

NATIONAL PRESS CLUB HEADLINERS LUNCHEON WITH
FORMER MEXICAN PRESIDENT VICENTE FOX

SUBJECT: GLOBALIZATION VERSUS NATIONALISM

MODERATOR: ALISON FITZGERALD KODJAK OF THE NATIONAL PRESS CLUB

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ALISON FITZGERALD KODJAK: [sounds gavel] Good afternoon, everybody, and welcome to the National Press Club. We are the world's leading professional organization for journalists. My name is Alison Fitzgerald Kodjak, and I am a correspondent at NPR News and the vice president of the National Press Club. And we're so pleased today to welcome to the National Press Club former President of Mexico, Vicente Fox. [applause]

If you are watching this from afar or listening via Web or on the radio, you can follow along on Twitter at the hashtag #NPCLive. And since I expect that this may be a pretty lively event, I just want to remind our audience here in the room and those listening and watching elsewhere that our audience is made up of working journalists and Club members who are not journalists and guests, and the general public. So if you hear applause, it's not necessarily a sign of a lack of journalistic objectivity.

I'm going to introduce our head table. Could you please hold your applause until I get through everybody's name. At my end here is Maria Recio, correspondent for Austin American Statesman. Next to Maria is Brennan Hoban, communications coordinator at the Brookings Institution. Then we have Todd Gillman, Washington bureau chief for the Dallas Morning News; Ferdous Al-Faruque, senior reporter at Medtech Insight and secretary of the National Press Club. Next to Ferdous is Michele Salcedo, desk editor at the Associated Press. And here on my left is Gloria Rodriguez, president & CEO of Communicad, and a guest of our speaker.

Skipping over the podium, we have Betsy Fischer Martin, executive-in-residence at American University and the co-chair of the National Press Club Headliners Team, which

organizations these events. Skipping over our speaker for a moment, we have Abby Livingston, Washington bureau chief of the Texas Tribune and a member of the Headliners team. Next to Abby is Danny Selnick, senior vice president at Business Wire and the National Press Club Headliners member who organized our event. Thank you so much, Danny. Next to Danny is Marta Sahagun de Fox, the wife of President Fox and the president of the Vamos Mexico Foundation. Thank you for being here. Amanda Macias, national security reporter at CNBC; and next to Amanda is Maria Pena, Washington correspondent at La Opinion/Impremedia. And finally, Tyler Crowe, who's the global policy correspondent at the Motion Picture Association of America and another member of the National Press Club Headliners team.

Thanks, everybody. [applause]

I'd also quickly like to thank a few other members of the Headliners team who helped put this event together: Lisa Matthews, Bill Lord, Lori Russo and Tamara Hinton. And our NPC staff who make these events run so smoothly, Lindsay Underwood, Laura Cocker, and our executive director Bill McCarren. Thanks, everybody. [applause]

Our speaker this afternoon often finds himself these days trending on Twitter. But stirring up controversy is nothing new to President Vicente Fox, who knew how to grab headlines long before there was a thing called Twitter. Mr. Fox was elected to be the 55th President of Mexico in December 2000, the first opposition candidate in more than 70 years to win this nation's highest office. His administration focused chiefly on improving trade relations with the United States and maintaining Mexico's growing economy.

Mr. Fox left office in 2006 and, in a break with his country's cultural norms and traditions, he's not been shy about expressing his views or opinions. A staunch defender of North American economic integration and political cooperation, Mr. Fox has proven to be adept at Twitter, easily switching between jabs at President Trump to, shall we say, clever hashtags describing the planned border wall with Mexico. If you haven't seen it, you can look it up.

But Mr. Fox has a message that's a bit longer than 240 characters. In his recent book, entitled, *Let's Move On: Beyond Fear and False Prophets*, Mr. Fox warns of the dangers of anti-intellectualism and apathy in our modern political discourse.

Today, he'll deliver an address entitled, "Democracy at the Crossroads: Globalization versus Nationalism," and will no doubt provide us his candid assessment of the future of US/Mexican relations.

