

U.S. Policy Aims to Strengthen Economic Ties With Latin America

BY JONATHAN BARKER
STAFF WRITER

The North American Free Trade Agreement has been a significant boon to U.S.-Latin American relations and should be the beginning of better intra-American ties, foreign policy analysts say.

"We're treating them as equals," said Leo Welt, publisher of The Latin America Index, a Washington, D.C.-based newsletter on Latin American affairs. "The Clinton administration's NAFTA agreement shows his agenda for Latin America and his strong interest in the area."

Welt said such economic cooperation would aid in the stability of the countries and would create profitable cooperatives for both areas.

"I am positive that this long-range relationship will create better market opportunities," he said. "It will provide a great opportunity for joint ventures and privatization in these areas."

One country Welt has observed developing is Argentina.

"Argentina has been booming," he said. "There has been much privatization and a lot of foreign investment. Argentina has tremendous growth."

Welt also said the liberalization reforms happening in Argentina had benefited the area in terms of democratic growth and educational programs. "There's a lot of growth going on," he said. "Education specifically is progressing."

Welt said environmental problems, a vital concern in Latin America, would be dealt with through an exchange of technology with the rest of the industrialized world.

"One of the issues is the environmental issue," he said. "This creates a great opportunity for America. I hope that we take a real active role in competing with Europe

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and the Far East in providing this technology. We have a very high degree of sophistication in environmental technology."

The United States has supported the reduction of defense budgets in Argentina, Brazil and Chile and attempts to liberalize the economies and governments in these areas, said John Booth, professor of political science at the University of North Texas.

"The U.S. has been strongly encouraging reductions of defense budgets in Latin America, and even more than that has been in favor of neoliberal reforms in Latin America," he said.

The benefits of NAFTA will be felt most strongly in Mexico and will serve to stabilize the already shaky elections process going on there, said Byron Adams, publisher of the Washington, D.C.-based Mexico Trade and Law Reporter. Adams also said the trade pact would increase the American role in Mexican affairs.

"It gives the U.S. a much stronger stake in Mexico's stability and economic growth," he said. "It's providing the U.S. with a huge untapped market."

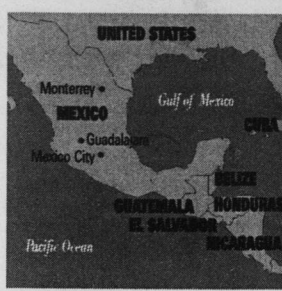
Countries of Central And Latin America

Country	Population	GDP (billions)
Argentina	32,900,000	\$101.2
Belize	189,000	\$290
Bolivia	7,323,000	\$4.8
Brazil	158,000,000	\$388
Chile	13,528,000	\$29.2
Colombia	34,296,000	\$43
Costa Rica	3,187,000	\$5.6
Cuba	10,846,000	N/A
Dominican Republic	7,515,000	\$7.1
Ecuador	10,933,000	\$11.5
El Salvador	5,574,000	\$5.5
Guatemala	9,784,000	\$11.7
Haiti	6,431,000	\$2.7
Honduras	4,949,000	\$4.9
Jamaica	2,506,000	\$3.6
Mexico	92,380,000	\$289
Nicaragua	3,878,000	\$1.7
Panama	2,529,000	\$5.2
Paraguay	4,929,000	\$7
Peru	22,767,000	\$20.6
Trinidad and Tobago	1,285,000	\$4.9
Uruguay	3,121,000	\$9.1
Venezuela	20,675,000	\$52.3

SOURCE: 1994 WORLD ALMANAC

Adams sees uncertainty for Mexico's ruling Institutional Revolutionary Party, or PRI, especially after the recent assassination of PRI candidate Luis Colosia. He said instability during the August presidential elections could jeopardize reforms if opposition parties took a majority.

"The new PRI candidate is not as strong as Colosia was," he said. "He was extremely popular with the Mexican people. Opposition parties are relatively hostile to



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SOURCE: RAND MACNALLY ATLAS

Economic and political liberalization in Latin American countries have advanced in the last 10 years. Experts expect ties between the United States and these nations to blossom in the next century.

"The U.S. policy is changing to recognize more commercial and economic relations with Latin America," he said. "The policy in the Cold War was security. The U.S. had an emphasis on internal politics. Now there is more emphasis on trade."

