

THE LIE:

NAFTA has been great for America and Mexico.

WRONG!

By Robert Colaco, Founder and National Chairman of Citizens for a Better America.

The Clinton Administration and those that went along with the President in both major parties told us back in 1993 that the passage of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) would be great for the United States. They told us that it would drive our exports higher, that it would produce more jobs here than in Mexico, that it would really cut down on the traffic of illegal immigration coming across the southern border of the United States. They also told us that it would improve the Mexican economy, they told us that it would give Mexico the incentive to clean up its environment including environmental problems that affect the United States such as the polluted Rio Grande River by El Paso, Texas and the polluted Tijuana River by San Diego, California.

National Geographic published a special issue in August 1996, an in-depth exposé on Mexico. I would certainly encourage you to get that issue and read it. The whole magazine is one in depth article "Emerging Mexico: A Special Issue". On page 7 of that issue National Geographic writes, "Today Mexico's 95 million people seem poised for another momentous change. Rich in natural resources, blessed with strong family ties

and a hardworking populace, Mexico is ready to move from the ranks of developing nations into a new role, this time as a modern player on the world stage. But those hopes have been tarnished, at least for the moment, by political corruption, civil unrest, environmental pollution, and the Mexican government's devaluation of the peso. The resulting economic woes have exacerbated tensions along the United States-Mexico border, where drug trafficking and illegal immigration rise each time the peso falls." Remember this is after NAFTA. The article goes on to say, "Such ripples touch neighbors in all directions, for our lives are ever more closely linked - by the North American Free Trade Agreement, by the recent guarantee of 20 billion dollars in U.S. loans to Mexico, by the growing influence of hispanic culture spreading north of the border, by the hefty U.S. investment in new businesses south of the border,..."

Did you see that, "by the hefty U.S. investment in new businesses south of the border". If U.S. businesses are investing in Mexico, that would mean they are investing less in the U.S. No wonder we have the high anxiety about jobs that we do. NAFTA continues to negatively affect your job, your future. This is exactly what the Pro NAFTA bunch told us would not happen.

The National Geographic expose continues on page 10 with more, "Drug trafficking is increasing. Pollution is legendary. Politics are in turmoil. And, though the country is a partner in a dramatic new experiment in trade, the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), Mexico has been battered by the recent devaluation of its currency. The gap between rich and poor is widening. The poor-both the cramped residents of the teeming cities and the indigenous peoples of the forests-are growing restless. Even the relatively small middle class has conducted protests and work disruptions. Everyone, it seems, wants something

new." In fact, National Geographic goes on to talk about (on page 23) how everything was going so great for Mexico. Then they say: "But catastrophe hit in 1994: Indians rebelled in Chiapas on the day NAFTA took effect." It's important to note that not only were the overwhelming number of Americans upset about NAFTA but the "Indians rebelled in Chiapas on the very day that NAFTA took effect".

Lets, let Foreign Affairs, the magazine published by the Council on Foreign Relations, Inc. (an organization that certainly seems very Pro NAFTA) shed some more light on this. In its November/December 1993 issue the summary for its article "The Uncomfortable Truth about NAFTA" said, "The trade agreement is really about helping a friendly and important neighbor in its yet uncompleted economic and political reform." The article went on to explain how Salinas proposed NAFTA, how "Salinas has overseen a radical liberalization of the Mexican economy, above all in international trade."... "But the reform has not yet delivered ..." "Unemployment remains far higher and real wages far lower than in 1980." "For the United States, this agreement is not about jobs. It is not even about economic efficiency and growth. It is about doing what we can to help a friendly government succeed."

The National Geographic article explains what happened, let me quote at length:

"The PRI's presidential candidate, Luis Donaldo Colosio Murrieta, was assassinated by a 23-year-old factory worker, who claimed to be acting alone, although conspiracy theories abound. Investors from abroad-and Mexican businessmen - lost confidence in Mexico, forcing the new president, Ernesto Zedillo Ponce de Leon, to devalue the peso. A severe recession

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