

women are leading the way through advancements in law, science, business, and the arts. As we approach the 21st century, women's unfailing strength and wisdom remain integral to ensuring the lasting prosperity of our Nation.

Each year, we observe August 26 as "Women's Equality Day," to honor the infinite sacrifices and contributions that women have made to the United States. On this occasion we reaffirm our national commitment to the distinctly American promise of guaranteed equality for all our people.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this eighteenth day of August, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-three, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and eighteenth.

William J. Clinton

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NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on August 20.

Remarks on Naming William M. Daley as NAFTA Task Force Chairman and an Exchange With Reporters

August 19, 1993

The President. Good afternoon, everyone.

Audience member. Happy birthday!

The President. Well, thank you very much. Thank you, Helen. [Helen Thomas, United Press International]

Ladies and gentlemen, I am pleased to announce that my good friend, Bill Daley of Chicago, has agreed to be the Chair of the administration's Task Force on the North American Free Trade Agreement. This agreement means more trade, more exports, and more jobs for the United States. I think it is very much in our national interest.

I also think it means the opportunity to go not only to Mexico but beyond Mexico into other nations in Latin America to develop stronger trading relationships that will boost our economy, the jobs, and the in-

comes of the American people well into the 21st century.

Thanks to the hard work done by Ambassador Mickey Kantor and the other members of the U.S. Trade Representative's staff, we have now seen in the last several days the conclusion of a remarkable set of side agreements to guarantee real investments in environmental cleanup and a dramatic and unprecedented commitment by the Government of Mexico to tie their minimum wage structure to increases in productivity and growth in the Mexican economy and to make that a part of the trade agreement, so that failure to do that could result in fines and ultimately trade sanctions, meaning that Mexico is serious about making this a trade agreement that benefits Mexican workers, raises wage levels, increases their ability to buy American products, and decreases the impetus for continued illegal immigration across the Mexican border. I am very, very encouraged by this.

I also want to say that as we move into this campaign vigorously now—and it's something that we've not been able to do because we didn't have an agreement until just a few days ago—Mr. Daley will be working with Ambassador Kantor, with the Secretary of Treasury, with the Director of EPA, with the Labor Secretary, and with other members of the Cabinet, including the Commerce Secretary, to present a strongly united front. Furthermore, we will be reaching out to involve in the national leadership of this task force prominent Republicans, Democrats, and independents who have a common interest in promoting the NAFTA and what it can do for our economy.

I believe, as I said repeatedly, that if we could get these side agreements which have now been concluded, this trade agreement means a better future for America's workers, for American industry, for the American economy. I think it is very much in our interest to adopt it. I believe the fact that Bill Daley has agreed to take a leadership role enhances the chances of its adoption, and I know that the Vice President, Mr. McLarty, and others in our administration join me in expressing our thanks to Bill Daley. And he'll be here soon, and we'll be going to work.

Would you like to say a few words?

Mr. Daley. I appreciate, Mr. President, Mr. Vice President, this opportunity. Obviously it's quite a challenge. And through your leadership we will be successful. Thank you.

Q. [Inaudible]

Mr. Daley. Yes, ma'am.

NAFTA and Job Creation

Q. Mr. President, how can you convince American workers that NAFTA is good for them when major corporations are laying off thousands of people? Where are the jobs going to come from?

The President. Well, major corporations are laying off thousands of people in part because they don't have enough work for them. Part of this downsizing is an inevitable part of the reorganization of some of those big employers. But what has happened is that for the last 12 years—for a long time—we had more jobs created in small business, in medium-sized businesses than were being lost in large businesses. The Fortune 500 laid off more than 100,000 people a year every year of the 1980's.

So, this trend is something that has been going on for some time. Whether we gain jobs or not, and gain good jobs, depends on whether there is more demand for American products and services. And there is ample evidence that the only way a wealthy country grows wealthier in a global economy is to increase the volume of trade. And it is a clear, elemental principle of economics that if you want more people to go to work in a competitive economy, you have to have more people to sell to. So that's what we're trying to do. I feel very strongly about it.

I also believe that by raising the incomes of Mexicans, which this will do, they will be able to buy more of our products, and there will be much less pressure on them to come to this country in the form of illegal immigration. So I think this will be a very stabilizing, economically healthy agreement.

I believe, to be fair, that a lot of the people who are against this agreement were against the original agreement and may not have had the chance to evaluate the side agreements that we've worked so hard since January to conclude with the Mexican Government. And I think that that will make a difference.

