



William J. Clinton Presidential History Project

Briefing Materials
Michael (Mickey) Kantor
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Prepared by Duane Adamson and Robert Martin, Research Assistants
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TIMELINE FOR MICHAEL (MICKEY) KANTOR

Prepared by Rob Martin and Duane Adamson

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- 1976** Mickey Kantor heads the presidential campaign of California Governor Edmund G. (Jerry) Brown.
- 1978** Kantor meets fellow Legal Services Corporation board member Hillary Rodham and her husband, Bill Clinton. Kantor quickly becomes a close friend and adviser to the couple. (*Los Angeles Magazine*, 01/1997)
- 1980** Kantor serves as California State Chairman for President Jimmy Carter's reelection effort.
- 1984** Kantor serves as California State Chairman for Walter Mondale's presidential campaign. Afterwards, Kantor states he has had enough and vows not to return to politics. (*The New York Times*, 06/07/1992)
- 1991**
- October* On the 3rd, Clinton announces his candidacy for president. Kantor's positions during the campaign include California finance director as well as the campaign's National Chair. (<http://www.mayerbrown.com/people/Michael-Kantor/>)
- December* Kantor hosts fundraising events in California. (*Los Angeles Times* 12/04/1991; 12/13/1991)
- 1992**
- February* Clinton comes in second to Paul Tsongas in the New Hampshire primary. Clinton garners 24.7% of the vote to Tsongas' 33.2%. Clinton calls himself, "the Comeback Kid." (Ross K. Baker, "Campaign '92: Strategies and Tactics of the Candidates," in *Election of 1992*, ed. by Gerald Pomper, p. 49)
- March* Clinton takes on Jerry Brown's candidacy after the polls in California show Brown leading Clinton. Kantor makes a number of public statements about Brown. (*Boston Globe*, 03/25/1992; *The Washington Post*, 03/26/1992)

Clinton sweeps South on Super Tuesday. Tsongas, in his targeted state of Florida, wins only 34% of the vote to Clinton's 51.7%. Of the eight Democratic primaries on the 10th, only Massachusetts and Rhode Island go to Tsongas. (Baker, pp. 49-55)

April Clinton meets in Florida with Kantor and Warren Christopher to brainstorm list of potential list of vice presidential candidates. (*Los Angeles Times*, 07/10/1992)

November Clinton is elected president capturing 43% of the popular vote.

December On the 24th, Clinton nominates Kantor as United States Trade Representative (USTR). (*Associated Press*, 12/24/1994)

1993

January Kantor tells Senate Finance committee that he had been selected by Clinton to negotiate three "side agreements" with Mexico and Canada in connection with the completed NAFTA pact. Weeks earlier, Clinton had promised to appoint a special negotiator for that task. (*Journal of Commerce*, 01/20/1993)

The Senate unanimously confirms Kantor as USTR on the 21st.

The Clinton Administration announces it will impose tariffs on steel from countries it says are selling at unfairly low prices in the American market. The Administration also takes a hard line on other trade issues regarding the European Community (EC) and Japan. (*Journal of Commerce*, 01/20/1993; *The New York Times* 01/27/1993, 02/02/1993)

Clinton comes into office with a policy of using economic leverage to promote democracy in China. He insists that Most-Favored-Nation (MFN) trading status for China be linked to specific improvements in human rights conditions. During the presidential campaign he had accused President Bush of "coddling" China's leaders, and pledged to pursue a tougher policy.
(http://news.bbc.co.uk/hi/english/world/newsid_1258000/1258054.stm)

February The EC responds strongly to proposed tariffs, arguing that the initial actions of the USTR were "worrying" and "completely unjustified." The proposed duties on steel imports would affect six of the twelve nations in the EC as well as 13 other countries. Other EC concerns include planned bidding restrictions on EC state-owned electric and telecommunications companies. (*The New York Times*, 02/03/1993, 02/09/1993)

Kantor and Commerce Secretary Ron Brown meet with Canadian Trade Minister Michael Wilson regarding proposed tariffs on steel and imported cars. (*The New York Times*, 02/09/1993)

Kantor announces that the Clinton Administration will seek renewal of “fast-track authority” set to expire in March 1993. (*The New York Times*, 02/12/1993)

March

Kantor announces on the 19th that he will delay proposed trade sanctions on the EC until meeting with EC trade officials in Brussels. (*The New York Times*, 03/20/1993)

Kantor takes first overseas trip as USTR in a visit to Brussels. During his visit, Kantor meets with EC President Jacques Delors and other EC officials. The U.S. and EC agree to three-week truce in trade dispute. (*London Times*, 03/29/1993; *The Washington Post*, 03/30/1993; *The New York Times*, 03/31/1993)

In a speech to the American Chamber of Commerce in Brussels, Kantor criticizes Japanese trade practices. (*London Times*, 03/31/1993; *The New York Times*, 03/31/1993)

April

General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) Director General Arthur Dunkel criticizes the Clinton Administration for delaying progress on the GATT Uruguay Round by expending too much political capital on NAFTA. (*The New York Times*, 04/04/1993)

The White House renews its request for “fast-track authority” which had expired on March 2nd. (*The New York Times*, 04/10/1993)

