Mr. NEUMANN. I want to wrap up this evening with a tribute to a church that I attended twice in the last 3 days here. The church held a very special service and they put in a huge amount of effort. A little church in Williams Bay. It is Calvary Community Church. What they did is they held a special worship service on two nights to honor our veterans. When I went there the first night, the church was absolutely packed. I got there about a half hour before the service started. There were 900 people there. I could not believe it. I walked in the place. It was absolutely jam-packed. All American citizens there to pay tribute to our veterans. What better place could they be to celebrate the Fourth of July weekend?

I went back the second night, my wife and I. Sue and I were driving over to the church service and we said, they cannot possibly have 900 people in this church again the second night in a row. They had 900 people the second night in a row. What that does for me is it reinvigorates me, gives me hope for the future of this great country.

We saw in two nights 1,800 people turn out to a church to pay tribute to the veterans that have done so much to give us this great Nation that we live in. I thought that would be a fitting way to wrap this discussion up this evening because they have done so much in the past to give us this great Nation that we live in today. It is now our responsibility, our awesome responsibility to do the right thing so that our children receive a better Nation than we received, so that we live up to our responsibility to pass this Nation on to the next generation in a fiscally sound way, a way that they can also look forward to living the American dream, hopes and dreams for their families and for their children and their grandchildren. That is what this is all about.

ON TRADE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. TAYLOR of North Carolina). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 1997, the gentleman from Michigan [Mr. BONIOR] is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. BONIOR. Mr. Speaker, I cannot help but comment on the discussion that we have just had here before I talk about trade, because I think it has a distorted view of history. I would like to correct my colleagues who just spoke by reminding the American people that in 1993, when the Clinton administration took office, they inherited a $300 billion annual deficit from the Republicans.

□ 2100

Three hundred billion. And, of course, in 1993, we passed a very important budget that has worked in several ways:

It has eliminated literally hundreds of government programs. It reduced the Federal work force by 250,000 people, I believe. We have the lowest Federal work force since John F. Kennedy, the lowest Federal work force today. And it also brought the deficit down from the Bush Republican number of $300 billion annually down to about 65 this year, every year reducing that budget deficit. And not one Republican voted for that 1993 budget deal that basically has brought us into balance.

So when my friends speak of spending, they have this convenient amnesia about their policies and how it was in the 1993 bill that we were able to finally get some control to the point now where our debt relative to our gross domestic product is the lowest of any Western developed nation in the world today.

I want to turn to another subject, if I could, this evening, Mr. Speaker, and that is trade. I will be joined hopefully by a few of my colleagues to talk about the North American Free Trade Agreement and its effects on the people of Mexico and the United States over the past 3½ years.

We are engaging in this discussion because sometime this fall, we think, Congress will be asked to approve something that is known as fast track. Now, people are out there saying what is this fast track that he is talking about; is that some kind of a Washington special lingual term that is out there to confuse the rest of us? Well, fast track is an authority that the Congress surrenders to the administration to make a trade deal. Fast track forces Congress to accept or reject an entire trade agreement rather than allowing us to improve upon the agreement that is reached by our trade negotiators with other nations.

The administration wants fast track, all administrations want fast track, in order to expand NAFTA to other nations in Central and South America. What we are saying is that, before we rush ahead to expand NAFTA, we should understand the effects it has already had on the workers in the United States and in Mexico.

I try to use the analogy that, if our house has a flooded basement, our roof is burning and we have chaos in our house, we do not decide to build an addition to the house. We decide to take care of these problems that we have before we pass on improvements to our house. The same is true with our trade agreement.

We will see much analysis of NAFTA over the next couple of weeks, starting later this week, when the administration is going to release a report on NAFTA, and we will discuss that a little later this evening. What I would like to discuss now is the remarkable election that took place on Sunday in Mexico.

Mexico is our neighbor. There are good people in Mexico, hard-working people, people who are struggling, people who have had a very difficult time with human rights and democracy. Elections have repeatedly been stolen in Mexico.