Please join me in welcoming to the National Press Club former Mexican President Vicente Fox. [applause]

PRESIDENT VICENTE FOX: Buen provecho. Bon appetit. Thank you for your invitation. Marta and I are really glad to be here. I had to jump a wall [laughter] to be here to

defend First Amendment [applause], to be by your side on the important and strategic role the press plays in our societies and in the whole of the world.

Marta and I experienced at some instances of our administration so many aggressive lies, calumnias. And yet, Marta and I always said that nothing better for the democracy, for freedom than having the press be free and write as they pleased. So we have a profound belief in this.

But let me now speak a little bit about what's going on today. This is my personal view after 76 years, on traveling around the world, learning, experiencing, until you get to the summit and maybe to maturity. But what is certain is you get to that very special place of wisdom. And that's a very special feeling, a very special way that you reach only after years and years of experience.

I've see in the world today three dates that are crucial: One, 2008, the last mammoth crisis that hit the whole of the world. Economies suffered, but also people and families lost up to 50% of their patrimony, of their work of their whole life. And unfortunately, these cycles – when we get crisis and then we get the good times – have been there forever, and are going to be here, and in the future, forever. That will keep on happening.

Next date I will take is 2013 when I think the world reached its very best peak of progress. It's incredible the progress that the world was able to accomplish. It's incredible the amount of new middle classes that came up from Africa, in Europe, in Asia, in Latin America, in United States, in China. Three hundred million families are middle class in China. Much more than what is here in United States. We're all human beings, we're gifted with 12 to 15 years of additional life because of health, technology, and many other developments. Today, expectancy of life, in this century, will move from 80/85 years to 130 years. It's going to be boring. [laughter] But it will give us more and more time to do more and more good things, to do things for others, to do things for our community, to do things for the whole of the world.

Also, per capita income went higher than ever before. Growth of economies and growth of wealth was all around the world. Africa's a region growing at rates of 8, 10, 12%, the total of the continent. Latin America, once we left behind dictators, messianic leaders, populists, demagogues, authoritarian military regimes, that went all over Latin America in the 20th century, we began to grow based on democracy and freedom. Latin America's been growing at rates of well over 5%. So we're performing much better.

But the next date I want to mention is 2016. After this great progress of humankind all around the world, we see something new happening. We see the Brexit, we see Catalonia trying to move out of Spain, and we see a very special phenomenon here in United States, the election of Senor Trump. And this is the election of a new alternative world with a U-turn to come back to the old times of the nation state, to the old time of strong authoritarian government; yes, to control borders, but also to control people, citizens, to control all free thinking into one thinking mind.

It's difficult to understand why should we put our whole nation in the hands of one man and let him do what he pleases. That's not the American Dream, that's not what Washington, Jefferson, Lincoln and all of them thought. They wanted to have independent branches of powers. They wanted to have checks and balances because they knew that in some times you get as leaders fake leaders, false prophets. You get as leaders those who don't have a clear path where they're going and whatfor they're moving there.

So we're back to the nation state. We're back to what we saw at the beginning of last century – a President like President Hoover making decisions to limit, to refrain creativity, innovation, change of the corporations, limiting them to go abroad and produce, forcing them to stay at home, or taxing imports worst off. And what happened? The big Depression.

So we've been moving around this global world that we've been building together and that we have seen how enriching, rewarding and successful it has been. Globalization and technology produced those great progresses of humankind. So this is what we have today. And this is why some are thinking of building walls. Stupid idea. I mean, when we have worked together, the three of us – Canada, United States and Mexico – for long, way, way before Trump reached power, and we decided to join and partner 25 years ago. And we have built the best tool for progress, for competitiveness, for creating jobs, for bringing income to people. That's something you cannot deny 25 years after NAFTA.

We just should remember when Ford Motor Company, Chrysler, GM went broke five years ago, and government, with taxpayers' money, investing billions of US dollars, came to the rescue of those corporations in bankruptcy. And what happened then after? Those companies came back to the marketplace. They came back successfully by transforming themselves into NAFTA corporations, working and nourishing their capacities and their competitiveness throughout the three economies – the Mexican economy, the US economy, and the Canadian economy. And it worked. Today, they are not only back in the marketplace, but they are gaining share of market. They are being able to compete with the industry and the rest of the world.