Kantor announces that the U.S. has reached a partial agreement on its trade dispute with the EC, but that it would proceed with trade sanctions until a full settlement has been reached. As part of the settlement the US agrees to drop “Buy American” rules for the Tennessee Valley Authority and Department of Energy in exchange for the EC agreeing to eliminate “Buy European” rules on electric utility equipment. Under the remaining sanctions, European companies would be barred from bidding on certain federal contracts. (*The New York Times*, 04/22/1993)

The White House identifies trading partners that discriminate against American companies or allow U.S. products to be pirated. Japan, Brazil, India and Thailand are listed as the worst violators of U.S. patents, copyrights and trademarks. By naming those nations in an annual survey required by U.S. trade law, the government opens the way for imposition of trade sanctions. (*Los Angeles Times*, 05/01/1993)

May

The media criticizes Kantor for a fundraising event where large Democratic National Committee donors had met with the USTR. (*The New York Times*, 05/27/1993)

Kantor urges the Senate Finance Committee to pass a "clean fast-track bill, free of terms or conditions" in order to complete negotiations on the Uruguay Round. The Finance Committee later approves "fast-track" on the Administration's terms, which gives the president until December 15th to complete the Uruguay Round and NAFTA. (*Journal of Commerce*, 05/21/1993; *The New York Times* 05/21/1993)

On the 19th, Labor Secretary Robert Reich urges Clinton to reverse a 1991 agreement that supports American-based companies with factories overseas. The statement contradicts Kantor and the USTR position on the matter. (*The New York Times*, 05/19/1993)

Kantor, Reich and Laura D'Andrea Tyson, chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers, hold a news conference challenging Perot's anti-NAFTA ad campaign. (*The Washington Post*, 05/29/1993)

June

Germany breaks ranks with the EC in a surprise telecommunications trade agreement with the U.S. The move averts planned sanctions on both sides. (*The New York Times*, 06/11/1993)

Kantor meets with trade ministers from Canada, Japan, and the EC in Tokyo. The two-day meeting was intended to pave the way for the July G-7 meeting in Tokyo. Negotiations fail to bring an agreement on a myriad of key trade issues. (*The Washington Post*, 06/24/1993)

On the 30th, U.S. District Judge Charles R. Richey rules that the Administration must evaluate the environmental impact of NAFTA before sending it to Congress. The ruling threatens the passage of the legislation. Kantor argues that the ruling "interferes with the president's ability to negotiate international agreements." The Administration appeals the ruling. (*The Washington Post*, 07/01/1993)

July

U.S., Japan, Canada, and the EC reach an agreement that eliminates tariffs on pharmaceuticals, construction equipment, medical

equipment, steel, farm equipment, furniture, distilled spirits and beer. Kantor and Clinton present the deal at the opening session of the G-7 summit in Tokyo on the 7th. (*The Washington Post*, 07/08/1993)

Kantor meets with Mexican President Carlos Salinas de Gortari in Mexico City on the 22nd to resolve differences on NAFTA labor and environmental side accords. After the meeting, Kantor predicts that the issues involving the side accords should be solved by August. (*The New York Times*, 07/23/1993)

August The U.S., Mexico and Canada announce on the 13th that they have reached agreement on NAFTA side accords, clearing the way for NAFTA ratification procedures to begin. (*Los Angeles Times*, 08/14/1993)

September Clinton launches a policy of "constructive engagement" with China. (*BBC, Timeline: US – China Relations*)

Kantor rejects an EC request for changes in the 1992 U.S.-EC Blair House agreement covering agricultural subsidies in the Uruguay Round. The EC had requested the change as a result of France's continued resistance to the agreement. (*The Washington Post*, 09/22/1993, 10/16/1993)

On the 24th, a federal appeals court overturns a previous ruling and allows the Clinton Administration to submit the NAFTA agreement to Congress without an environmental impact statement. (*The New York Times*, 09/25/1993)

October Under pressure from the US, Japanese Prime Minister Morihiro Hosokawa announces he will implement an open competitive bidding system that will put foreign firms on an even footing with Japanese construction, engineering and architectural firms. In response, the Clinton Administration cancels plans to impose trade sanctions. (*The Washington Post*, 10/27/1993)

November Clinton attends the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) leadership meeting in Seattle and discusses the Uruguay Round. Clinton also meets with Chinese President Jiang Zemin at the summit. (*The Washington Post*, 11/21/1993; *BBC, Timeline: US – China Relations*)

December The U.S. and EC announce the resolution of a farm trade dispute on the 2nd. U.S. and EC negotiators see the agreement as a major step towards meeting the December 15 deadline in the Uruguay Round of GATT talks. France rejects the compromise days later. After intense

pressure, France acquiesces on the 8th. (*The New York Times*, 12/03/1993; *The Washington Post*, 12/07/1993)

After several months of negotiation and public debate, NAFTA is ratified on the 8th. Labor unions had opposed the agreement, as did a number of Democratic leaders including House Majority Leader Richard Gephardt (D-MO) and House Majority Whip David Bonior (D-MI).