They had a very important election on Sunday. There were over 100 million people in Mexico. Opposition on both the left and the right of the ruling Institutional Revolutionary Party, or PRI, as it is called, these opposition parties scored significant victories, victories that will unravel nearly 70 years of one-party rule in Mexico. And the biggest one ever was the Party of the Democratic Revolution, which is a party that is headed by Mr. Cardenas, who was overwhelmingly elected the mayor of Mexico City. And by the way, this is the first time they allowed the second most powerful position in Mexico, the mayor of Mexico City, to be elected.

This election was significant for many reasons, but I want to focus on two of those reasons this evening. Most people agree that the conduct in the election on Sunday was not perfect but that it was by far the fairest national election conducted over the past 68 years in Mexico. This was the first real chance that the people of Mexico have had to see their ballots actually tallied and counted and not discarded or misplaced somewhere.

The voters rejected the PRI. That is the 70-year ruling party. They protested its economic policies and they bravely chose change. Now, in the past, they have chosen change, but their ballots were not counted and elections were stolen from the people, and it was done on a regular basis. The most notable example was the Presidential election in 1988, not too long ago, in which most people believe that Cardenas handily beat Carlos Salinas only to have the apparent victory snatched from him by the PRI massive electoral fraud.

In that election Cardenas' phones were tapped, his top aides were murdered, and the government halted the vote count on election night and declared Salinas the winner. Over the next 6 years, as many as 500 Cardenas and PRD activists were murdered in an attempt to intimidate and silence the opposition. That is a startling, startling number. Five hundred of his supporters and activists were murdered by the ruling party.

What amazed me through all of this was the acceptance of Carlos Salinas in America as some kind of savior, an intellectual, elite, smart, sophisticated individual. He fooled the entire elite intellectual community in this country.

It has been said in Mexico that the PRI governed not from the ballots of democracy but from the bullets of revolution. It has also been called the perfect dictatorship by one of the great writers of Mexico, Octavio Paz. It was only a matter of time before these misdeeds of the PRI caught up with them, and on Sunday these misdeeds did catch up with them.

While many people will try to characterize the vote on Sunday in Mexico as only being significant because it produced a major shift in power away

from the PRI, anybody who watched that election and listened to that election and analyzed that election and saw what the Mexican workers were going through, and I will describe that in a second, will understand clearly that this was significant because the Mexican people felt their economic situation needed to be changed.

A major factor in the ascension of the PRD and Cardenas has been their economic program. Many people here probably believe that all of Mexico supported NAFTA, and that the loss of American jobs has greatly benefited Mexico. But that is not the case at all. In fact, it is just the opposite. The very few at the top, in our country and in Mexico and to some degree in Canada as well, have benefited well, but the majority of people, 80 percent of the American people, probably higher than that in Mexico, have suffered as a result of what I consider one of the worst treaties this country, if not the worst, has ever put together.

Now, let me talk about what has happened there, because Mexico has been devastated since NAFTA through an economic crisis triggered by the devaluation of their peso, which we argued was going to happen when we debated NAFTA on this floor, and also by the PRI government policies that benefitted investors at the expense of the working people in Mexico. And, of course, investors were benefited in the United States at the expense of our workers.

The PRD and Cardenas agree that NAFTA and the economic policies of the existing ruling party there, the PRI, are not working. They favor changing NAFTA to make it fair to workers in all three countries. In order for NAFTA to work, according to its opponents, we had to build a consumer market in Mexico.

The idea was that we will have this free trade and the people that are producing things in Mexico will increase their salaries, and when they increase their salaries they will be able to buy more products from us, more consumer products, and everything will kind of just bubble up. Well, the opposite has happened. Everything has sort of bubbled down.

That means ensuring that Mexican workers, under this theory, had jobs at wages in which they could afford to buy United States products. But, as I said, just the opposite has happened. The lives of millions of people in Mexico have been devastated, thanks in part to NAFTA, to the economic crisis precipitated by the peso devaluation in 1994, and to the wage controls forced on workers by the existing Government and the businesses and official labor unions it controls.