Now, NAFTA was created with a vision, was created after discussions and discussions, dialogue, bringing in the best minds that Canada, United States and Mexico had – how can we build a better future? How can we confront the challenge of the East, that extremely successful East, which economies are growing at rates on the average of 10%. How can we protect and defend the Western values when Europe was declining 25 years ago. So the decision was, let's get together. Let's be competitive. Let's have a great North America – Canada, United States and Mexico.

Number two, the threats and the challenges of security and safety. We've been by the side of this nation working every day, every year on security and safety issues. We do exercises, practicing exercises in the Gulf of Mexico and the Pacific with the US Marines and the Mexican Marines, every year we do that, even four times a year. And we work, invest like we don't do in many other things in Mexico to prevent drugs reaching this nation. Because Mexico doesn't produce drugs, doesn't consume drugs significantly. We're doing the job, trying to be a good neighbor and a good partner for US young. We've got 80,000 kids

dying every year. Here in the United States, people say, "What's wrong with Mexicans? What's happening with them? Why are they killing each other? Are they drinking too much tequila?" No, we're working to prevent drugs reaching this nation.

And what is happening here? You're legalizing consumption. So we pay the price of 80,000 kids dying every year and you legalize here. And by the way, I'm totally in favor of legalization. That's the only way we're going to get out of this trap. But that's one of the NAFTA purposes; another NAFTA purpose was to bring competitiveness to the region. Because we do have, each of us, capacities, resources, that put together, we become competitive, the three of us.

And final purpose, it was let's give a hand to Mexico. Let's bring Mexico, upgrade Mexico to the standards of United States and Canada. And you know, everything is working fine. We're being successful. And here comes this disrupter, or destroyer, with a full ignorance on how economies work; to say that it is not right that Mexico takes away the jobs from United States; that trading is a zero-sum – what you win, the other one loses. I mean, this nation has been a trader, has been a [20:39] since the beginning of times. The first and very first economic policy of President Washington was to send Jefferson and other bright minds of the nation to Europe to trade, so that the economy could start growing here in United States.

Right after World War, I mean the trading became open, and US forced every other economy to open our markets. And now that we developed our capacity, no, no, no, we're not ready to compete again. So let's go back to build walls, to reduce trading, to impose tariffs and else and else.

NAFTA, in one generation, 25 years, accomplished 80% of the dream. And today, Mexico's had full employment in most of its regions and its states. And today, the migration train has reversed. Now many more Mexicans are coming back to Mexico. That was the original idea of NAFTA, to create the jobs, to create the opportunities in Mexico so that people would not be willing to migrate. And that's exactly what we should do now with Central America. It's not fair, it offends dignity to call animals to those migrants.

So NAFTA's working in 25 years, we have reduced the gap. When you used to make \$1 in the Mexican side and \$10 on the US side, that was a strong incentive, strong motivation to cross the river, to jump walls. Who of you would not go for multiplying your income from one to 10? I mean, economic incentives work. And this one worked.

But now, 25 years after, that gap is reduced to five-to-one. Again, we're doing the job. NAFTA is working. And my forecast is that in one more generation, 25 years more, we will be on a one-to-one income, same as Canada and United States. And that's the purpose, that's the objective of NAFTA.

But this disrupter comes in, closing his eyes, thinking that he knows about economy, and comes with the wrong decisions, and at the wrong time. Because as I said, NAFTA's

working; we just have to be patient and wait, yes, another generation, so that we have a successful Mexico. That's then everything about NAFTA.

What we have today in Mexico, we have an election coming, July 1st. And finally, this dilemma, these two options that have been alive in Latin America – on one side, populism, demagoguery, false prophets; and on the other side, responsible governments, respect for freedom, respect for democracy, respect for human rights. This is the successful world, the world that has accomplished great things.

There is not one nation that I know of – neither Argentina with the Kirchners and the Perons, nor Venezuela with the Maduros and the Chavezes, nor Cuba with the Castros, nor Bolivia with the leader there, or the eternal leader in Nicaragua today – those morals[?] are obsolete. They don't work. They come from the Sao Paulo Forum, they come from ideas that were back in the 20th century, but they don't serve anymore.