The Uruguay Round agreement is approved by 117 nations on the 15th. The agreement extends GATT into agricultural trade and government subsidies. The agreement also establishes the World Trade Organization (WTO) as a permanent institution of GATT members to enforce trade rules. (*The Washington Post* 12/15/1993; *The New York Times*, 12/16/1993)

Kantor criticizes Japanese bureaucrats in a published letter, accusing them of blocking trade reforms in order to hold on to power. The letter is seen as a signal that the US is shifting its trade focus to Japan after the successful conclusion of GATT and NAFTA negotiations. (*The New York Times*, 12/21/1993)

1994

January

The Clinton Administration announces it will cut Chinese textile imports to the U.S. by more than \$1 billion. The U.S. accuses China of attempting to exceed American limits by shipping goods into the U.S. through other nations. (*The New York Times*, 01/07/1993)

Clinton and Russian President Boris Yeltsin meet in Moscow where the two leaders discuss nonproliferation, economic development and US-Russian trade issues. (*The Washington Post*, 01/13/1994; <http://www.ceip.org/files/projects/npp/resources/summits2.htm>)

Just prior to the implementation of U.S. trade sanctions, the U.S. reaches a three-year agreement with China on clothing and textile imports. The January 17th deal allows for U.S. inspection of factories that officials charge are shipping products that have been mislabeled to disguise their country of origin in order to circumvent US import quotas. (*The Washington Post*, 01/18/1994)

February

Clinton and Japanese Prime Minister Morihiro Hosokawa hold a summit meeting on the 10th. Kantor and the Japanese foreign minister are unable to reach a trade agreement. Clinton signs an executive order less than a month later on March 3rd reviving the Super 301 law

that had expired in 1990. (Dryden, pp. 391-392; *The New York Times* 03/04/1994)

On the 15th, Kantor announces that Japan had violated previous trade agreements. The announcement initiates a process under which U.S. trade officials would have 30 days to identify which Japanese products might be hit with punitive tariffs. (*The Washington Post*, 02/16/1994)

March

Japan concedes to US demands that Japan further open its markets to American cellular telecommunications companies. The move halts announced punitive tariffs. While agreement is reached in this sector, numerous meetings in Tokyo and Washington throughout the spring fail to reopen formal negotiations on a broader trade framework. Formal negotiations had broken off on February 11th. (*The Washington Post*, 03/11/1994; *The New York Times*, 03/29/1994)

April

The official Uruguay Round treaty is signed by 125 nations in Marrakech, Morocco. The U.S. signs the agreement and the Administration begins negotiations to gain Congressional approval. (*The Washington Post*, 04/15/1994)

The Clinton Administration postpones planned trade sanctions against China and Japan for 60 days. The sanctions were to be implemented on the 30th. Additional talks with trade officials of both countries are planned to attempt to resolve issues. (*The New York Times*, 05/01/1994)

On the 28th, Tsutomu Hata replaces Morihiro Hosokawa as Japanese Prime Minister. (http://www.kantei.go.jp/foreign/cabinet/0061-pre_e.html)

May

US and Japanese trade officials announce an agreement ending a three-month stalemate in trade negotiations. Formal negotiations begin on a broad trade framework between the two countries. (*The Washington Post*, 05/25/1994)

Clinton announces he has signed an executive order extending China's MFN status despite Beijing's failure to achieve "overall, sufficient progress" on a number of key issues the Administration had highlighted in 1993. The decision reflects the Administration's decision to drop its policy of linking human rights reform to China's annual renewal of MFN status. (Cronin, "The United States and Asia in 1994", *Asian Survey*, Vol 35, Issue 1; *BBC, Timeline: US – China Relations*)

June

On the 30th, Socialist leader Tomiichi Murayama replaces Tsutomu Hata as Japanese Prime Minister. The change appears to be a setback

for U.S.-Japanese trade negotiations. (*The Washington Post*, 06/30/1994; http://www.kantei.go.jp/foreign/cabinet/0061-pre_e.html)

Kantor announces that USTR will investigate claims that Chinese trade practices violate copyright laws and threatens possible trade sanctions. At issue are Chinese factories that produce compact disks, videotapes and computer programs without payment royalties or acknowledgment of copyrights. (*The New York Times*, 07/01/1994)

July The Clinton Administration formally accuses Japan of "longstanding discrimination" against US manufacturers on the 31st as trade talks break down. The move again sets the stage for imposition of trade sanctions in 60 days. (*The Washington Post*, 08/01/1994)

August U.S. and Canada reach an agreement in a long-running dispute over wheat imports. (*The Washington Post*, 08/02/1994)

Kantor announces that Belarus and Uzbekistan will now be permitted to export certain goods to U.S. tariff-free under the Generalized System of Preferences program. (*Journal of Commerce*, 08/28/1994)

September Key legislators state that Clinton's request for renewal of "fast-track" authority is blocked and would not be considered in 1994. (*The Washington Post*, 09/13/1994)

October The U.S. and Japan reach an agreement to open Japan's flat-glass, insurance, and medical equipment markets to U.S. companies. The two countries are unable to reach a deal on the contentious issues of autos and auto parts. (*The Washington Post*, 10/02/1994; *The New York Times*, 10/03/1994)

The House of Representatives postpones a vote on the Uruguay Round treaty until after the elections. (*The New York Times*, 10/06/1994)