There was a concerted effort, since 1980 basically, where the corrupt labor union in Mexico, which lost its leader, by the way, a man who was 96 years old, who passed away, and maybe there is hope for change now, but he was in cahoots with the investors, the business elite, the foreign investors and the Government to keep wages low. The effects of these failed policies on workers in Mexico has been staggering. It has been staggering. That, in turn, had smoked out NAFTA for what it really was about, giving corporations investment guarantees in Mexico and then solidifying the role of the maquiladora region in Mexico, that is the area along the United States-Mexican border, and California, Arizona, New Mexico and Texas, solidifying the role of this area called the maquiladora region as an export platform.

What does export platform mean? That means people produce to ship right back into this country. United States companies are shifting jobs to Mexico, paying Mexican workers about 10 percent of what American workers were being paid and are shipping their products right back here to the United States. The toll of this on Mexican workers has been severe. The gap between Mexico's richest and their poor has been rapidly expanding, as I might add, as it has been in the United States. Our gap between the rich and the poor in this country is growing ever more every year, every 4 or 5 years. It is expanding to an all-time high today.

Twenty-eight thousand small businesses have failed in Mexico since NAFTA. The number of unemployed in Mexico doubled in 2 years. Our own embassy in Mexico estimated in late 1995 that 35 percent of Mexicans were either unemployed or underemployed. Real wages in Mexico are 27 percent lower than in 1994 and 37 percent lower than they were in 1980. Real wages. And 19 percent of workers made less than the minimum wage, which is only $3.30 a day. Not an hour, $3.30 a day. And 66 percent of workers lack any benefits at all, any pension or health benefits.

Eight million people. Listen to this. Since NAFTA, eight million people in Mexico have fallen from middle class status into poverty. Eight million in just 3½ years. And perhaps worst of all, millions of children have entered the work force to try to keep their families making ends meet.

The Mexican people were stunned by all of this, as one can imagine. Their wages were cut. If they had any benefits, they were cut out. They were being dropped into poverty. Twenty-eight thousand of them lost businesses. The peso was devalued. They woke up one morning and the worth of the money they had in their pocket, or if they had a little savings account, dropped by 30 or 40 percent. So they were mad. They were mad. And they were stunned and they opted for change, and I believe the American people feel the same way about this treaty.

Now, people say the economy is doing so well in the United States. It is doing extremely well for about 20 percent of Americans. They are doing incredibly well. Incredibly well. But for 80 percent of America, their wages have been stagnant since 1979. Almost 20 years. Going on almost 20 years now. And it is easy to understand, because corporations and companies are saying to workers, ''If you want a wage increase, you want pension benefit increases or health benefit increases, we are out of here; we are going to Mexico.''

And do not take my word for it. There was a study done by Kate Bronfenbrenner, University of Cornell in New York, just done recently for the Labor Department. This study, by the way, was suppressed because of what it said. It said that 62 percent of businesses in this country use NAFTA as a lever, as a wedge against their own workers, saying that, ''If you demand too much, we are out of here; we are leaving.'' Sixty-two percent. An amazing number. An amazing figure.

So there was change in Mexico. I believe the American people feel the same way about this. And if the vote on NAFTA were held today, I believe it would be a much different story because we are coming to realize that, after 3½ years, trade agreements like NAFTA cannot ignore the issues of wages and basic standards for workers or the environment, or for things we do not ordinarily talk about when we talk about trade, like food safety.

I am concerned that the report that many people will be looking at for information about NAFTA that will be issued later this week will not address these serious issues either. Later this week we will be releasing its version, the administration, of how well NAFTA has worked. But I am not sure it will include a serious discussion about how NAFTA is depressing wages, affecting food safety, highway safety and a number of other issues.

□ 2115

I want to relay to you a story of one real person who has been affected by NAFTA, a story you will not read about in the study on NAFTA. I met this woman a couple weeks ago. She was from the city of El Paso, right on the border, a city which has more certified NAFTA job losses than any other city in the country. Her name is Irma Montoya.