So now Mexico is confronted with that dilemma. You have two candidates, but either one would be a great president of Mexico. I'm talking about Meade. Unfortunately with this milestone on his shoulders of PRI; unfortunately he has the wrong trademark, the PRI. But he's a bright, experienced, excellent leader for government and future president. And Anaya, the representative of youth, of Millennials, an aggressive kid with all the virtues of being young, but maybe the only problem of such, of having or not having experience. But yet, those two options can work excellent for Mexico.

But head runner is the other guy. I would worry. Because democracies that are not sustained on middle classes, on educated middle classes, are very difficult to sustain. Because people go for a get, they go for whatever they can get on the short term to survive. And they don't reflect about the future of their nation.

So that's what we have in Mexico. Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador that has shown in the two debates that he doesn't have nothing to offer to Mexico or to Mexicans, that he doesn't understand economy, that he doesn't know about foreign relations, that he doesn't know about education. And he just wants to change everything, like the guy here. They feel illuminated. They think they can build a much better world. They think they can isolate themselves and be by themselves and be great, again.

So this is what is at stake in the world. I send this provocative messages, and now I guess it will be very convenient to go into a Q&A session. Thank you very much for your attention. [applause]

MS KODJAK: Thanks very much for that broad view. I'm going to start with a sort of selfish question, something that is dear to our hearts here at the National Press Club. Last fall, a Mexican journalist, Emilio Gutierrez Soto, won one of our highest awards, and he stood right at this podium and made an impassioned speech for the freedom of the press in Mexico. And he is here in the United States seeking asylum. And shortly after that speech, he was detained by our immigration services, and has been imprisoned in El Paso, Texas, ever since. We at the Press Club have been calling for his release so he can prepare his case for

asylum. One, have you been familiar with the case? And two, would you join us in that call for his release?

PRESIDENT FOX: Yes, I'm aware. It is just one more story that is going on every day here in United States. I call him the "little mouse," Sessions, because he obeys his boss, Trump. And because he's so aggressive with migrants that many cases are unfair and they lack the most basic justice approach to the cases. And of course, I join in with you and with the press to demand that Emilio is treated fairly and, first of all, released, because there is no reason to have him there. [applause]

But I claim for all those others, all those others that are suffering exactly the same thing, that this idea is really a discrimination idea, to speak about Mexicans being rapists, being criminals, to generalize that everybody has that behavior. Any criminal, any raper should be judged and taken to jail, no matter what nationality they are. But to select a few countries, a few nations to start pressing this way is totally unfair.

And I wish more of us and more leaders in Latin America or Mexico should speak up, and more leaders in business and leaders of corporations here in the United States should speak up because in the future we might repent on all these things happening.

MS KODJAK: Thank you. Just a little further on that, the situation for journalists in Mexico has been very difficult recently. Reporters with Borders ranked your country 147 out of 180 in press freedom. What's going on in Mexico? Why has this situation deteriorated so much with the free press?

PRESIDENT FOX: Well, I cannot think that it's a special case to go after one person because he's exercising his freedom. It's 80,000 people that die in Mexico. And it's this problem we have with intense violence that comes out of drugs and cartels, comes out of the way we're trying to confront the problem. I think it's the wrong way. We must legalize.

Why I say? Because many of these press representatives that have been killed would be writing about cartels or might be giving out a fight against cartels and against crime, or might be denouncing. But [31:58] 80,000 kids. And what I say usually is, they were not born criminals. They do not have criminality in their genes. All those 80,000 kids which die on the streets of Mexico, they had a dream, too. Maybe they looked for a job and they didn't get it. And then they looked for scholarship to go to university and they didn't get it. And then they found out that in the cartels, they are paying three times minimum wages and more, that they'd get a better salary working for the cartels than working for GM on the manufacturing line.

So it's tough what we have in there because of drugs and war on drugs and war on cartels. Corruption. Corruption. The money for corruption mostly comes from these guys also. They're such a strong power, they are getting \$55 billion US dollars every year out of the drugs sold in the United States. And that money comes back to Mexico and used to bribe officials, to bribe army people, to bribe policemen, to bribe most everybody there in Mexico.