November In off-year elections, Republicans take control of both houses for the first time since 1946. Republicans pick up a surprising fifty-four seats in the House. More than 300 Republican candidates for Congress endorse the "Contract with America" developed by Newt Gingrich of Georgia. (Peter B. Levy, *Encyclopedia of the Clinton Presidency*, Westport CT: Greenwood Press, 2002, p. 114)

Senator Robert Dole joins Clinton in a White House Garden press conference to announce he will vote in favor of GATT. The announcement is seen as a major victory for the Clinton Administration. (*The Washington Post*, 11/24/1994)

The House passes Clinton's expanded GATT legislation 288 to 146. The Senate ratifies the legislation in December. (*The Washington Post*, 11/30/1994)

December

In Miami, Clinton and the leaders of 33 other Western Hemisphere nations pledge, on the 10th, to create a hemisphere-wide free trade zone. The leaders set a 2005 deadline for agreement on the proposed Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA). (*The Washington Post*, 12/11/1994)

1995

January

Kantor threatens to block imports of Chinese goods unless Beijing takes strong steps to curb copyright infringement by February. Acting under Special 301 provisions, Kantor publishes a list of \$2.8 billion of goods that could be subject to retaliation, though the final list is later pared to roughly \$1 billion. Kantor adds that China's failure to improve its protection of intellectual property rights (IPR) would also complicate its bid to join the WTO. China responds by threatening counter-measures. U.S. and Chinese negotiators are scheduled to resume talks later in the month in Beijing. (*The New York Times*, 01/01/1995)

The Administration announces that the U.S. and India have agreed on a deal to open India to American exports of textiles and clothing for the first time. (*The New York Times*, 01/01/1995)

Kantor finds under Section 301 trade law that EU quotas on banana imports are "adversely affecting U.S. economic interests." The finding sets February 10th as the deadline for comments on possible responses, including trade retaliation. (*Journal of Commerce*, 01/11/1995)

U.S. and China renew threats as trade talks in Beijing fail on the 28th. (*The Washington Post*, 01/29/1995)

After Congress refuses to act, Clinton issues \$20 billion in emergency loans to Mexico to stabilize the country's financial markets. ("Eight Years of Peace, Progress, and Prosperity," <http://clinton5.nara.gov/WH/Accomplishments/eightyears-02.html>)

February

Kantor announces on the 4th that the U.S. will impose 100% tariffs on \$1.08 billion worth of Chinese imports effective February 26th, which would constitute the largest sanctions in U.S. history. China immediately responds with counter-sanctions, also effective the 26th. Two days later, China invites U.S. negotiators back to Beijing to

resume talks. (*The Washington Post*, 02/05/1995; *The New York Times*, 02/07/1995)

The Administration announces that Kantor and Brown will co-host the Hemispheric Trade and Commerce Forum in June to begin work on the proposed FTAA. (*Journal of Commerce*, 02/10/1995)

Kantor sends a letter to Brown on the 15th to oppose a bid by United Technologies Corp to secure U.S. Export-Import Bank financing for a deal to sell airplane parts in Russia. He argues the deal could undermine the competitiveness of the US aerospace industry. (*Wall Street Journal*, 03/07/1995)

Kantor meets with Canadian Trade Minister Roy MacLaren to discuss Canada's protection of its cultural industries.

Kantor announces that the U.S. and China have reached an agreement providing for greater protection of IPR in China, ending the threat of sanctions on the 26th. (*The Washington Post*, 02/27/1995)

March

Kantor travels to Beijing to sign the IPR agreement with China on the 11th. While in Beijing, Kantor criticizes China's performance under a 1992 bilateral market access agreement with the U.S. to remove import restrictions China had suspended the agreement in January after it failed to be admitted to the WTO. (*The Washington Post*, 03/12/1995)

Kantor announces on the 12th that the U.S. will support China's accession to the WTO as a founding member. The U.S. and China also sign a series of trade agreements in which China agrees to resume implementation of its 1992 market access agreement with the U.S. (*The Washington Post*, 03/13/1995)

Kantor reportedly assures Chilean Finance Minister Eduardo Aninat of the Administration's intention to move forward with negotiations for Chile to join NAFTA despite recent congressional criticism. House Minority Leader Richard A. Gephardt (D-MO) was particularly vocal in his opposition to NAFTA expansion. (*The Washington Post*, 03/18/1995)

The U.S. drops its opposition to the selection of former Italian Trade Minister Renato Ruggiero as the new head of the WTO after European officials agree that Ruggiero would step down after a single four-year term in favor of someone from a non-European nation. (*The Washington Post*, 03/21/1995)

April

Senior U.S. and EU officials, including Kantor, reportedly consider the possibility of creating a U.S.-EU free-trade zone. (*Journal of Commerce*, 04/28/1995)

The U.S. and Japan resume automobile trade talks. Several rounds of talks have already been held in 1995 without success. Kantor reiterates his threats to impose trade sanctions should the talks fail.

