

# What do we expect from Bill Clinton?

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## I

It is difficult to predict what changes will occur as the result of the rise to political power of a new generation in the most powerful nation on earth.

Bill Clinton's administration begins at a crucial moment, not only for the domestic economy of the United States but for its commercial relations with other nations as well.

Recent frictions with the European Community require a great deal of caution and finesse if a trade war of unpredictable consequences is to be avoided and a balanced solution reached.

In much the same way, new strategies are needed in trade relations with the group of Asian nations that make up the Pacific Rim, a region with which the United States has a sustained trade deficit.

It is therefore clear that the attitude adopted by Clinton and his impressive new team of advisors towards the Free Trade Agreement between Mexico, Canada, and the United States, will be crucial.

Credit should be given to George Bush for the role he played in promoting the Agreement during his administration, along with President Salinas de Gortari and Prime Minister Brian Mulroney.

It should be remembered however, that this was not a personal project developed by three heads of state, but rather, between their respective governments, after long and careful negotiations. These facts account for the maturity of the Agreement as a durable document which while maintaining strict observance of international law, may well be in effect for many years.

The final approval by the respective legislatures of the three participating nations is of course still lacking. The fact that President Clinton has considered that the

Agreement is an adequate instrument with which to create, in America, the largest market in the world, is encouraging, and it is reasonable to expect that this liberalization of trade relations may be extended to include other Latin American countries.


In view of the significant regional industrial blocs in Asia and Europe, our continent should become an example of flexibility, efficiency, and modernization. Therefore, we expect the following from Bill Clinton:

- That he recognize Mexico as the United States' second most important trading partner.
- That he accept the negotiations of the Free Trade Agreement concluded to date as a guarantee of progress for our three nations.
- That he emphasize the creation of jobs in the United States, Canada and Mexico as one of the most positive features of the Agreement, since each new job will not only benefit the families of workers and employees in each one of these countries, but will also strengthen what will become the largest market on earth.
- That he consider our common border not as a long wall that separates our two countries or a trench that divides us, but rather as a line of neighborliness, which joins us in the common search for prosperity.
- That the application of state-of-the-art technology, production, and the optimal use of raw materials and labor in our three countries form the basis of an articulate and coherent response to the aggressiveness of the huge commercial blocs in the Pacific and in Europe.
- That the Hispanic minority in the United States establish ties of brotherhood with all the other ethnic groups that are part of the most advanced nation on Earth.
- That the "Big Brother" of the past become, together with Mexico and Canada, a protagonist in the crusade for mutual understanding and shared effort.

## II

The forthcoming Agreement is not only the cornerstone of a North American Common Market; Bill Clinton also sees it as a an excellent opportunity for economic recovery in the United States. Thus, we are confident that his administration will favor the rapid implementation of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA).

It would be highly incongruous for President Clinton to attack NAFTA in order to take political revenge against the Republican administration which preceded him. In a plausible scenario, Clinton will recognize the Agreement as a covenant between nations, and not individuals.

In Austin, President Salinas de Gortari summed up the relationship which Mexico seeks with the United States, in a historic phrase: "We want trade, not aid" 

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