Ms. Montoya worked in an electronics plant in El Paso for 8 years. She worked hard. She paid her taxes. She played by the rules. She did her best. But despite her best efforts, the company shut down in El Paso when maquiladoras from just across the border, miles away, took over the work her plant did.

And why did they do that? Of course, because they were being paid. She was being paid a very low salary, very close to the minimum wage in this country. They moved the plant just a few miles over the border because they could get away with paying people less than a dollar an hour over there.

Now Irma received no health or pension benefits from her company. And despite being eligible for NAFTA job training assistance, she received no

real help. She wanted to become an accountant and was told it would be too expensive. So now Irma is stuck without a job, without a pension, without health benefits, without training. And she lives in a city where the unemployment rate is about 12 percent.

NAFTA provided the incentive not only for the loss of her job but for the downward pressure on wages and benefits for the American workers, which left Irma without a pension or without health benefits. And this is going on all over the country.

Just the other week my friends were here, the gentleman from Ohio [Mr. KUCINICH] and the gentlewoman from Ohio [Ms. KAPTUR], and the gentleman from Pennsylvania [Mr. KLINK] and the gentlewoman from Missouri [Ms. DANNER], and they were telling me about how these jobs are leaving, how people are being stranded without benefits, without the proper training, and it is going on all over the country. There are hundreds of thousands of people just like Irma Montoya all over this country.

And while you will not hear about Irma Montoya later this week in the administration's report on NAFTA, we are going to keep coming to the floor. My colleague, the gentleman from Massachusetts [Mr. MOAKLEY], who is with me, who is going to talk about this issue in just a second, and other colleagues are going to come here and talk about this issue because it needs to be aired.

And while I do not think the NAFTA report will be all that enlightening, one memo that I would recommend to everyone here in this Chamber and in the Congress and my colleagues is to take a look at Professor Harley Shaiken, who was at the University of California at Berkeley, who has probably more knowledge on this issue than anybody in America and who has studied the economic relationship between the United States and Mexico extensively. Look at his report. Professor Shaiken sheds some light on what I would call the myth behind the increased exports to Mexico.

There is no denying that exports to Mexico have risen since NAFTA, although imports from Mexico have increased more dramatically. We had about a $2 billion surplus with Mexico prior to NAFTA, which is only 3½ years ago. We have a $16 billion deficit today. That is a major shift. That means they are sending us here a lot more than we are sending them there. We are sending them a few more things, but listen to what is happening to those things that we send them.

He, Professor Shaiken, analyzing trade data, shows that the vast majority of export growth has been in what he calls the revolving door exports. And what do we mean by revolving door? Those are goods that are shipped to Mexico as components, therefore counted as exports, but then they are assembled right on that maquiladora border. They get over the line, they are assembled and they come right back here, shipped right back to the United States. The revolving door exports have surged 230 percent since NAFTA, rising from $18 billion in 1993 to $42 billion last year.

These exports accounted for 40 percent of our total exports to Mexico in 1993, but that share grew 62 percent last year. So 62 percent of our exports to Mexico are shipped right back here. They are assembled, put together by people who are making 70 cents, a dollar an hour, and then they are sold back here, at no reduced rates, I might add. These are not job-creating exports, they are job destroying exports. As Professor Shaiken noted in his memo, paraphrasing Pogo, ''We have met the market and it is us.''

The memo also notes that NAFTA has increased for especially direct investment in Mexico from other nations as well. This is kind of interesting. Remember the claim during our debates, where the NAFTA proponents said that we want to pass NAFTA now to get into Mexico before the Europeans and the Asians could get in there?

Well, the fact is that those nations have a trade surplus with Mexico. We have a $16 billion deficit, and they are investing in Mexico at rapid rates since NAFTA. Investments from Germany have tripled since NAFTA; investments from Japan have increased tenfold.

Now keep that fact in mind when we are going to hear the same claim this year about going into Latin American nations before European and Asian nations do. We are going to hear that same argument, and it is just full of holes. The facts show that we will all get into those markets, and that rushing through an ill-conceived free-trade agreement does not give us any type of advantage in that respect.