Speaking at a Senate hearing, Kantor endorses a proposal to eliminate tariffs among the world's developed countries on computers, computer parts, semiconductors and computer software by 2000. (*Journal of Commerce*, 04/26/1995)

Kantor files a complaint against the Mexican government on behalf of several U.S. express-delivery companies, charging that Mexico is disregarding terms of NAFTA. (*Wall Street Journal*, 04/27/1995)

As part of an annual review, Kantor announces that the U.S. will not begin cases against any countries for violating U.S. copyright laws but will place Brazil, Greece, Japan, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, the EU, South Korea, and India on the "priority watch list." (*The Washington Post*, 04/30/1995)

May

Another round of U.S.-Japanese auto talks are broken off on the 5th. Kantor attends a National Economic Council (NEC) meeting on the 6th to discuss US options. The NEC reportedly recommends the imposition of sanctions on Japan to the President. (*The Washington Post*, 05/07/1995)

Kantor announces on the 10th that the Clinton Administration will file a complaint against Japan's trading practices with the WTO and will also move ahead with unilateral sanctions against Japanese imports. (*The New York Times*, 05/11/1995)

Kantor rejects a Colombian proposal to revise banana export quotas to Europe. (*Journal of Commerce*, 05/12/1995)

Kantor proposes to place 100 % duties on thirteen models of Japanese-made luxury cars. The sanctions are set to take effect June 28th. EU officials subsequently speak out against the trade sanctions. (*Journal of Commerce*, 05/17/1995)

Kantor testifies before Congress to answer questions regarding "fast-track" negotiating authority, which has important implications for the expansion of free-trade zones in Asia, the Americas, and, in particular, Chile. (*Journal of Commerce*, 05/18/1995)

- June* On the 28th, Kantor and Japan's Trade Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto strike a last-minute deal in Geneva ending a bitter dispute between the US and Japan over cars and car parts. The US-Japan Agreement on Autos and Auto Parts is formally signed on August 23rd, 1995. (www.ita.doc.gov/td/auto/fullrpt.html)
- July* Kantor and Treasury Secretary Robert Rubin oppose efforts by European Commission Vice President Sir Leon Brittan to persuade the U.S. to adopt an EU interim accord on global financial services. (*Journal of Commerce*, 07/25/1995)
- With Congress set to debate the granting of “fast-track” negotiating authority, Kantor signals that the Clinton Administration will insist that labor and environmental provisions are included in negotiations on Chile’s ascension to NAFTA. (*Journal of Commerce*, 07/31/1995)
- September* The Clinton Administration announces a plan on the 6th to closely monitor sales of U.S. autos and auto parts to the Japanese in an effort to strengthen the U.S.-Japanese auto pact signed in June. (*The Washington Post*, 09/07/1995)
- The Clinton Administration announces that it will lift restrictions on Canadian wheat imports after Canada agrees to limit its exports to the U.S. for one year. (*Journal of Commerce*, 09/13/1995)
- Congress debates a sweeping reorganization of the Commerce Department that would create a large new trade agency under the control of the USTR. (*Journal of Commerce*, 09/22/1995)
- The Clinton Administration announces that it will file a complaint against the EU’s restrictions on banana imports with the WTO. (*Journal of Commerce*, 09/28/1995)
- The U.S. and South Korea reach an agreement on the 29th that will lower Korean barriers against imported autos. (*The Washington Post*, 09/29/1995)
- October* Talks between the Clinton Administration and House Republicans fail to produce an agreement on “fast-track” negotiating authority. (*Journal of Commerce*, 10/17/1995)
- Kantor announces that the U.S. has completed an agreement opening trade with the Palestinian self-rule authority. (*Journal of Commerce*, 10/13/1995)

Kantor announces that the U.S., Japan, EU, and Canada agree that China still falls far short of meeting criteria for joining the WTO. (*The New York Times*, 10/22/1995)

The Clinton Administration decides against new restrictions on Mexican tomato imports. Kantor had reportedly first suggested the proposal in 1993 at the urging of Florida farmers. However, Administration officials reportedly fear the measures would violate NAFTA. (*Journal of Commerce*, 10/27/1995)

Kantor publishes the list of countries that violate copyright laws, citing Brazil, Saudi Arabia, Greece, United Arab Emirates and South Africa as the worst offenders. (*Journal of Commerce*, 11/14/1995)

Kantor argues that China's partially reformed trading system does not yet warrant accession to the WTO. China promptly rejects Kantor's concerns. (*The Washington Post*, 11/24/1995)

Kantor warns China on the 30th that it risks the imposition of new trade sanctions if it fails to implement its February copyright agreement with the U.S. (*The New York Times*, 12/01/1995)

December

Kantor and Transportation Secretary Federico Peña announce that implementation of the NAFTA provision that gives Mexican truckers the right to apply for unlimited travel in four U.S. border states will be delayed pending negotiations to tighten enforcement and inspection procedures. (*The Washington Post*, 12/21/1995)

1996

January

Kantor announces the creation of a new office within USTR to enforce trade agreements. (*Journal of Commerce*, 01/08/1996)

Kantor announces that Colombia and Costa Rica have agreed to cooperate with the US in pushing the EU to liberalize its restrictions on banana imports. (*The New York Times*, 01/11/1996)

Kantor says that the Clinton Administration has not set a deadline in IPR negotiations with China. (*Journal of Commerce*, 02/01/1996)