I wish you would have some understanding on this problem and we would work together as partners. I mean, United States and Mexico. We can do much better if we stopped putting the blame on the other and we start working together as NAFTA members, as NAFTA partners.

MS KODJAK: So on that topic, you've advocated for the legalization, the global legalization of drugs. What do you think that would achieve? And what do you think the road blocks are?

PRESIDENT FOX: Well, my position is based on ethics. It's based on the belief of freedom. And that every human being is created free. And to use that freedom with responsibility. So governments do not have the right to impose behaviors or moral conducts on us, the people. And this is a principle of the founding fathers. Even God itself, from any religion, will impose dogmas and beliefs, but at the very end God let us be free, and we can spit on Him, we can go against Him, and he still respects our freedom.

So freedom is a very key issue on drugs. Now, the idea is not that you harm yourself, you harm your health or you die on a suicide through drugs. It's moderation, it's knowledge, it's information, it's prevention that works in the case of drugs. But prohibitions don't work, and will never work. It has to be understanding, it has to be information. It has to be conviction. It has to be building our own beliefs.

So I think that changing the paradigm— and I have witnessed that; I've been in every market where drugs have been approved and legalized, marijuana or even other drugs. And I see this change of criminal and illegal activities into business, entrepreneurship and new industry. And it works. And it works. And it works pretty well.

Even some people move from having been criminals to become farmers or become businessmen when the industry is legalized. So I've seen that it works. And I've seen that having full respect for people's freedom is an essential ethical rule or philosophy that should apply to anything we do.

MS KODJAK: Okay, we're going to turn now to our President, because there's a lot of questions here. The first one, if you had an opportunity to sit down with President Trump, what would you say to him?

PRESIDENT FOX: I received the message inviting for that. And my answer was very simple: apologize to Mexico and to Mexicans, to my dear paisanos here that were offended, and I will gladly sit with you. And please change that taco bowl for a real taco and a real enchilada and a real tequila. And I invited him to come to our place. But he's stubborn. He only knows about himself, his ego, and pretty difficult to deal in that case. That's why we're striving and struggling so much with NAFTA. If NAFTA was negotiated, it was a dialogue between experts, between people that understand on the Canadian and Mexican side and the US side, I think we would have reached an agreement long ago. But he wants *his* NAFTA under *his* conditions and his people and his team cannot move out of that. They have

to get what Trump wants. That's not negotiating, that's not making deals. That's just taking advantage of the other.

MS KODJAK: So after President Obama, Mexico is President Trump's favorite scapegoat for America's troubles. How does it feel to be such an important part of the American political process?

PRESIDENT FOX: Well, maybe some of you don't know that what you have here in front, half of it is American blood. My grandfather was born in Cincinnati, Ohio. He came as a vagrant into Mexico without a penny in his pocket. So I know about migration, I know about the American Dream. I know and I learned to love this nation, to be part of this nation, to defend this nation. So I do this with the best will, the best desire that I make a modest contribution to thinkers and to decision makers here in this nation.

MS KODJAK: One final question here. You've said that our midterm elections this fall are a good opportunity to stop Trump's agenda. Hispanic voters in the United States traditionally have had a lower voter turnout. Do you have any message for them?

PRESIDENT FOX: First, in relation to 20th century Latin America, every nation we were at hands of authoritarian, of messianic leaders, as I already mentioned. And what was the answer to that? It was through the democracy, building strong congresses, so that if you have a crazy guy running your nation, one way or another, you have a congress to stop that; you have the bridles of the wild horse to be controlled.

So I think it's most important here, for whatever happens, that you have as strong Congress, an opposition Congress, which is what we did in Latin America. Last three governments in Mexico, we've been minority governments – President Zedillo, President Fox, President Calderon. And it's difficult, believe me it's difficult to govern with a minority in Congress. But nothing best to ensure the future of a nation than having these checks and balances, having these autonomous branches of government. It's most important.

