interest rates down, getting housing starts and new jobs going upward. But we know that over the long run, our ability to have our internal economic policies work for the benefit of our people requires us to have external economic policies that permit productivity to find expression not simply in higher incomes for our businesses, but in more jobs and higher incomes for our people. That means more customers. There is no other way -- not for the United States or for Europe or for Japan or for any other wealthy nation in the world. (Applause.)

That is why I am gratified that we had such a good meeting after the NAFTA vote in the House with the Asian-Pacific leaders in Washington. I am gratified that, as Vice President Gore and Chief of Staff Mack McLarty announced two weeks ago when they met with President Salinas, next year the nations of this hemisphere will gather in an economic summit that will plan how to extend the benefits of trade to the emerging market democracies of all the Americas.

And now I am pleased that we have the opportunity to secure the

biggest breakthrough of all. Negotiators from 112 nations are seeking to conclude negotiations on a new round of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade. A historic-worldwide trade pact, one that would spur a global economic boom, is now within our grasp.

Let me be clear. We cannot, nor should we, settle for a bad GATT agreement. But we will not flag in our efforts to secure a good one in these closing days. We are prepared to make our contributions to the success of this negotiation; but we insist that other nations do their part as well. We must not squander this opportunity. I call on all the nations of the world to seize this moment and close the deal on a strong GATT agreement within the next week. (Applause.)

I say to everyone, even to our negotiators, don't rest, don't sleep. Close the deal. I told Mickey Kantor the other day that we rewarded his laborious effort on NAFTA with a vacation at the GATT talks. (Laughter.)

My fellow Americans, bit by bit all these things are creating the conditions of a sustained global expansion. As significant as they are, our goals must be more ambitious. The United States must seek nothing less than a new trading system that benefits all nations through robust commerce, but that protects our middle class and gives other nations a chance to grow one; that lifts workers and the environment up without dragging people down; that seeks to ensure that our policies reflect our values.

Our agenda must, therefore, be far-reaching.

We are determined that dynamic trade cannot lead to environmental despoliation. We will seek new institutional arrangements to ensure that trade leaves the world cleaner than before.

We will press for workers in all countries to secure rights that we now take for granted, to organize and earn a decent living.

We will insist that expanded trade be fair to our businesses and to our regions. No country should use cartels, subsidies or rules of entry to keep our products off its shelves.

And we must see to it that our citizens have the personal security to confidently participate in this new era. Every worker must receive the education and training he or she needs to reap the rewards of international competition rather than to bear its burdens. Next year, our administration will propose comprehensive legislation to transform our unemployment system into a reemployment and job retraining system for the 21st century. (Applause.)

And above all, I say to you we must seek to reconstruct the broadbased political coalition for expanded trade. For decades, working men and women and their representatives supported policies that brought us prosperity and security. That was because we recognized that expanded trade benefitted all of us, but that we have an obligation to protect those workers who do bear the brunt of competition by giving them a chance to be retrained and to go on to a new and different and, ultimately, more secure and more rewarding way of work. In recent years, this social contract has been sundered. That cannot continue.

When I affix my signature to the NAFTA legislation a few moments from now, I do so with this pledge: To the men and women of our country who were afraid of these changes, and found in their opposition to NAFTA an expression of that fear, what I thought was a wrong expression and what I know was a wrong expression, but nonetheless represented legitimate fears -- the gains from this agreement will be your gains, too.

I ask those who opposed NAFTA to work with us to guarantee that the labor and side agreements are enforced; and I call on all of us who believe in NAFTA to join with me to urge the Congress to create the world's best worker training and retraining system. We owe it to the business community, as well as to the working men and women of this country. It means greater productivity, lower unemployment, greater worker efficiency, and higher wages and greater security for our people. We have to do that. (Applause.)

We seek a new and more open global trading system not for its own sake, but for our own sake. Good jobs, rewarding careers, broadened horizons for the middle class Americans can only be secured by expanding exports and global growth. For too long our step has been unsteady as the ground has shifted beneath our feet.

Today, as I sign the North American Free Trade Agreement into law and call for further progress on GATT, I believe we have found our footing. And I ask all of you to be steady; to recognize that there is no turning back from the world of today and tomorrow. We must face the challenges, embrace them with confidence, deal with the problems honestly and openly, and make this world work for all of us. America is where it should be -- in the lead, setting the pace, showing the confidence that all of us need to face tomorrow. We are ready to compete and we can win. Thank you very much. (Applause.)

(NAFTA is signed.) (Applause.)

Good evening. A few moments ago, the House of Representatives voted to approve the North American Free Trade Agreement. NAFTA will expand American exports, create new jobs, and help us reassert America's leadership in the world. This agreement is in the deep self-interest of the United States. It will help make working Americans winners in the new global economy.

I want to thank the lawmakers of both parties who gave it their support. Many of them showed real courage in voting their conscience in the best interests of our country.

Tonight's vote is a defining moment for our country.