One other item from Professor Shaiken's memo that I would mention at this point is about continued falling real wages in Mexico. He notes that Mexican workers have been unable to make wage gains despite increased productivity. What does that mean? That means they are putting out more, Mexican workers are producing more, dramatically more, because they are hard workers and because they are working in newer modern facilities.

Some of these facilities in the maquiladora, and I have traveled and looked at them, they are as modern as anything we have here in this country. So productivity in Mexico has risen 38 percent since NAFTA, but real hourly wages have dropped by 21 percent over the same period. So you figure it out. They are producing more for their executives and CEO's, and these corporations, mostly multinationals, productivity is way, way up and their wages are going down.

And then when our workers try to get a wage increase here in their plants, they see multinational people who are down there and who own corporations up here say to our workers, ''We cannot give you any wage increase, cannot take care of any health or pension benefits because we will just go down to Mexico and we do not have to pay them anything.'' So they are leveraging. They are leveraging.

Productivity in Mexico, as I said, has risen by 38 percent since NAFTA, but real hourly wages dropped by 21 percent. Despite the fact that many plants in Mexico approach or exceed United States productivity levels, the hourly wage in Mexican manufacturing was less than 10 percent of the United States levels in 1996. They make one-tenth of what our workers make, and this is a trend that has only accelerated since NAFTA. This disparity between wages and productivity in Mexico existed well before NAFTA and during stable economic times.

Between 1980 and 1993, manufacturing productivity in Mexico rose by 53 percent while real wages declined by 30 percent. So you know the investors, the money people, the multinationals, they are doing very well. Their workers have been falling further and further behind, 8 million falling into poverty from the middle class in Mexico.

That fact led many of us during the NAFTA debate in 1993 to call for a linkage between wages and productivity in Mexico and for ensuring the rights of workers in Mexico, that those rights were honored, but our cause went unheeded. And the problem has only gotten worse, as we have already seen. So this is a trend, I think, that is going to continue on and on unless we seriously address these issues of wages and worker rights in our trade agreement.

The current system is tragic for working people both in the United States and in Mexico and in Canada, as well. It does not have to be permanent, though. The people of Mexico spoke on Sunday, and the American people through us in Congress will have a chance to speak this fall when we have this debate.

We need to remember that this trade debate is not just about markets and trade barriers; it is about jobs, it is about living standards, it is about human rights, it is about human dignity. Human dignity. These struggles we are about to engage in have been fought in this country before and around the world by earlier generations of workers.

At the turn of this century, 100 years ago, the industrial revolution brought massive change, just as the global economy and technology and information are changing the landscape today. And at that time, giant corporations tried to do the same thing. They tried to control the process. But the people got wise, they figured it out. They figured out they were being exploited. They figured out their land was being exploited, and they banded together. They formed labor unions and they formed progressive movements. They came together and fought back and they made a difference. That struggle led to the creation of a system of labor

and social and health rules which increase our living standards in this country.

If it was not for people coming together, led mostly by labor unions in this country, we would not have a minimum wage, we would not outlaw child labor, we would not have weekends, we would not have a 40-hour work week, we would not have an 8-hour day, we would not have health benefits. We have to remind ourselves sometimes that people banding together can make a difference.

But it is that very system that is under attack today, and we cannot afford to go backward 100 years. This debate is about our economic future, and whether we want to take our Nation forward or go back to an era in this Nation in which workers' rights were not guaranteed and in which a few wealthy corporations controlled our economy.

This is a fight against transnationals, multinational corporations. That is what this is about. There are very few governments standing up to them today. Labor is on the decline in many parts. Although I might just say in this country it is on the rebound, and it is becoming more vibrant and more organized, and they are organizing more workers every day because of the statistics I read to you.

I predict in Mexico, with the demise of their labor leader, who passed at 96 and who was, I believe, corrupt and did not serve working people well, and with the demise of the PRR government, we will see stronger labor unions, we will see people banding together in progressive units and demanding a fair and just wage.