That's why I think that to provide more thought, to provide more discussion, to provide more better negotiations is needed. It's needed other voices that have to be considered, by voices with authority, voices that must be heard. And I think the best for this nation would be in November to have a minority government that has to go to Congress and has to go to Congress before they shoot the guy in North Korea, or go to Congress before they end up with the Palestinians or with the Iranians, or go to Congress before you reject people migrating, looking for asylum because they're running away from violence.

So I think better decisions come from a better balance of power.

MS KODJAK: Okay, I'm going to turn to NAFTA. As you said, it's been around for 25 years now. Doesn't President Trump has a bit of a point, to maybe reopen it and look at it and see how it's working?

PRESIDENT FOX: You never will make me say that Trump is right. [laughter] But I know, we all have said it, NAFTA can be improved. It's 25 years old. There are many things that can be improved in NAFTA. But the way he put it is, "Either we win, either we have a surplus with the trading with Mexico or there is no NAFTA." That's not the way to go. You have surplus or you have deficits according to your competitiveness, according to your capacities and your wisdom in marketing and selling. But United States deal is not in trading, that's not what this nation wins. That's a mistake, again, on the side of Trump.

What United States wins through openness, trading and NAFTA is open the door for US investment. And look at the profits, they're enormous, they're mammoth profits that corporations bring back to United States. That's where the businesses— and by the way, now say that the wealthy, that the corporations are wrong, are not doing they're social responsibility. I want to recall this nation that 60% of families here in United States are owners and are stockholders of corporations' stocks and assets.

So Wall Street is maybe the best creation of humankind to distribute income. And today is the bad guy. And today many people want to destroy or to stop Wall Street. Well, Wall Street is 60% of US families that have stock in those corporations. And yes, I think it's wrong for some of those corporations keeping stock up to 50, 60 or 80%. I think they should be forced to be open and put those stocks on the market so that people can have them and benefit from them.

MS KODJAK: So we have several people saying, one, do you think that a deal on NAFTA is possible. There have been ongoing negotiations. And what changes would you recommend?

PRESIDENT FOX: A deal is totally possible. And in answer, to say it again, if this guy was not there, if we would already have a deal. Since my time in the Bush administration, we came out with NAFTA-Plus idea. And that was long time ago. We always think that NAFTA can improve, every year, and year by year. There are new things coming. There was not the Internet that we have today. There was not the technology. There was not the globalization as intense as we have today. Yes, NAFTA has to be reshaped, every year if possible. And that should be done.

But as I said, it's on the benefit of the three nations feeling like partners. Not, it's me against you and you against me, and let's see who wins. That's the wrong start. So NAFTA should be improved.

And second part of it was?

MS KODJAK: What changes would you recommend?

PRESIDENT FOX: I think there are many examples of the world how this treaty can be improved. One of them is the Trans-Pacific which Trump immediately rejected. He said United States is not going to join in. That was six months ago. About a month ago he said, "Well, we're considering. Maybe we will." Why? Because all the others, the other 11 or

whoever we are, decided to go ahead with it. And we finished the TPP. We have it ready. We have agreed. And we've already started processing and working on it.

So it's, again, that's a great example. It has many new things. Technology, for instance, was not considered. The financial and banking system. Even new agreements like the European agreement that Mexico has with them now has the human side of it. So it considers migration. It considers flows of people. It considers many other aspects that were not relevant a time ago.

MS KODJAK: I'm going to turn to the wall, or the lack of wall. And actually, I have a similar question from a few people. Why are you so angry about the insistence that Mexico pay for the wall when it's never going to happen anyway? They say.

PRESIDENT FOX: Well, no discussion. Good. [laughter]

MS KODJAK: That's according to the question.

PRESIDENT FOX: But he insists. He insists that he will get the money somewhere in some way out of Mexico. He said by imposing tariffs to imports. And he's hanging them by the neck because he imposes— let's say he said a 30 or 40% tariff on automobiles manufactured in Mexico and coming to the States. Who's going to pay for that? Consumers. Consumers are going to pay for that 40%. It's not Mexicans. It's US consumers buying that car here. But he's affecting his own people, his own citizens by forcing them to pay more for a car than they should pay.

