More trade means more jobs

AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland and other officials of Big Labor sure know how to confuse an issue.

Consider the proposed free trade agreement with Mexico. Union officials are attempting to short-circuit the agreement with the fiction that it will destroy the U.S. jobs by enticing manufacturers to move their factories South of the Border, where "cheap labor" is available.

Of course, jobs that might migrate to Mexico are the same ones union officials claim are no good for America — low-skill, low-pay jobs that union members aren't interested in and won't take.

Mexico's labor force is neither highly educated nor highly skilled. For many of our southern neighbors, jobs that go begging here would be the best jobs they've ever had.

Officials of organized labor aren't really interested in protecting such jobs. What interests them is protecting certain industries against competition. The job-flight rhetoric is a red herring.

In truth, the proposed free trade agreement would result in a net increase in employment in the United States.

Sure, some jobs will drift South, where employers will find willing workers. But this also means the creation of more jobs at home.

With an improved economy, Mexican families will be able to buy more U.S. products and services. Earnings of the average Mexican worker today are less than a sixth of the average American's. Even with this modest buying power, Mexico is America's third largest trading partner, purchasing some $27 billion worth of U.S. goods last year, 70 percent of all Mexican imports. With more pesos in their pockets, and fewer trade barriers blocking their access to U.S. goods, Mexicans will be able to buy even more products made in America.

A preview of the benefits can be seen in the special U.S.-Mexican economic arrangement, the "maquiladora system," under which U.S. companies are permitted to establish and own factories in certain parts of Mexico, usually border areas. The owners are allowed to import equipment, components, and raw materials.

Currently, maquiladora factories provide jobs for about 350,000 Mexicans. Meanwhile, some 20,000 U.S. businesses in 49 states supply the Mexican factories, creating an estimated 100,000 jobs north of the border as well.

Those who support free trade hope it will become infectious. A trade agreement with Mexico would unite all of North America — Canada, Mexico and the United States — into a powerful and vibrant market, with 360 million people and a $6 trillion gross national product.

High Point's railroad ties

One on One
By D.G. Martin

Why would anybody want to read a book about a railroad line that was built in North Carolina more than 100 years ago?

A good question to ask about a new book by Allen Trelease called "The North Carolina Railroad, 1849-1871" and published by the UNC Press. But there are good answers — several of them.

First of all, whenever you read history, you learn a little bit about why the present is the way it is.

I'd always wondered why the state's main east-west rail routes ran through Raleigh and then went along a northern route by Durham and Greensboro to Charlotte — instead of going directly through Asheboro on a straight line. In other words, why do we have a Piedmont Crescent instead of a Piedmont Straight Line? The book gives the answer.

The route was selected back in 1849 and 50, after the state chartered the North Carolina Railroad to build a rail link between Goldsboro and Charlotte. Mostly, the route was chosen because of terrain. There are fewer steep inclines on the Greensboro route than on the Asheboro route. The greater the incline, the stronger the locomotive must be and the more often rails and other equipment have to be replaced. The straight line route just wasn't practical.

Take a guess about where the highest point along the Goldsboro-Charlotte route turned out to be. (See the answer at the end of the column.)

Other railroad related situations gave some of our other cities their names. Here is what the book says about Durham: ". . .Durham owes its very existence to the railroad. The original survey called for a station to be built at a hamlet called Prattsburg. . .But William Pratt, the local landowner, asked such an exorbitant price for land on which to build the depot that the road relocated two miles west onto the land of Dr. Bartlett Durham, who donated the needed property. Durham's Station becames the nucleus of the later city."

Or Thomasville. Back in 1849-50 when the route through Davidson County was being surveyed, State Senator John W. Thomas hoped the railroad would go through his plantation. He tried hard to interest the surveyors but they passed him by and chose a route north of his land. So how did he get his name on the town by the railroad? He swallowed his pride and bought a big piece of land along the route that was selected. Later he built a small village that became Thomasville. Now you know the rest of the story. And when you buy furniture with the Thomasville name, you will know where it came from.

But this book is important for the present and future, too. The North Carolina Railroad route was leased to the Southern Railway in 1895 for 99 years. That lease runs out in three years. Since the State of North Carolina is the major owner of the North Carolina Railroad, it faces a major problem — and opportunity. What does it do with an asset that would cost millions or billions to replace?

And with auto transporation about to wear out our land, our air, and our pocketbooks, might there not be a place for new action by the state to bring us closer together again by rail?

Sometimes the study of the past is a view to the future. "The North Carolina Railroad, 1849-1871" might help us find the answers for transportation for the next century.

I almost forgot. Here is the answer to the question about the highest point on the railroad route. Of course it is at High Point. And that is how the railroad station and then the town got the name.

D.G. Martin of Chapel Hill is secretary to the University of North Carolina. He shares these opinions with state newspapers.