So we do not want to go back as a nation to where we were 100 years ago. We want a trade policy that is going to move us forward. That is what this debate is about, and that is why we are here talking about it, so that people can understand some of the other side of the issue.

We are going to get a report, as I said twice or three times this evening, from the administration this week on NAFTA; and I would ask the people to look at that in its entirety. They are not going to hear in that report about food processing or they are not going to hear about food safety.

Let me talk about food safety for just a second. Then I want to yield to my good friend, the gentleman from Massachusetts [Mr. MOAKLEY], the ranking member of the Committee on Rules. Remember a few months ago the strawberry scare in this country, contaminated strawberries came in from Mexico? Hundreds and hundreds of kids in this country, particularly in my State of Michigan, were affected. We had 1,100 kids who had to go get vaccine shots, a series of very difficult shots, and hundreds of them were sick.

That has happened with wheat, and it is happening with other foods. And, of course, the drug problem. You know, we tried to negotiate a tougher drug deal than NAFTA, but we caved. Drugs are coming in here at incredible rates, an incredible rate. Seventy percent of the cocaine coming into this country comes through Mexico, 25 percent of the heroin, and it is passing through every day. It is a wave line down in Texas.

They inspect trucks. They inspect 1 truck out of 200. Eleven thousand trucks come across the border. Eleven thousand trucks come across the border every day. One out of every two hundred get inspected. So lots of drugs are coming in here. The NAFTA agreement was one of the worst agreements this country ever signed and engaged in.

I am not opposed to having an agreement with Mexico. They are good people. They are hard-working people. They have a new chance for a new beginning. I want a good trade relationship, but I want a relationship that will elevate their workers to our standards, rather than bringing our workers down to their poverty standards. That is not too much to ask. That is what the Europeans did when Portugal and Greece wanted into the European Union, you know, an economic market union that is strong and vibrant.

□ 2130

But the Europeans said to Greece and to Portugal, ''Before you come in, you have got to meet a few standards here on food safety, you have got to meet a few standards on wages, on productivity, a few other things. And then we will let you in.'' And these countries said, ''Well, that's reasonable, that's fair, we'll do that.'' They met those standards and they were accepted and they are part of the union. That is what we were trying to get with a good NAFTA. But instead, we got one of the worst pieces of legislation, I believe, this country has ever engaged in.

I thank my colleague from Massachusetts for staying so late and participating in this. I appreciate his leadership on this issue and his passion for working people. He is one of the great leaders of this body on Central American issues. I remember vividly the gentleman from Massachusetts [Mr. MOAKLEY] leading the effort to bring justice and dignity to El Salvador. I thank him for joining me this evening.

Mr. MOAKLEY. Mr. Speaker, I thank my leader, and my dear friend from Michigan. I do not think there is anybody in this House who is a better friend to American workers than the gentleman from Michigan [Mr. BONIOR]. He knows that NAFTA was a bad idea and he is really speaking out on this issue. He is on the right side of this issue.

I was in my office watching my leader speaking on this thing when my telephone rang and a young lady from Milton, Massachusetts called up and said, ''I'm looking at my television set and I notice the gentleman from Michigan [Mr. BONIOR] speaking on NAFTA. How do you stand on NAFTA?'' I said, ''I voted against NAFTA, as did the gentleman from Michigan [Mr. BONIOR].'' But there are people out there that the gentleman has really educated this evening with some of the facts that he has given, and I am sure that many votes might change as a result of it.

Mr. Speaker, the North American Free-Trade Agreement has been a bad idea. It has been bad news to the American economy, it has been bad news for the American workers, it has been bad news for the Mexican workers, and before the passage of NAFTA, the United States had a trade surplus with Mexico, but since the passage of NAFTA our trade deficit has ballooned to $16.1 billion.