So it's one and again the wrong decisions in relation to trading, to doing business. It's good to know that 40% of each item that will be produced in Mexico comes from US companies exporting into Mexico. And it's good maybe for you to know that Mexico buys from this nation \$40 billion US worth of grain, which Mexico buys from US farmers, millions of US farmers. Where are they going to replace that market?

So all proposals are lose/lose. Instead of thinking how can we both win. Why not keep exchanging grain that we buy for tequila, avocados and chelada that we sell. That's the best approach that we should have on trade.

MS KODJAK: Again with the wall, is it anything more than a symbolic thing?

PRESIDENT FOX: It is, and it's proven by history. The Chinese Wall that he has so proudly mentioned — I mean, Trump — the great Chinese Wall. It was cost with great effort, paid by Chinese people working, putting it stone by stone on that wall, doing a lot of sacrifice. And what happened immediately? The Manchus and the Mongols jumped the wall and conquered China. So it didn't work, that wall.

Berlin Wall, exactly the same. It didn't work against freedom. And this wall— let me put it this way. I profoundly believe in the concept of vanguard, successful vanguard, educated, technological vanguard that drives the world ahead. I mean, people. I mean,

corporations. I mean, the schools. I mean, universities. And the rear guard, the forgotten ones, the ones that don't have even food on the table, the ones that don't have opportunity, the ones that are not educated, it's an obligation and convenience of the vanguard to take care of the rear guard, and to keep that guard as close as possible. Because if not, what happens? This rear guard, if it's hungry, if it's extreme poverty, if it's desperate, they will jump any wall. They will swim any sea – the Mediterranean or the Gulf of Mexico, or whatever. They will jump your fence in your homes. So why do we want this side of the equation to lose all hope that they can progress.

So it's an obligation and it's a convenient obligation of the vanguard to keep close to the rear guard. And this is what corporations are doing, and this is what nations are doing – to become passive, to bring them in, to bring education to them, to bring opportunities to them. And that's what works, and that's what will work to the future.

So walls don't work. And that will keep happening if we don't attend this. US Congress has sitting there the bill presented by Senator Kennedy and Senator McCain, 16 years ago. And it's the right answer to the migration issue, because every country has the right to control its borders, to bring security and safety to your borders. I agree on that; that's what Mexico wants, that's what any nation wants.

But there are much better ways of doing it than the ways being proposed. That initiative that is there has an answer to the flow of migration every year, has an answer to illegals here and how they could be documented or go back, has an answer to not separating families, fathers from children and children from mothers. Everything is in writing there.

So instead of the stick, what we should use is our wisdom, is our intelligence, to have better answers to the problems that we're confronting all around the world.

MS KODJAK: I have a couple of questions that sort of seem to sum up the whole debate that's happening about the US and Mexico. So I'm just going to read them one after the other. What is Mexico doing to help its population earn a living wage in order for its people to remain in Mexico and not be forced to come here to work? And a second one actually doesn't end in a question mark. You don't seem to show much sympathy for American workers who've lost their jobs because US companies have moved overseas.

PRESIDENT FOX: Good question. About Mexico, we are doing everything that is in our hands. We've been doing everything that is possible in trying to retain our people. We don't want them out. We would love to have them in. But history. When you go back and you see that 20th century where all of Latin America failed because we did not enjoy the fruit of democracy and the fruit of freedom. We were in the hands of dictators all along, of messianic leaders. What happens when you have that?

And that, I think, is something to be considered in the case of United States. When you have that, when you have the powerful, the dictator telling you, "Don't worry, I'm going to build the schools for you. I'm going to create jobs for you. I'm going to maintain you. Don't worry. Be there and I will help you." That's the proposal also of the 20th century Latin

America. What happened, that we didn't grow up as citizens. We did not grow up thinking that it's in my hands, it's in my effort, it's in my sacrifice to progress as much as I can. I don't depend on government. But we've never heard that. We didn't learn that. And that's why we lag behind. What's why Africa, the same. I mean, those dictators, those guerillas that they have way back that promised the same to the African people.