At a time when many of our people are hurting, we chose to compete, not retreat -- to lead the new world economy, we did so much to make, as we have led the world in America's finest moments. The debate over NAFTA has been contentious.

Men and women of good will raised strong arguments for and against this agreement. Every participant in this debate wanted the same thing: more jobs, more security, and more opportunity for every American. And so do I.

The passionate defenders of our working people who opposed NAFTA are right to speak out against economic conditions which have produced too few jobs, stagnant incomes, inadequate retraining and investment strategies for people and places that need them. They fought hard and they have my respect.

But in an economy where competition is global and change is the only constant, we cannot advance the security of our workers by building walls of protection around our nation or pretending that the world economy simply isn't there. Our only choice is to take this new world head on.

That is why it is so important that we pass NAFTA, and I call on the Senate to complete the process within days. By eliminating Mexico's tariff taxes and restrictive rules, we will be able to export more cars, computers and other products, and keep more American workers on the job here at home.

NAFTA will raise environmental and labor standards in Mexico. I want labor and management to work together with my administration to ensure that the labor and environmental provisions of NAFTA are honored, and that this pact works to America's advantage.

NAFTA is a big step but just the first step in our effort to expand trade and spark an economic revival here and around the world.

We must guarantee our workers the training and education they need to compete in the new global marketplace. We must provide every citizen with

health care that can never be taken away. We must increase investment in our people and their jobs.

And we must lower foreign trade barriers so that the goods and services we produce can compete and win in the global marketplace. Tomorrow, I go to Seattle to meet with the leaders of fifteen Asian-Pacific economies. I will ask them to work toward more open markets for our products.

When we return, we will reach out to the other emerging market oriented democracies in Latin America.

And next month, we will urge our European and Asian competitors to complete work on a worldwide trade agreement that will create literally hundreds of thousands of U.S. jobs as we open markets all across the globe.

We've faced these difficult choices before -- whether to turn inward or to turn outward as leader of the world.

After World War I, we turned inward and built walls of protection around our economy. The result was Depression and ultimately war.

After World War II, we made a different choice. We turned outward. We built a system of expanded trade and collective security and created the great American middle class.

Tonight, with the Cold War over, our nation is facing that choice again; and we have not flinched. Once again, leaders of both political parties are finding common ground to fight for the common good.

Tonight, America has once again shown its strength, its confidence in itself. Americans are winners. And we are ready, together, to shape the new world.

Thank you and good night.

*FINAL TEXT -
FOR DELIVERY*

**REMARKS BY PRESIDENT CLINTON
ON THE SIGNING OF
THE NAFTA IMPLEMENTING LEGISLATION**

Thank you, Vice-President Al Gore -- the "Great Debater" of NAFTA.

Let me also thank Mickey Kantor, our trade representative, who has represented this nation so well at bargaining tables across the world.

And I would like to thank Bill Daley, the NAFTA "czar," who organized a crack brigade that fought hard and well for this agreement. Former congressman Bill Frenzel played an invaluable role, as well.

I also would like to recognize Speaker Foley, Reps. Michel and Gingrich, Majority Leader Mitchell, Senator Dole, and all the other members of Congress who supported this agreement. You showed courage by voting your conscience in the interest of the country, and I deeply appreciate it.

Finally, I would like to thank all of you here today. Members of my cabinet . . . businesspeople, environmentalists, workers, community leaders . . . you fought for this agreement against long odds. Its triumph is your triumph too, and I thank you.

This is a defining moment for our nation. We are present at the creation of a new economic order. And we stand on the verge of a global economic expansion -- sparked by this nation's decision to compete, and not retreat.

In a few moments, I will sign into law the North American Free Trade Agreement. NAFTA will tear down trade barriers between the U.S., Mexico and Canada -- creating the world's largest free trade zone, led by the United States. It will create jobs, some 200,000 new jobs by 1995 alone.

The environmental and labor side agreements, negotiated by my administration, will make this agreement a force for social progress as well as economic growth. Let me be clear: NAFTA is a good deal for the United States.

Already, the confidence we displayed by ratifying NAFTA has begun to bear fruit. We are now making real progress toward a worldwide trade pact so significant that it would make the gains from NAFTA look small by comparison.

Today, we have the chance to do what our parents did before us -- we have the opportunity to remake the world. For in this new era, our national security will be determined as much by our ability to pull down foreign trade barriers as by our ability to breach distant ramparts.

Once again, America leads the world. And in so doing we will rediscover a truth about ourselves -- it is when we lead that we build security and prosperity for our people.

We learned this lesson the hard way. Twice before in this century, we have been forced to define our role in the world.

After World War I, we turned inward, building walls of protectionism around our nation. The result was Depression and, ultimately, war. After World War II, we reached outward. Gifted leaders of both parties built a new order based on collective security and expanded trade. They created the foundation of stability that created the great American middle class. Their statecraft stands to this day: the IMF and World Bank, GATT, NATO.

