

Deep Integration Timeline UPDATE

Updated August 2009. For a complete timeline dating to September 11, 2001, visit www.integratethis.ca

February 20, 2008

While campaigning for the Democratic party leadership, future President Barack Obama writes in an op-ed for the Dallas Morning News that: "Starting my first year in office, I will convene annual meetings with Mr. Calderón and the prime minister of Canada. Unlike similar summits under President Bush, these will be conducted with a level of transparency that represents the close ties among our three countries. We will seek the active and open involvement of citizens, labor, the private sector and non-governmental organizations in setting the agenda and making progress."

February 26, 2008

Both Barack Obama and Democratic leadership rival Hillary Clinton commit on television to renegotiating NAFTA. "I've said that I will renegotiate NAFTA, so obviously we'd have to say to Canada and Mexico that that's exactly what we're going to do... we will opt out of NAFTA unless we renegotiate it," says Clinton, vowing to eliminate the right of companies to sue the federal government (Chapter 11) for enacting measures to protect workers. "I will make sure that we renegotiate in the same way that Senator Clinton talked about," Obama adds. "I think, actually, Senator Clinton's answer on this one is right. I think we should use the hammer of a potential opt-out as leverage."

April 21-22, 2008

Fourth annual North American leaders summit takes place in New Orleans. The SPP's future is questioned when one news columnist refers to the New Orleans meeting as the "Siesta Summit" and business leaders wonder openly whether there's enough political will to keep the talks going.

May 2, 2008

Data from the 2006 census shows that the median earnings of full-time Canadian workers increased about \$1 per week between 1980 and 2005, from \$41,348 to \$41,401. At the same time, the incomes of the richest Canadians increased by 16.4 per cent over the same period, while incomes of the poorest fell by 20.6 per cent. The income stagnation and concentration of wealth at the top prove that free trade with the U.S. (1989) and then Mexico through NAFTA (1994) has been only selectively beneficial.

June 10, 2008

Transport ministers from Canada, the United States and Mexico meet in Ottawa and Meech Lake "to explore future enhancements to North America's transportation system and shared perspectives on the challenges of infrastructure renewal."

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June 17, 2009

Canada's ambassador to the United States, Michael Wilson, addresses the secretive invite-only North American Forum gathering in Washington, D.C.

June 26, 2008

A report from the federal government's Competition Review Panel, "Compete to Win," claims the SPP: "has yielded too little progress in improving crossborder flows. Indeed, Canada risks being side-swiped by the preoccupation the U.S. has with its southern border. The most recent SPP Summit confirms that little progress can be expected within a relevant time frame. In this context, the Panel believes that it is imperative to intensify our bilateral effort with the US, focusing on facilitating the flow of goods, services and people across the Canada-US border. If we are forced to choose between trilateral and bilateral efforts, the latter should be chosen."

July 22, 2008

An Angus Reid poll shows that "52 per cent of [Canadian] respondents think their country should do whatever is necessary to renegotiate the terms of the commerce deal, up seven points since March... Conversely, 18 per cent of respondents want Canada to continue to be a member of NAFTA under the current terms, and 11 per cent believe the country should do whatever is necessary to leave the commerce deal."

September 24, 2008

U.S. President Bush meets with leaders and officials from 11 countries in the Western Hemisphere, including Canada, to launch the "Pathways to Prosperity in the Americas" initiative, based on the Security and Prosperity Partnership model.

September 26, 2008

The Council of Canadians releases the results of an Environics poll finding that 61% of Canadians agree with then U.S. presidential candidate Barack Obama that NAFTA should be renegotiated to include enforceable labour and environmental standards. This was up from 52% support for renegotiation in an Angus Reid poll from July.

February 14, 2009

A week before U.S. President Obama's first visit to Canada, a coalition of major Canadian organizations sends Prime Minister Stephen Harper a letter urging him to signal Canada's willingness to renegotiate NAFTA. Among the signatories to the letter are Common Frontiers, the Ontario Federation of Labour, the Ontario Secondary School Teachers Federation, the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists (Ontario Chapter), OXFAM Canada, the Council of Canadians, Sierra Club of Canada and the Canadian Federation of Students.

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February 25, 2009

CCCE President Tom d'Aquino tells the Commons foreign affairs committee that the SPP is "probably dead" but that something else will inevitably replace the North American dialogue. "Why it will be replaced is because the energy, environment, trade, financial regulation, and agriculture, all these things that we do in the form of millions of cross-border transactions everyday are going to have to be co-ordinated," he says.

March 27-28, 2009

A new public-private Standing Committee on North American Prosperity – or NA 2050 – holds its inaugural meeting at the CentroFox in Leon, Mexico. Former Mexican President Vicente Fox and his wife co-host the summit, which is billed as an attempt to fill a perceived vacuum for a North American vision in the wake of the SPP and NAFTA. The group meets for a second time in Atlanta, Georgia from May 11 to 12.

May 26-27, 2009

Following their first border meetings, Napolitano and Van Loan announce they have signed The Shiprider Agreement, which makes permanent a pilot project in which U.S. Homeland Security and RCMP officers staff vessels jointly to skirt jurisdictional issues. The security ministers also agreed to "Develop joint threat and risk assessments to assist the two countries in forming a common understanding of the threats and risks

we face," and "Expand integrated law enforcement operations along our shared border and waterways to prevent criminals and/or terrorists from using the border to evade enforcement or to inflict harm on our two countries."

June 25, 2009

The Canadian Council of Chief Executives announces that its president, Tom d'Aquino, will step down to be replaced by former Liberal deputy prime minister John Manley. A long-time proponent of the SPP and co-author of "Building a North American Community," Manley says that as new CCCE president he will build bridges between the corporate sector and government.

July 29, 2009

The Canadian Biotechnology Action Network (CBAN) breaks the news that Health Canada did not assess the human health safety of "SmartStax" – a new eight-trait genetically modified corn from Monsanto and Dow AgroSciences – before the product was jointly approved for the market in Canada and the United States. The joint approval is proof that SPP-NAFTA regulatory harmonization activities continue at the expense of proper testing and stringent standards.

August 9-10, 2009

Fifth annual North American leaders' summit takes place in Guadalajara, Mexico amid suggestions U.S. President Obama has dismantled the formal SPP process, though working groups continue.