So you need what you have here. And my wish is, don't lose it. You learn here about the American Dream and you say you get the American Dream with your effort if you go to school, if you work, if you strive and you go ahead, you make the dream. You, yourself. You don't sit down in your living room like many of the followers of Trump are doing. "Ah Trump, good! Great!" You sit down in your living room. You ask for a beer, you drink beer, you watch TV. And you wait for Trump to deliver. To deliver his promise that he will take jobs back from Mexico, back to people here. He will never do that.

He said, "I'll bring back the coil"—

MS KODJAK: Coal.

PRESIDENT FOX: Coal. Jobs. I call them the carbon jobs. And those guys are there sitting, "Ah, thank god, the Trump king, he's going to solve my problems." That's the losing proposition that we lived by in Latin America for a whole century, 500 million people. So that's not the right way to go.

And for those workers that lost their job here, go to the community college. Manufacturing jobs are going to be down not only in United States, Mexico and elsewhere in the world. Robots are going to be taking over. Now we don't need drivers any more pretty soon. We're going to have cars that drive themselves.

So we need to find other ways of replacing jobs. This nation in the last 20 years lost 35% of the manufacturing jobs. But same happens in Mexico. We lost all the textile jobs that we took from United States, from North Carolina and the Carolinas. That industry came to Mexico and we enjoyed it for five years. And now it's in Central America. And now it's in Africa. And now it's in China.

So manufacturing jobs are not going to be here. So what you have to do is learn throughout your life. Go to school. Be and learn there. When I joined Coca-Cola, I thought I was joining a corporation for life, that I would be the CEO of the Coca-Cola Company worldwide. That was my dream when I joined Coca-Cola as a route salesman. And that was the way we all thought 40 years ago, 50 years ago. Today, a Millennial, he's two years here, and then I move here; two years here, I create a company. I sell it to the big guys and then I move, too. Nobody thinks about staying in one job for all of your life.

So yes, these people that lost their jobs, it's very unfortunate. But you don't sit down and cry. Mexico lost a lot of jobs. We have a lot of unemployment. We work hard. Now we are the most competitive manufacturing place in the world, way above China. Investment that went to China is coming back to Mexico. We're very competitive, we're very productive.

We are the sixth largest recipient of tourism in the world now. Mexico. We used to be the 20th. Now we're the sixth. Why? Because we have worth. We have developed our beaches. We have developed our cities, like San Miguel de Allende, like Guanajuato. We have 11 huge manufacturing plants, automobile manufacturing plants, the state of the art, in Guanajuato, Queretaro and San Luis Potosi. In a region that holds 10 million Mexicans, we have 11. There's no other place in the world that has that. And it's not US corporations. Three of them are there, but also it's Mazda, it's Nissan, it's Toyota, it's BMW, it's Volkswagen, it's Mercedes Benz. All of them are manufacturing there. Why? Because we're competitive. That's the only reason.

So what you need to do here, and what Trump should be thinking is, how do we become more competitive. And one way to become more competitive is to associate with Mexico, to associate with Canada, and then you are more competitive and you can be more successful.

MS KODJAK: So we are close to running out of time, but before I ask you the final question, first I would like to present you with the traditional, and hopefully your second, National Press Club coffee mug. Only the best people have them [applause]

And we have a few events coming up soon that I'd like to welcome you all to. On May 29th, we have a book event with Bret Baier, who wrote the book, *Three Days in Moscow: Ronald Reagan and the Fall of the Soviet Union*. That's Bret Baier of Fox News. May 31st, screening of the film, *Chappaquiddick*, and a discussion with the screenwriters. On June 20th, we have breakfast and book discussion with Jon Meacham. His book, *The Soul of America: The Battle for Our Better Angels*. And on June 27th, we have a luncheon with the CEO of Delta Airlines, Ed Bastian.

And for my last question, I was going to ask, and I'm very disappointed that I can't, who made your boots? But you're not wearing boots today, so I have to ask—

PRESIDENT FOX: I really thank you for this cookie. You know, when you are going to jump a wall, you change your boots. [laughter] You wear sports tennis shoes so that you can really get up there.

MS KODJAK: Thanks very much. [applause] And we are adjourned. [sounds gavel]

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