Mr. Speaker, a $16.1 billion deficit is hardly good news for the economy. The deficit in large part is due to the revolving door exports. In fact, Mr. Speaker, 62 percent of our exports to Mexico were revolving door exports, which mean that our raw goods were sent to Mexico, assembled by Mexican workers and sent back to the United States.

Before the NAFTA agreement, Mr. Speaker, only 22 percent of our exports to Mexico were revolving door exports. These exports, along with other conditions of this agreement, have cost American workers wages and in many cases cost American workers their jobs. In fact since 1993, NAFTA has cost American workers over 420,000 jobs. That is right, Mr. Speaker, 420,000 jobs have been lost as a result of NAFTA. The Department of Labor has certified that in the years 1994 and 1995, 52,000 Americans lost jobs in 400 U.S. plants since the passage of NAFTA. Many of these workers, unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, came from my home State, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

Since the start of NAFTA, hundreds of thousands of jobs have been shifted to maquiladora production plants, which pay very low wages for work done right on our border. As of March of this year, the maquiladora plants employed more than 861,000 Mexican workers in over 2,600 plants. These plants are taking American jobs from all over the country. In fact, in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, just this year, the Osram Sylvania Co., a fluorescent light manufacturing plant, sent 160 jobs to Mexico. When asked why they moved, company officials said, ''The move was NAFTA-related.''

For those American jobs that have not gone to Mexico, the threat is always there that they will go, and for that reason American wages have stayed low, closer to Mexican wages.

In fact, the NAFTA Labor Secretariat found that half the American firms used threats of moving to Mexico to fight union organizing. When forced to bargain with labor organizers, 15 percent of the firms actually closed part or all of a plant. That is triple the rate of shutdowns before NAFTA.

But, Mr. Speaker, despite what has happened to our workers, despite what has happened to our economy, the people who are suffering most are the

Mexican workers. Their wages are less than one-third of what they were in 1980. Some 14.9 percent of Mexicans live below the poverty rate, which is less than $1 a day. In fact, the Mexican Government even has policies to hold down the wages to attract investments despite the thousands of people living on less than $1 a day.

In 1995, one out of every five Mexican workers worked for less than the Mexican minimum wage, and 66 percent got no benefits whatsoever.

Since Mexican workers do not make very much money, they can barely afford to put food on the table, much less buy American products. Mexican infant mortality is very high, 13 deaths per 1,000 live births. For those children who do survive, 10 million of them are sent to work, violating Mexico's own child labor law.

From what I can tell, Mr. Speaker, nothing at all has been done about the horrendous environmental degradation in Mexico. Thirty percent of the population of Mexico have no access to sanitation. I have heard that some of the workers that live in some of these new industries that have gone down to Mexico are still living in refrigerator crates.

Mr. BONIOR. The gentleman makes a very good point. The American Medical Association, in examining this border, the maquiladora border that the gentleman is talking about, termed it a cesspool of infectious disease. This is our American Medical Association. That is how bad the environmental degradation is in that area, and that has caused, as the gentleman has correctly stated, numerous health problems, literally babies born without brains. There are hideous examples of deformities, just unconscionable activities on the part of the corporations that have gone down there and the governments that have allowed it to happen. I thank the gentleman for raising that point.

Mr. MOAKLEY. The gentleman from Michigan is absolutely correct. On some days the children in Mexico City can hardly breathe. This polluted air is making its way into this country. The ozone levels in El Paso, TX have increased steadily since NAFTA. The rate of hepatitis in the border region of the United States has risen to about four times the U.S. average.

Mr. Speaker, hepatitis is a very contagious disease that does not respect borders, yet the NAFTA agreement looks the other way. As the gentleman from Michigan alluded to, we import fruits and vegetables from a country that has virtually no environmental regulations and that many times these fruits and vegetables are filled with pesticides that are not even allowed in our country.

But despite all of these problems, Mr. Speaker, the administration now is proposing expanding NAFTA to Chile and possibly the rest of the southern hemisphere. I think this is a very dangerous idea. Any agreement we make should include very serious and very specific regulations on labor, on the environment, and on human rights. These conditions should not be left for later action because, as we have seen with this trade agreement, provisions that were left out of the original agreement never really happened.