February

Following a series of White House meetings assessing U.S.-China policy, the Clinton Administration issues strong threats of trade sanctions against China unless China begins to implement the 1995 IPR agreement. Negotiations between the countries are set to continue the following week. The Administration remains deeply divided on the issue. National security advisors reportedly fear that taking a hard-line

could undermine U.S. interests in other areas, such as curbing international arms sales and stabilizing China-Taiwan relations. Kantor, however, reportedly argues that allowing China to ignore the 1995 trade agreement would undermine U.S. credibility on all trade issues around the world. (*The New York Times*, 02/04/1996)

Kantor issues a complaint with the WTO against Japan for copyright infringement against American music recorded before 1971. (*The Washington Post*, 02/10/1996)

USTR and Russia reach an agreement limiting imports of Russian handguns. (*The New York Times*, 02/12/1996)

Kantor announces on the 16th that the U.S. and Canada have reached a five-year agreement curbing Canadian softwood lumber exports in a deal that resolves a thirteen-year trade dispute between the countries. The agreement takes effect April 1st. (*The New York Times*, 02/17/1996)

Kantor suggests that the U.S. could use the threat of sanctions to fight bribery and corruption overseas and help US companies conduct business abroad. (*The Washington Post*, 03/07/1996)

April

On the 3rd, Brown is killed in an airplane crash in Dubrovnik, Croatia.

Clinton nominates Kantor on the 12th to replace Brown as commerce secretary. Because Kantor's nomination comes during a congressional recess, his confirmation is not required until 1997. (*1996 Congressional Quarterly Almanac*, Washington, D.C.: Congressional Quarterly, Inc., 1997, p. 3-15)

Clinton promotes Deputy U.S. Trade Representative Charlene Barshefsky to acting-USTR. (*The Washington Post*, 04/13/1996)

May

Testifying before Congress, Kantor speaks out against recent GOP calls to reorganize the Commerce Department, arguing that Commerce helps the US to maintain its high-technology edge. (*Journal of Commerce*, 05/09/1996)

The Clinton Administration threatens China with sanctions set to go into effect on June 17th should Beijing fail to crack down on copyright violations in China. (*The Washington Post*, 05/17/1996)

June

Barshefsky reaches an IPR agreement with China on the 17th, averting economic sanctions. Kantor calls the agreement a good first step. (*Journal of Commerce*, 06/18/1996)

Commerce announces that talks with Japan to open its construction markets are proceeding slowly. (*Journal of Commerce*, 06/21/1996)

On his first overseas trip as commerce secretary, Kantor heads a delegation to Indonesia, South Korea and Thailand. Important issues include automotive, transportation infrastructure and telecommunications sectors, as well as IPR issues. (*Journal of Commerce*, 06/24/1996)

Kantor announces that the U.S. supports South Korea's bid to join the OECD. (*Wall Street Journal*, 07/01/1996)

July

Kantor travels to the Balkans to complete Brown's April trade mission. (*The Washington Post*, 07/10/1996)

The U.S. and Bosnia sign an agreement on the 12th providing incentives for U.S. businesses to help Bosnia recover from the war. (*The New York Times*, 07/13/1996)

Commerce opens the Trade Compliance Center to monitor the market-opening commitments of other countries around the world to U.S. exports. (*Journal of Commerce*, 07/25/1996)

Kantor announces that the Clinton Administration will consider extending U.S. government export assistance only to those companies that pledge not to bribe foreign officials. (*Journal of Commerce*, 07/26/1996)

August

Kantor suggests that Chile's high economic growth rate, budget surplus and low inflation make it a strong candidate for inclusion under NAFTA. (*Journal of Commerce*, 08/07/1996)

September

Kantor represents the Clinton-Gore campaign in negotiations with Dole-Kemp to set up the 1996 presidential debates. The two sides agree to hold two presidential debates in October. Ross Perot is excluded from the debates, reportedly at the insistence of the Dole-Kemp campaign. Gore and Kemp are also scheduled to hold one debate in October. (*The Washington Post*, 09/22/1996)

Kantor announces a new Commerce Department plan to fight foreign bribery and do more to help small U.S. firms win trade finance. (*Journal of Commerce*, 09/25/1996)

Kantor attends the U.S.-China Joint Commission on Commerce and Trade. Important topics of discussion reportedly include US access to China's markets, IPR, commercial law, and cooperation in such

“priority” sectors as aviation, chemicals, power and information technology. The talks also lead to a decision to establish a Beijing office to verify computer software licensing. (*Journal of Commerce*, 09/26/1996, 09/30/1996)

Kantor reaches an agreement with the Dole-Kemp campaign reaffirming the details of the two scheduled debates. Dole-Kemp reportedly wanted to move the time of the debate ahead to avoid a potential conflict with major league baseball play-offs. (*The Washington Post*, 09/29/1996)

October Commerce postpones a preliminary decision in a trade complaint brought against Mexico by Florida tomato producers until the 28th to give the two governments more time to reach an agreement. (*Journal of Commerce*, 10/11/1996)

Commerce announces on the 11th that the Clinton Administration has reached a tentative deal with Mexican tomato growers to keep a floor under the price of produce they ship to the United States. The final agreement is signed on the 29th. (*The Washington Post*, 10/12/1996)

November Clinton wins the presidential election on the 5th. Kantor says that he will not return as commerce secretary in the second term.