I also think that it's important that this Government, our Government, make a good-

faith effort to make sure that we provide adequate retraining and other opportunities for people who fear they will be subject to dislocation under this agreement. In my mind, there is no question that this agreement is a significant net plus for the American economy.

Efforts To Combat Drugs

Q. Mr. President, what do you think about this proposal to merge the DEA with the FBI? And what kind of signal would that send about U.S. commitment to drug interdiction?

The President. Well, first of all, I've not had a chance to view the proposal. The Vice President's task force has under review a number of proposals. I'm not sure they've even finalized their own decisions. You might want to ask him about that. But he'll be making a presentation to me early in September. And when and if that recommendation comes to me, I'll evaluate it. I'll talk to him, and I'll talk to the Attorney General about it. But I will say this: Anything we do will be designed to enhance our efforts to combat drugs, not to weaken it. And any decision I make will be made with that in mind.

NAFTA

Q. Do you and Mr. Daley have any idea how you are going to overcome or circumvent the leadership of the House, the majority leader and the chief whip, both of whom are opposed to NAFTA?

The President. Well, the chief whip is clearly opposed to it, and I think he and I—I admire him immensely, but we just have an honest disagreement about this. And I might say, since he's from Michigan, I would just point out to you not very long ago General Motors announced that they were moving 1,000 jobs back from Mexico to the United States to be closer to the market and because of the higher productivity of the American worker.

I'd like to make one point about that, and then I'll say something about the majority leader. I have governed a State where people shut their plants down and went to Mexico for low wages. I have been there. And my belief is that if we defeat NAFTA, nothing

will stop. NAFTA won't stop people. If you beat NAFTA, it will not stop people who want to go to Mexico for lower wages from going there. But more and more, smart manufacturers are deciding that they should locate where they're going to have a highly productive work force and where they'll be reasonably close to the market and where they'll be very flexible to change product lines on a rapid basis. I think that this will help the American economy.

I also think that the kinds of investments you'll see in Mexico, if NAFTA passes, are not those investments along the American border that produce more products to come back into America but investments further down into Mexico to put Mexican people to work to produce products for their own market, which, again, will stabilize their incomes, stabilize their population movement, increase their ability to buy American products. So that's the argument I'm going to make to others. I don't think I can change Mr. Bonior's mind, but I think perhaps I can change others.

Mr. Gephardt has a different set of concerns. He wants to make sure that we're going to adequately fund the training programs, that we're going to adequately fund the environmental programs, and that the Mexican commitment to raise minimum wages means that manufacturing wages will in fact go up as their incomes go up. And I still have high hopes that things that will happen between now and the time the implementing legislation is presented to Congress in several weeks will persuade him to support this. I do believe it will be difficult for us to prevail if both of them are opposed. But Mr. Gephardt has some high standards for this agreement, but I'm not sure they can't be met.

And I also say, I want the Members of Congress who have not announced their positions to review these agreements. There has never been a trade agreement with this kind of environmental protection in it. There has certainly never been a trade agreement where one country committed to raise its wages when its productivity increases and to make that wage increase a subject of the trade agreement so that they can be subject to fines for trade sanctions that they don't

keep. This has never happened before. Mexico was serious about trying to raise the living standards of its own people in ways that help stabilize American wages and American jobs.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:57 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Statement on Naming William M. Daley as NAFTA Task Force Chairman

August 19, 1993

I am pleased to announce that William Daley has agreed to serve as Chairman of the administration's Task Force on the North American Free Trade Agreement. His willingness to serve—on behalf of expanded exports, expanded jobs, and expanded trade—is a further measure of his commitment to public service.

For the next several months, the Congress of the United States will debate and determine the fate of NAFTA. With the leadership of the United States Trade Representative, Mickey Kantor, and the help of others in our administration, new supplemental agreements have been completed that will transform NAFTA into a force for job creation, environmental cleanup, greater American competitiveness, and higher labor standards.

The case for NAFTA is strong, and in Bill Daley, I have found the strongest possible advocate to make that case. Bill will work effectively and closely with Ambassador Kantor, Treasury Secretary Bentsen, Commerce Secretary Brown, Labor Secretary Reich, EPA Administrator Carol Browner, and other members of the Cabinet to conduct a positive, bipartisan campaign to explain the benefits of the NAFTA to the country and to the Congress.

NAFTA is a pathbreaking trade agreement because its implementation will bring a better deal for American workers, companies, and consumers, while acting as a spur for a cleaner environment and a better climate for workers on all sides of the border. Passage of the NAFTA is a high priority of our admin-