I am glad to join my leader, an expert on this matter, and I look forward to continuing this debate with him.

Mr. BONIOR. I thank my colleague for his leadership and passion on this issue and for bringing to light some of the important facts on workers' rights and health and safety. We appreciate the gentleman's contribution.

PROBLEMS ASSOCIATED WITH IMPLEMENTATION OF IMPENDING EPA STANDARDS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. TAYLOR of North Carolina). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Pennsylvania [Mr. MASCARA] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. MASCARA. Mr. Speaker, I was supposed to join the gentleman from Pennsylvania [Mr. KLINK] this evening to talk about the problems associated with the impending standards to be implemented by the Environmental Protection Agency.

First of all, I would like to give a historic perspective to illustrate why I have joined so many of my colleagues in the House of Representatives to speak about the national ambient air quality standards. First let me clear the air, no pun intended. I support, as do many Members of Congress, clean air and a sound environmental policy in this country. The key word is ''sound.''

I would like to share with my colleagues, Mr. Speaker, a historic perspective about the 15 years' experience that I had in county government. During that time I served on the Southwestern Pennsylvania Regional Planning Commission and during those 15 years I served as chairman 3 years and also as chairman of the Plan Policy Committee which had the responsibility of implementing ISTEA, which is the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act and the Clean Air Act amendments of 1990 which were a companion bill. So I had an opportunity as a county commissioner to see the system from the bottom up and now as a Member of Congress to see it from the top down. I do have some experience in dealing with legislation that applies to clean air and air quality standards.

As a member of the Regional Planning Commission, we covered six counties, including Allegheny, Armstrong, Beaver, Butler, Washington, and Westmoreland and the city of Pittsburgh. I also served as chairman of this Plan Policy Committee that had the responsibility of implementing those two pieces of legislation, including the National Highway System Act.

This enabled me to have a better understanding of the problems associated with implementing those standards in southwestern Pennsylvania. I led a group of county commissioners in 1994 suggesting that the nonattainment status in southwestern Pennsylvania was incorrect, and that we as county commissioners and the city of Pittsburgh council requested that an independent testing firm test the quality of air in southwestern Pennsylvania to determine whether in fact we did not reach attainment. We found at that time that some of the equipment that was used in measuring the quality of air was faulty, we found that the air quality samples that were taken were taken on the hottest days of the year. We requested and the Department of Transportation in Pennsylvania and the Department of Environmental Resources agreed to permit a testing company, an independent testing company to measure the quality of air in southwestern Pennsylvania.

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The tests that were done by this independent firm proved our suspicions that the earlier testing was inappropriate and resulted in inaccurate test results. The air quality in the Pittsburgh region had definitely met the air quality standards. The Pennsylvania DER advised the EPA that southwestern Pennsylvania had met its ozone standards, and the EPA sat on the new information and never corrected our status from moderate nonattainment to attainment.

Listen to this. Based on monitoring data between 1989 and 1994, western Pennsylvania's air quality met or exceeded the national standards for ozone levels. Apparently the application got lost in the bureaucratic maze, for it took the EPA over 2 years to respond instead of the mandated 18-month period. That summer, the summer of 1995, western Pennsylvania's ozone readings exceeded acceptable levels on only 9 days. Let me remind you that 1995 was one of the hottest summers on record.

Yes, we paid the price for clean air that we now breathe, and as I said earlier we all support clean air. Southwestern Pennsylvania citizens paid the price, and now they want us to believe the new standards could eventually put the remaining 100,000 miners out of work and impact workers in the few remaining jobs we have in southwestern Pennsylvania.

Mr. Speaker, I remind you that as a part of the 1980's and the decline in the steel and mining industry that we lost nearly 200,000 manufacturing jobs in southwestern Pennsylvania. And these new air quality requirements are without a basis of science, and we are asking the President, and I joined in with several of my colleagues in writing the President asking him to take another look at the air quality standards which will be implemented this year.