Uncle Dan from Doolie says

Food outside the food chain

I see by the papers where a feller that works fer the city of Portland, Oregon earned $94,869 last year on a emergency telephone operator's job that pays $30,600 a year. He done it by putting in more time and a half over time than reglar time.

I mentioned this item to the fellers during the session at the country store Saturday night, and it struck most of em as passing strange. Bug Hookum, fer one, wanted to know why the city wouldn't of come out better hiring another worker at reglar wages. Clem Webster quick explained that overtime is cheaper than Social Security, health insurance and all the other benefits everbody expects nowdays. Once a person is trained fer a job, Clem said, the more hours he's willing to work the better.

Practical speaking, Clem went on, he could see where the city was taking a risk letting the feller work 100 hour weeks. Clem said if some ambulance chasing lawyer found out he was asleep on the job while somebody burned up in his wrecked car the city would find out it would of been cheaper to hire half a dozen more operators. That's part of the reason most private companies don't allow overtime if they can help it, Clem said, and if they can't help it they give their workers equal time off so as not to pay em extra.

But it was Zeke Grubb that raised doubt about the whole idee. Out here in the country, he noted, folks general work from see to can't see, and them with lights on their tractors keep right on going when they have to. You don't hear talk of overtime or compensation time, you just keep doing as long as it's got to be done, was Zeke's words.

Some say discussion is light without heat and argument is heat without light, and it is said that discussion is exchanging idees while argument is exchanging ignorance. The fellers stayed on a pritty even keel during the session, but the Oregon overtime champion kept slipping other items down the agender. Fer instant, Bug said fer all the Federal laws that multiply ever time Congress sets you would think some labor or health rule would keep that kind of thing from happening.

Clem was full agreed with Bug about Federal rule overkill. Clem said he had been following the California drout and water rationing where a fourth of some of the country's vegetables usual grow. You know the Federal regulators are gitting ready fer farmers in other parts of the country that want to take up the slack.

If we see a jump in home gardens, Clem said, the next thing we'll see is word from Washington that a tomater growed at home is a tomater not inspected by the USDA. That tomater is outside the official food chain and it don't git picked by labor under OSHA and NLRB protection. What we have here is a outlaw tomater, and if everbody is allowed to raise and eat em we'll cripple the tomater picking, packing and sauce making industry, not to mention losing all the taxes from trucking and selling. And if tomater outlaws ain't stopped you know the potater, bean and melon outlaws ain't far behind, was Clem's words.

The fellers didn't take Clem serious, but Zeke did note that cutback in California means mark up in stores, and that's serious.

Out here in the country folks work from see to can't see, and them with lights on their tractors keep right on going. —Zeke Grubb

Your turn

There are just certain people who make the world a nicer place to live in. They are few and far between, but they are still there; and I sincerely hope that everyone in the world has the pleasure of knowing at least one. I know one — her name is Sara Mott, and she has opened my eyes to so much over the past three years.

Sara Mott is, or was, my drama teacher. She has been, and will continue to be so much more than just a teacher. She has been my mentor, director, guide, crutch, and most importantly my friend. She opened my eyes to all in the world that is good and worth working for. She comforted me in times of sadness and shared with me in time of joy. She taught me the value of hard work while still giving me memories that will last a lifetime. She has, in essence, been the best teacher that I have ever had the pleasure of knowing.

For reasons beyond my control, Mrs. Mott no longer teaches at Mooresville Senior High School, and the halls are not as nice without her in them.

Thus, I feel the need to alert Mooresville to what a tremendous loss the students are suffering. In the past three years, Mrs. Mott has directed me in four plays, all of which have been phenomenal successes. She has directed five other plays that I have not been involved in, but which I have seen and were also successful. She has escorted me as well as other students on trips to New York City and Abington, Va. to see the historic Barter Theatre. She has taken two of her plays to regional competitions, at which various honors were received. Finally, she produced and directed the musical production of "Grease" last spring. Our advanced theatre class had recently begun work on our spring production when Mrs. Mott was taken out of the classroom.

Sara Mott's contributions to the dramatics program at Mooresville Senior High stand for themselves. Only when she returns will the halls regain their lost spirit.

Travis W. Montgomery

After 6 years as a Mooresville resident, I am forced to move away in an attempt to find employment. I'll miss the fine, friendly people and the excellent community spirit I've enjoyed here.

It is sad that my reason for leaving stems from frustrations of a 2½-year effort surrounding legal difficulties with Lake Norman Regional Medical Center. I believe I have not been treated fairly because LNRMC is not permitting me to return to work following an injury.

At least I have the satisfaction of knowing that LNRMC has developed specific policies and procedures on the provision of reasonable accommodations to handicapped employees, and that is has communicated them to its staff.

Perhaps these new policies and procedures will benefit others. If so, these changes that my situation helped bring about will serve as my thanks to this delightful community.