Revisionist Movement Clashes With Traditional Acceptance of Holocaust

BY CHRISTOPHER TEBBIT
STAFF WRITER

The Nazi genocide of Jews and other Europeans ended almost 50 years ago. But there still are people who question whether the Holocaust actually happened.

In February, The Daily Tar Heel ran an advertisement paid for by the Committee for Open Debate on the Holocaust. The committee is attempting to bring Holocaust revisionism, a promotion of the idea that the Holocaust never really happened, into the historical mainstream.

"There is a growing body of revisionist research that is becoming very widely known, therefore making the Holocaust story worthy of debate," said revisionist Bradley Smith, who is a member of the CODOH.

"There is a really weak response from

the other side and, in many cases, the revisionists have the facts on their side," he said.

The revisionists claim there is no hard evidence that gas chambers ever were used for murder in the Nazi concentration camps.

"There is no physical or documentary proof that the gas chambers in the concentration camps were ever used for any other purpose than the delousing of clothes and such," Smith said.

"Most Holocaust survivors do not claim to have any personal knowledge of the gas chambers," he said.

The revisionists also argue that it has not been shown that there was an order to murder the all the Jews of Europe, or that there were 6 million Jewish deaths during the war.

"The facts, in many cases, lie on the

revisionists' side and, unlike the other side, which relies on faith, we can and are willing to be disproved," Smith said.

Smith is working with David Cole, another member of the CODOH, to produce a set of videos documenting revisionist research made in the concentration camps of Europe.

Cole makes trips to the concentration camps and videotapes both the trips and the interviews of the Holocaust preservation officials.

"I publish the 'Smith's Report,' which promotes open debate of the Holocaust, and we use the proceeds to fund David's trips overseas," Smith said.

But, according to Smith, the revisionists have a difficult time persuading the historical community to acknowledge any of the results of their research.

"No untenured professor at any college

in America can afford to assign seriously written Holocaust revisionist text without the risk of summarily losing their jobs.

Tenured professors feel they can not now turn and, using revisionist research, reveal that they promoted the orthodox literature for political reasons," Smith said in a letter sent to college newspaper editors.

But Aron Breitbar, senior researcher for the Simon Wiesenthal Center, a Jewish organization based in Los Angeles, said he did not think the Holocaust was an acceptable subject for debate because there was no doubt as to the facts of the Holocaust.

"You do not debate the past. Facts are facts, and they may only be interpreted," Breitbar said.

"Revisionists' should not be the term used for these people. These people are deniers. They want to whitewash the stain of the Holocaust and lead us to believe that

perhaps the Nazis were not as bad as we are told. The fact of the matter is that they do not want to debate the past; they want to rehabilitate Nazism," he said.

Breitbar also said there were no historians or scholars who contested the Holocaust.

"There is not one professional historian or scholar who contests the Holocaust. They are only professional anti-Semites who are capitalizing on a younger society's ignorance," Breitbar said.

Proof that individuals were gassed in Auschwitz was presented to the Superior Court of California in the 1981 case of the State of California vs. the Institute for Historical Review, Legion for Survival of Freedom.

It was stated in a press release that "After lengthy and heated arguments by both sides, on Oct. 9, 1981, the honorable

Judge Thomas T. Johnson declared that this court, 'Under evidence code section 452h, does take judicial notice of the fact that Jews were gassed to death at the Auschwitz Concentration Camp in Poland' and that the Holocaust is not reasonably subject to dispute."

Gerhard Weinberg, UNC history professor, said that while debating whether the Holocaust happened was absurd, some issues concerning the Holocaust did deserve attention.

"There are issues about the Holocaust that merit discussion. There is for example, considerable discussion about exactly when the Germans made the decision to kill all the Jews," Weinberg said.

"The revisionists are dangerous in that they might make society less conscious of the terrible dangers that surround us as we live," he said.

According to Weinberg, there are several reasons for the rise in Holocaust skepticism.

"As the Holocaust fades with time, anti-Semitism becomes much more socially acceptable and even fashionable," Weinberg said.

"Also, with distance in time, terrible things become less real to people, therefore making it easier for people to believe that it just did not happen."

"The Holocaust tells us that not only natural disasters cause great human suffering, but also human cruelty," Weinberg said.

"All the advances in both bureaucratic and mechanical technologies make it possible for people to do terrible things on an enormous scale," he said.

"We underestimate the dangers of the world in which we live," Weinberg said. "The earth is a far more dangerous place than we imagine."

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