

5 minute FTAA Talk with slides

*created by Portland Jobs with Justice and
the Portland FTAA Working Group*



1. Do you remember the fights against NAFTA in 1994 and the expansion of the WTO in 1999? A coalition of working people, environmentalists, and others almost prevented the passage of NAFTA, and the huge coalition in Seattle beat back the expansion of the WTO. (slides of WTO protests in Seattle)
2. We have a new challenge facing us called the FTAA, or the Free Trade Areas of the Americas. This is the formal name given to the massive expansion of NAFTA that would cover nearly all the countries of the Western Hemisphere, where the FTAA is being negotiated in secret as we speak. (slide of a map of the Western Hemisphere)
3. Why join Jobs with Justice, the Oregon AFLCIO, church groups, and others in opposing the FTAA? (slides...."FTAA" with a slash through it?)
4. Job security is threatened by these treaties. Let's look at an Oregon story that illustrates NAFTA induced job insecurity. Pendelton is a company that is as Oregon as blackberry pie, yet now it's sewing operations are in Mexico. (Pendelton slide) At first, Pendelton encouraged workers to lobby against NAFTA - on company time! But, other apparel corporations, including Columbia Sportswear, (Columbia slide) also an Oregon company, moved to areas where they could make a bigger profit because of low labor costs. So, Pendelton left the United States as well and moved to Mexico, where the minimum wage is \$4.00 per day. Pendelton still charges top dollar here (cost.) The main label still says: "...". A more difficult to notice label says "Assembled in Mexico." (slides - "Made in Oregon" store, Pendelton shirts, picture of label in shirt at the "Made in Oregon" store)
5. Companies do not have to actually close down and leave to cause people to worry about job loss. Since NAFTA passed in 1994, companies have increasingly threatened to move to Mexico in order to prevent union organizing and to chill fights for good contracts. (slide of Freightliner) Freightliner threatened workers in the UAW in North Carolina that they would move to Mexico if the union didn't settle. The FTAA, which gives corporations a larger tariff-free investment zone, will only make them more powerful in their threats. (slide with the clear statistic. Do we have time for this??)
6. So, with all the problems for U.S. workers, has NAFTA been good for Mexican workers? Will the FTAA be good for workers from Mexico to Chile? Let's look at NAFTA's record.
 - Mexican real wages have dropped 29% since NAFTA, causing great suffering.
 - The average working family spends 67% of its income on food (much of it produced by U.S agribusiness.) Ten years ago the same family spent only 14.5% on food. Imagine spending 67% of our income on food.
 - When workers try to organize real unions, not sweetheart unions they are typically met with physical abuse and threats. This abuse keeps profit margins high. The labor side deals of NAFTA have not AT ALL protected workers' right to organize, as was promised. This is a picture of the Han Young factory workers in Tijuana, Mexico. Goons hired by the company are preventing picketing. (David Bacon's slide of Han young)
 - & look at the devastation to the environment and health caused by corporate greed of many of the corporations settling in Mexico. This is(David Bacon's slide of toxic waste dump.)

7. How is the FTAA supposed to get through Congress? President Bush is expected to ask for Fast Track authority from Congress to negotiate the FTAA within the first 100 days of his presidency. (Fast track slide) Under Fast Track, trade agreements must be voted up or down with NO amendments within 60 days. NAFTA and the original WTO agreements were pushed through Congress with Fast Track. We MUST defeat Fast Track authority for Pres Bush!! Fast track is completely undemocratic. This is our first goal post.

8. We must take action! Knowing all this without doing anything can give us high blood pressure, and we have a great chance to stop Fast Track and the FTAA if we take action together. We have an opportunity to keep building the powerful coalition that set back the WTO in Seattle last year, and the FTAA is as important as the WTO.

9. There are lots of interesting things for you to do. It is a learning experience for all of us!

- a. We are leaving a resolution for your group to sign and send to the Oregon congressional delegation.
- b. We invite you all to a teach-in on....
 - a. We're leaving you action sheets. Please indicate how you will be part of this mobilization. One great thing is to have a house party with your family, neighbors and friends - and we'll get you a speaker.

We will pick up these forms from.....