In this very auditorium, in 1949, President Harry Truman signed one of the charter documents of that golden era of American leadership -- the North Atlantic Treaty that created NATO. "In this pact, we hope to create a shield against aggression and the fear of aggression," Truman told his audience, "a bulwark which will permit us to get on with the real business of government and society, the business of achieving a fuller and happier life for our citizens."

Now the institutions built by Truman and Acheson, Marshall and Vandenberg, have accomplished their task. The Cold War is over. The grim certitude of the contest with Communism has been replaced by the exuberant uncertainty of international economic competition. And the great question of our day is how to ensure security for our people at a time when change is the only constant.

Make no mistake: The global economy, with all its promise and perils, is now the central fact of life for our hardworking citizens. It has enriched the lives of millions of Americans. But for too many Americans those very winds of change have worn away at their security. For two decades, most people have worked harder for less. Seemingly secure jobs have fled overseas.

And while America is once again the most productive nation on earth, this very productivity holds within it the seeds of further insecurity. After all, productivity means that the same workers are producing more -- or fewer workers produce more.

This is the world we face. We cannot stop global change or repeal the laws of international competition. We can only harness its energy to our benefit. Now we must recognize that the only way for a wealthy nation to grow richer is to export -- to find new customers abroad for products made at home.

That, my fellow Americans, is what we are beginning to do.

First, we began to put our own house in order. Our economic plan included the biggest deficit cut in history. Now interest rates are down, and housing starts are booming.

Our economy created more private sector jobs in the past ten months than it had in the previous four years, combined.

Then, we worked long and hard to enact the pathbreaking trade pact I will sign in a few moments.

We could not rest there. From the G-7 meeting in Tokyo, where we negotiated a new trade framework with Japan . . . to the meeting last month with the leaders of fifteen Asian and Pacific economies . . . to my session last week with Latin American heads of state . . . we have travelled the globe, fighting to open markets to our goods and services.

As Vice-President Gore and Chief of Staff Mack McLarty announced two weeks ago when they met with President Salinas of Mexico, next year the nations of this hemisphere will gather in an economic summit that will plan how to extend the benefits of trade to the emerging market democracies of the Americas.

Now I am pleased to report that we have the opportunity to secure the biggest breakthrough of all.

Negotiators from 112 countries are seeking to conclude negotiations on a new round of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, GATT.

A historic worldwide trade pact -- one that would spur a global economic boom -- is now within our grasp. Let me be clear: We will not settle for a bad GATT agreement. But we will not flag in our efforts to secure a good agreement. We are prepared to make our contribution to the success of this negotiation, but we insist that other nations do their part, too.

We must not squander this opportunity. I call on all of the nations of the world to seize this moment and close the deal on a strong GATT within the next week. Don't rest; don't sleep; in the interest of workers and businesses everywhere, get it done.

Bit by bit, these measures to expand trade are creating the conditions for a sustained global expansion. As significant as these steps are, our goal must be more ambitious still.

We seek nothing less than a new trading system that benefits all nations through robust commerce; that protects our middle class; that lifts workers and the environment up, without dragging anyone down; that seeks to ensure that our policies reflect our values. Our agenda will be far-reaching:

We are determined that dynamic trade cannot not lead to environmental despoliation. We will seek new institutional arrangements to ensure that trade leaves the world cleaner than before.

We will press to secure for workers in all countries the rights we take for granted -- to organize and to earn a decent living.

We will insist that expanded trade be fair to our businesses and regions. No country should use cartels, subsidies, or rules of entry to keep our products off its shelves.

And we must see to it that our citizens have the personal security to confidently participate in this new era. Every worker must receive the education and training he or she needs to reap the rewards of international competition. Next year, my administration will propose comprehensive legislation to transform our unemployment system into a reemployment and job retraining system.

We must, above all, seek to reconstruct the political coalition for expanded trade. For decades, working men and women -- and their representatives -- supported the policies that brought us prosperity and security.

That was because we recognized that expanded trade benefitted us all, but that we had an obligation to protect those workers who did bear the brunt of competition. In recent years, this social contract has been sundered. That cannot continue.

When I affix my signature to the NAFTA legislation a few moments from now, I will do so with this pledge to the hardworking working men and women of this country: The gains from this agreement must be your gains. I ask those who opposed NAFTA to work with us to guarantee that the labor and environmental side agreements are strictly enforced.

And I call on those in the business community who so strongly backed NAFTA: join with me to urge Congress to build the world's best worker training system. Just as government has an obligation to create the best system possible, and workers have a responsibility to take advantage of it, you have a duty to invest in your employees. We can only reap the rewards of lower deficits, low inflation, and expanded trade if the American workforce is world-class.

We seek a new and more open global trading system not for its own sake, but for our own sake. Good jobs, rewarding careers, and broadened horizons for our middle class can only be secured by expanding exports and global growth.

For too long, our step has been unsteady as the ground has shifted beneath our feet. Today, as I sign the North American Free Trade Agreement into law, I believe that we have found our footing. America is where it should be -- in the lead, setting the pace, showing the confidence that has made us great. We are winners. And we are ready to compete.