Charmaine Bonus

The Tribune welcomes letters. We prefer originals that address issues of interest to our specific readership. You must include your name and address, and we would very much appreciate a telephone number in the event we want to ask a followup question. Keep in mind that your letters are subject to editing.

Mail your letters to Mooresville Tribune, Post Office Box 300.

OUR COMMUNITY

IN OTHER YEARS

1937
54 YEARS AGO

The following announcement has been received by numerous friends of the groom in this city: "Mrs. Lula E. Moreland of Corvallis, Oregon, announces the marriage of her daughter Marian to Mr. Cicero Albert Frazier on Friday, the thirteenth of April, one thousand nine hundred and thirty-seven, Detroit, Michigan. At home, 2013 East Monlo Boulevard, Shorewood, Wisconsin."

A wedding of much social interest to relatives and friends took place Sunday evening, August 1, at the Methodist parsonage in Troutman, when Miss Una Trayumn Alexander became the bride of Mr. Woodrow Lewis. They were accompanied by Miss Alma Lowrance and Mr. Jesse Brown, special friends of the contracting parties. The bride is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. J. Sam Alexander, of the Prospect neighborhood. She is a clever and attractive young woman with a charming personality and has a wide circle of friends and relatives in and around Charlotte and Mooresville. The bridegroom is the only son of Mrs. Mattie Morgan and the late Leonard Lewis, and holds a position with the Mooresville Cotton Mills.

Mooresville Tribune

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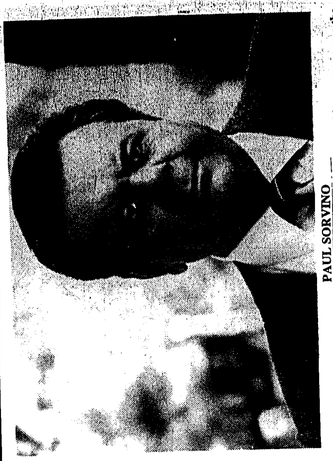
PAUL SORVINO: THE PASSIONATE PAISANO



by Seb Groves

Imagine doing an interview with (1) a well known sculptor, (2) a respected artist, (3) a gifted opera singer, (4) a writer, (5) a director, (6) a musician, and (7) an actor — and doing it all in just about an hour. That's what happens when the interview is with Brooklyn-born Paul Sorvino, a man of many talents and much achievement.

Sorvino had wrapped his new NBC film, "Nightmare." (The movie is scheduled to air April 7 — but please check listings because of a possible shift in date and time.) He had a good feeling about the TV flick, and was also feeling pretty good about the way his last feature film, "Goodfellas," was doing at the box office. And, ally happy about the fact that the good people who do the nominating for the Academy Awards saw fit to bestow six Oscar bids on the movie.

Besides Paul, the film's stars include Robert De-Niro, Ray Liotta, Joe Pesci and Lorraine Bracco. Pesci and Bracco were both nominated in the Supporting category, while nominated for Best Director and, along with Nicholas Pileggi, for Best Screenplay. The movie also netted a Best Picture Oscar nod.

"I never doubted it would be successful," Paul said. "It's well done and the people involved with it are some of the best in the business. Also, in Scorsese's presence you feel a certain elevation, artistically. You feel very exalted. You want to please him and do the best job for him, and you do. He makes you a true collaborator. There's no sense of authoritarian nonsense. He knows what the movie is. He knows what it has to look like and what has to be done and encourages a great deal of improvisation and then edits the improvisation — and when it's completed, we all feel we've been part of something special."

In describing "Nightmare," Sorvino expressed his own passionate feelings about justice and protecting the helpless: "This film isn't just about violence being threatened against a human being. In this case, the child is also threatened by the failure in a society that doesn't really treasure its youngsters. Instead of allowing its children to be children, it permits them — even encourages them, to become sex symbols. It bothers me that girls of 13 and 14 are becoming fashion models and are photographed in sexually suggestive poses. There's something very sick about that. I am a 52-year-old and should be 13, 14-years-old should be 13, 14-years-old should be allowed to be heavily made up and tuned into objects of sexual interest. The film is a sensitive, intelligent police detective faced with the gnawing knowledge that a criminal who threatens a child may never be brought to justice because until the crime takes place, there's no way to prove that he intends to commit it.

Victoria Principal produced the film and stars as the mother who is desperately trying to save her young daughter from the clutches of the man who has become obsessed with her. At one point in the story, the mother realizes she may have to take the law into her own hands to protect her child.

"When I first read the script," Sorvino said, "I knew I wanted to do this film. I liked it. I thought it was very well written. And it was an opportunity for me to work with Victoria and to work together again. Our last picture was 'I Will, I Will, For Now.' Also, I felt the character of the detective very much like a man who feels deeply about his job because he believes in the law and believes that people have a right to live without fear of the criminals who prey on society. He's a little burned out, but his sense of justice and morality is as strong as ever.

The dilemma for my character is can a man deny a life ethic and a work ethic for a greater truth and for justice?"

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