

1984

Sept. 4, 1984: Conservative Brian Mulroney is elected Prime Minister of Canada after opposing free trade during the campaign.

Sept. 25, 1984: Canadian Prime Minister **Brian Mulroney** meets President Reagan in Washington and promises closer relations with the US.

Oct. 9, 1984: The US Congress adopts the Trade and Tariff Act, an omnibus trade act that notably extends the powers of the president to concede trade benefits and enter into bilateral free trade agreements. The Act would be passed on October 30, 1984.



1987

Oct. 3, 1987: The 20-chapter **Canada-United States Free Trade Agreement (CUSFTA or FTA)** is finalized. U.S. trade representative Clayton Yeutter offers this observation: "We've signed a stunning new trade pact with Canada. The Canadians don't understand what they've signed. In twenty years, they will be sucked into the U.S. economy."

Nov. 6, 1987: Signing of a framework agreement between the US and Mexico.

1985

1985: A Canadian Royal Commission on the economy chaired by former Liberal Minister of Finance **Donald S. Macdonald** issues a report to the Government of Canada recommending free trade with the United States.

St. Patrick's Day, 1985: Prime Minister Brian Mulroney and President Ronald Reagan sing "When Irish Eyes Are Smiling" together to cap off the "**Shamrock Summit**", a 24-hour meeting in Quebec City that opened the door to future free trade talks between the countries. Commentator Eric Kierans observed that "The general impression you get, is that our prime minister invited his boss home for dinner." Canadian historian Jack Granatstein said that this "public display of sucking up to Reagan may have been the single most demeaning moment in the entire political history of Canada's relations with the United States."

Sept. 26, 1985: Canadian Prime Minister Brian Mulroney announces that Canada will try to reach a free trade agreement with the US.

Dec. 10, 1985: U.S. President Reagan officially informs Congress about his intention to negotiate a free trade agreement with Canada under the authority of trade promotion. Referred to as fast track, trade promotion authority is an accelerated legislative procedure which obliges the House of Representatives and the Senate to decide within 90 days whether or not to establish a trade unit. No amendments are permitted.

1986

May 1986: Canadian and American negotiators begin to work out a free trade deal. The Canadian team is led by former deputy Minister of Finance **Simon Reisman** and the American side by **Peter O. Murphy**, the former deputy United States trade representative in Geneva.

1988

Jan. 2, 1988: Prime Minister Mulroney and President Reagan officially sign the FTA.

Jan. 9, 1988: *The Economist* says that around the year 2018, people should "pencil in the phoenix . . . and welcome it when it comes . . . There would be no such thing . . . as a national monetary policy . . . The world phoenix [international monetary unit or coin] supply would be fixed by a new central bank, descended perhaps from the IMF. The world inflation rate—and hence, within narrow margins, each national inflation rate — would be in its charge. . . . This means a big loss of economic sovereignty." ¹¹

1989

Jan. 1, 1989: The Canada US Free Trade Agreement (CUSFTA or FTA) goes into effect.

1990

Jun. 10, 1990: Presidents Bush (U.S.) and Salinas (Mexico) announce that they will begin discussions aimed at liberalizing trade between their countries.

Aug. 21, 1990: Mexican President Salinas officially proposes to the US president the negotiation of a free trade agreement between Mexico and the US.

1991

Feb. 5, 1991: Negotiations between the US and Mexico aimed at liberalizing trade between the two countries officially become trilateral at the request of the Canadian government under Brian Mulroney.

Apr. 7 to 10, 1991: Cooperation agreements are signed between Mexico and Canada covering taxation, cultural production and exports.

May 24, 1991: The American Senate endorses the extension of fast track authority in order to facilitate the negotiation of free trade with Mexico.

June 12, 1991: Start of trade negotiations between Canada, the US and Mexico.

1992

Feb. 1992: U.S. and Mexican environmental authorities release the **Integrated Environmental Plan for the Mexican-U.S. Border Area (IBEP)** —an effort linked to the 1983 La Paz Agreement. ¹²

Apr. 4, 1992 Signing in Mexico by Canada and Mexico of a protocol agreement on cooperation projects regarding labour.



Apr. 30, 1992: U.S. President **George H. W. Bush** signs **Executive Order 12803** — "**Infrastructure Privatization**." The Order encourages privatization (e.g., selling or long-term leasing) of state and local government "infrastructure assets" that are "financed in whole or in part by the Federal Government and needed for the functioning of the economy. Examples of such assets include, but are not limited to: roads, tunnels, bridges, electricity supply facilities, mass transit, rail transportation, airports, ports, waterways, water supply facilities, recycling and wastewater treatment facilities, solid waste disposal facilities, housing, schools, prisons, and hospitals." ¹³

Aug. 12, 1992: "President Bush announced the completion of negotiations for a comprehensive North American Free Trade Agreement between Mexico, Canada and the United States. At that time, the Administration issued various documents, including a negotiated summary of the Agreement." ¹⁴

Sept. 18, 1992: "President Bush officially notified the Speaker of the House and the President of the Senate, in accordance with the 90-day notice requirement under section 1103(a)(1) of the 1988 Act, of his intent to enter into a NAFTA with the Governments of Mexico and Canada. The notice was accompanied by the reports of 38 private sector advisory committees on the draft Agreement as required by section 135 of the Trade Act of 1974. The President committed to work closely with the Congress to develop appropriate implementing legislation. The Administration also issued a report at that time on the benefits of the NAFTA and actions taken to fulfill the commitments made by the President on May 1, 1991 on worker adjustment, labor rights, and environmental protection." ¹⁵

Oct. 7, 1992: "President Bush, President Salinas, and Prime Minister Mulroney met in San Antonio, Texas, to discuss plans for implementing the NAFTA and affirmed their shared commitment to adopt the agreement in 1993, to take effect on January 1, 1994. The three trade ministers who negotiated the agreement--U.S. Trade Representative Carla Hills, Secretary Jaime Serra, and Minister Michael Wilson--initiated the NAFTA draft legal text." ¹⁶