December The WTO holds its first Ministerial Conference in Singapore from the 9th to the 13th.

1997

January Kantor predicts that Congress will grant fast-track negotiating authority to Clinton to help him pursue opportunities for greater free trade in the Western Hemisphere in 1997. (*Journal of Commerce*, 01/08/1997)

Kantor’s tenure as secretary of commerce ends on the 21st. He is succeeded by William Daley.

March The Senate confirms Barshefsky as USTR. (*The New York Times*, 03/06/1997)

April Media reports name Kantor as one of a few senior Clinton aides that had helped Webster Hubbell to find employment and lucrative speaking engagements after leaving government as he faced a criminal investigation in the Whitewater scandal. (*The New York Times*, 04/02/1997)

1998

January

Several news organizations report alleged sexual relationship between White House intern Monica Lewinsky and Clinton. Clinton denies the allegations as the scandal erupts. (*CNN News Online, A Chronology: Key Moments In The Clinton-Lewinsky Saga*: www.cnn.com/ALLPOLITICS/1998/resources/lewinsky/timeline)

On the 18th, Clinton, testifying under oath to lawyers in the Paula Jones sexual harassment case, denies having had an affair with Lewinsky. (*Time Online, Timeline of Monica Lewinsky Scandal.*)

On the 24th, Clinton asks Kantor to return to the White House to help deal with the controversy. Talks continue between Starr and attorneys for Lewinsky over a possible immunity agreement. (*The New York Times*, 01/26/1998; *CNN News Online, A Chronology: Key Moments In The Clinton-Lewinsky Saga*)

February

Kantor claims attorney-client privilege to successfully fend off an attempt by Starr to subpoena him. Sidney Blumenthal is also served. According to media reports, Starr was seeking information about any contacts Kantor or Blumenthal might have had with reporters. Starr's office withdraws Kantor's subpoena after receiving written confirmation Kantor's status as personal attorney of the President. (*The New York Times*, 02/24/1998)

October

Voting along party lines on the 4th, the House Judiciary Committee approves a resolution to recommend an impeachment inquiry. (*Time Online, Timeline of Monica Lewinsky Scandal*)

A House subcommittee on oversight and investigations releases a March 6th, 1995, memo by Harold Ickes to then-USTR Kantor. It indicates Ickes had met with a group of Teamster officials and wanted to meet with Kantor to persuade him to intervene in behalf of striking Teamsters. The committee releases other materials related to Kantor's activities in the Diamond Walnut Growers case. (*The New York Times*, 03/07/1998)

With 31 Democrats voting yes, the House approves on the 8th an open-ended impeachment inquiry of the President by a vote of 258-176. (*Time Online, Timeline of Monica Lewinsky Scandal*)

December

Clinton's legal team appears before the House Judiciary Committee, arguing that the President should not be impeached. Two days later, the White House presents a 184-page defense report to the House

Judiciary Committee. (*Time Online, Timeline of Monica Lewinsky Scandal*)

On the 19th, the House of Representatives approve two articles of impeachment against the President. (*Time Online, Timeline of Monica Lewinsky Scandal*)

1999

February

On the 12th, the Senate acquits Clinton on charges that he committed perjury and obstruction of justice to hide sexual indiscretions with Lewinsky. Article I alleging perjury is defeated as 45 Democrats and 10 Republicans vote “not guilty.” All 45 “guilty” votes on Article I are Republican. Article II charging obstruction fails on a 50 to 50 tie. Five Republicans join all 45 Democrats in supporting full acquittal. (*The Washington Post*, 02/13/1999)

May

Kathleen Willey makes numerous media appearances accusing the Clinton Administration of attempting to intimidate her. She alleges that Kantor had tried to pressure friends of Willey to “turn against her.” (*The Washington Post*, 05/17/1999)

Timelines

- Michael (Mickey) Kantor Timeline, prepared by Rob Martin and Duane Adamson, Miller Center, University of Virginia, 06/11/2002
- Clinton Administration Timeline, prepared by Robbie Robinson, Miller Center, University of Virginia, 05/30/2002
- The Clinton Presidency Timeline, *Eight Years of Peace, Progress, and Prosperity*, <http://clinton5.nara.gov/WH/Accomplishments/eightyears-02.html>

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- Ronald Brownstein and David Lauter, “How Clinton Narrowed His List to Just One,” *Los Angeles Times*, 07/10/1992
- Transcript of Kantor and Charles Black, “Kantor and Black Discuss The Presidential Campaign,” *CBS This Morning*, 09/16/1992
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- Barton Gellman and Dan Balz, “Clinton Transition Team Ready to Hit the Ground Running,” *The Washington Post*, 10/29/1992

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- Greg Mastel, "In Defense of Trade Politics," *Journal of Commerce*, 01/24/1996

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- “Congress OKs North American Trade Pact,” *Congressional Quarterly Almanac*, (Washington D.C.: Congressional Quarterly, Inc., 1994) pp. 171-173; 176-181
- Mickey Kantor, et.al., “North American Free Trade Agreement and Side Agreements,” Hearing before the House Ways and Means Committee, *Federal News Service*, September 14, 1993

