



## Industries Still Heading for Mexico

The North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), signed into law by President Bill Clinton 21 years ago, has certainly spurred many manufacturers to close plants in the U.S and build new ones in Mexico. This is precisely what opponents of NAFTA, including The John Birch Society, expected and predicted.

In April 2016, the list of closed, or soon to be closed, factories in the U.S. grew larger when the Ford Motor Company [announced its plan](#) to build a new assembly plant in [Mexico](#) to produce its Focus compact vehicle and its C-Max hybrid. Company officials said Ford would possibly begin production of its trucks and sport utility vehicles at the Wayne, Michigan, plant, which will soon be vacant. Workers are holding their breaths hoping that Ford actually does what is merely a possibility at this point.

Ford admitted that it will pay Mexican workers less than half the \$29 per hour workers in Michigan have been earning. Ford's Chief Executive Mark Fields stated, "At the end of the day, we are a multinational company, and we will do what's best for business." Claiming that his company had added 25,000 jobs during the past eight years, he nevertheless announced that Ford intends to move more manufacturing to China and elsewhere. United Automobile Workers union leader Dennis Williams condemned the Ford decision while blaming it on NAFTA.

The move by Ford parallels similar planned moves to Mexico by Toyota, Kia, and Audi. General Motors has already built a huge plant in Mexico to produce its automobiles. Eighty percent of the vehicles produced in Mexico are exported from Mexico, most of them into the United States.

While campaigning for the presidency in 2008, Barack Obama targeted NAFTA saying, "One million jobs have been lost because of NAFTA." He also lambasted Hillary Clinton for her claim that "NAFTA has been good for New York" during her campaign for a Senate seat. In 2016, GOP candidate Donald Trump has made NAFTA one of his targets, even promising to have the pact repealed. And President Obama, no longer a foe of NAFTA, is anxiously working to have Congress approve the NAFTA-like [Trans-Pacific Partnership](#) (TPP) and [Trans-Atlantic Trade and Investment Partnership](#) (TTIP). The TPP will accomplish for 12 Pacific nations what NAFTA has done for Mexico. The TTIP would effectively have the United States join the [sovereignty-compromising](#) European Union.

The 20-year-old NAFTA pact filled 2,000 pages and covered far more matters than just trade, even establishing a tribunal whose decisions on trade matters have unfavorably impacted American companies. The pact additionally sets environmental standards for the three nations. It amounts to an



Written by [John F. McManus](#) on April 23, 2016

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economic and political revolution.

Yes, NAFTA is a job destroyer for Americans. But it also waters down U.S. sovereignty, something quietly desired by many of its creators and partisans. NAFTA should be repealed. And Congress should reject immersion into the TPP and TTIP.

If America continues down the road already shown by NAFTA and favored by President Obama, third-world status will soon be America's fate. [Contact Congress today to tell them to vote no on the TPP and TTIP.](#)

*John F. McManus is president emeritus of [The John Birch Society](#). This column appeared originally at the [insideJBS](#) blog and is reprinted here with permission.*



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