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- Excerpt from Edward Kaplan, “American Trade Policy, 1923-1995,” (Westport, CT.: Greenwood Press, 1996) pp. 119-120;126-135
- Speech by Mickey Kantor to the National Press Club, “Remarks on the GATT,” *Federal News Service*, 12/23/1993

CHINA

- “China’s Trade Status Tied to Human Rights Record,” *Congressional Quarterly Almanac*, (Washington D.C.: Congressional Quarterly, Inc., 1994), p. 184
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- “House Avoids China Trade Sanctions,” *Congressional Quarterly Almanac*, (Washington D.C.: Congressional Quarterly, Inc., 1996), p. 2-93
- Excerpt from John Dietrich, “Interest Groups and Foreign Policy: Clinton and the China MFN Debates,” *Presidential Studies Quarterly*, (Vol 29, No. 2, 1999)
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- Excerpt from Robert Busby, *Defending the American Presidency: Clinton and the Lewinsky Scandal*, (London: Palgrave, 2001)

SUGGESTED TOPICS FOR MICHAEL (MICKEY) KANTOR

Prepared by Rob Martin and Duane Adamson

Miller Center University of Virginia, 06/12/2002

The 1992 Presidential Campaign

- Origins of Kantor's relationship with Bill Clinton. Discuss Kantor's role in the 1992 campaign. How did Kantor's role in the campaign evolve?
- Discuss the selection of Al Gore as Clinton's running mate. What was Kantor's role in the selection process?
- Other topics might include: the Gennifer Flowers scandal; "the Comeback Kid;" Super Tuesday; Ross Perot's impact on the campaign; and the 1992 presidential and vice-presidential debates.
- Discuss Kantor's role in the transition.

Getting Started as USTR

- How did Kantor come to serve as Clinton's USTR? What understanding did he have with the president about his role & responsibilities? What were the trade priorities of the Clinton Administration upon coming to office? Discuss the transition from twelve years of Republicans in office.
- How was the Office of the USTR organized under Kantor? How were responsibilities distributed between Kantor and his deputies and staff?

Trade Policy in the Clinton Administration

- How was trade policy made in the Clinton Administration? Who were the important players in setting trade policy? Discuss the interagency process. Describe the role that other agencies such as Commerce, Agriculture, and Labor played in supporting USTR in negotiations. What tools were available to Kantor as USTR in negotiating agreements? Discuss the use of carrots and sticks in the Administration's trade strategy. What role did threats of trade sanctions play in bilateral negotiations? How did the Administration reconcile its commitment to free trade with the use of unilateral trade tools under Section 301? Discuss the various constituencies that the Office of the USTR represents.
- Discuss the Administration's export-led growth strategy. How did the Administration attempt to balance economic and geostrategic interests? How did the 1994 Republican revolution in Congress impact Clinton trade policy? Discuss the Democratic Leadership Council's impact on Clinton trade policy. How did "triangulation" between New Democratic and populist strategies affect trade policy?

- Discuss USTR's relationship with Congress. How did the Administration attempt to build support in Congress for NAFTA, the Uruguay Round agreement, and fast-track authority?
- What does Kantor feel was his greatest accomplishment as USTR?

NAFTA: Extending fast-track negotiating authority, labor and environment side agreements, building congressional and public support for ratification, further extending free trade throughout the Americas (Chile entry into NAFTA, Free Trade Area of the Americas), implementation issues.

The GATT Uruguay Round: France and agricultural subsidies, completing agreement, building congressional and public support for ratification, establishment of WTO, participation in first WTO meeting.

China trade policy: MFN and human rights, intellectual property rights, opening Chinese markets to US goods, bid for WTO membership.

Japan trade policy: Opening Japanese markets to US goods, particularly controversies over computer chips, telecommunication equipment, automobiles and auto parts.

Department of Commerce

- Kantor's appointment as Commerce Secretary. Transition from USTR to Commerce. Why did the Administration decide to forgo Kantor's confirmation process? What changes, if any, did Kantor make in the organization and management of Commerce after taking over from Ron Brown?
- Kantor's role and responsibilities as Commerce Secretary. The Commerce Department's role as liaison between business and government. Discuss Kantor's work to open foreign markets for U.S. business. What role did Kantor play as Commerce Secretary in setting trade policy in the Administration?
- Other topics might include: proposals in Congress to reorganize the Commerce Department; Kantor's work to monitor foreign compliance with market-opening agreements; Kantor's work to fight foreign corruption; Kantor's trade missions to Southeast Asia and the Balkans; settling the trade dispute between Mexican and Floridian tomato producers; the 1996 WTO meeting.
- What role did Kantor play in the 1996 campaign? Discuss Kantor's participation in the weekly White House political meetings. Discuss Kantor's work negotiating the terms of the 1996 debates.

Clinton's Second Term

- Observations of the Clinton Administration's management of scandals. What effect did scandals have on the Clinton presidency? When did Kantor's involvement with the Administration formally end?

The Clinton Presidency in Retrospect

- Evaluation of Clinton as a public leader, a legislative leader, and a world leader.
- Discuss how President Clinton made decisions, managed issues. How would Kantor describe Clinton's presidential style? Did Clinton's approach change over time?
- What were the strengths and weaknesses of the Clinton Administration? What features of the Clinton Administration were missed or misunderstood by the press? How should future historians view the Clinton Administration?