

Clinton finalizes NAFTA with signing of pact

WASHINGTON — President Clinton signed legislation Wednesday creating the world's largest free-trade zone and used the ceremony to prod other nations to "seize the moment and close the deal" on liberalized global trading rules.

With considerable fanfare and eight pens, Clinton signed the North American Free Trade Agreement, which links the United States, Canada and Mexico into a single market.

"This whole issue turned out to be a defining moment for our nation," Clinton told an audience of supporters, including many of the lawmakers who helped him win uphill passage of the measure.

And, in a fence-mending gesture toward organized labor, which fought the trade agreement fiercely, Clinton vowed to send to Congress early next year legislation "to create the world's

best worker training and retraining system."

"We owe it to the business community as well as to the working men and women of this country," he said.

Labor and other critics, including Texas billionaire Ross Perot, argued that the pact would lure many U.S. companies into relocating in Mexico, where workers are paid lower wages.

Clinton conceded Wednesday that such concerns reflected "legitimate fear" by U.S. workers. Even so, he predicted that the trade agreement would result in a net gain of U.S. jobs, up to 200,000 new ones by 1995.

The trade agreement already has been ratified by Canada and Mexico.

It takes effect Jan. 1 and over the next 15 years eliminates tariffs and other trade barriers. It creates the world's largest and richest trading bloc, covering 360 million people and stretching from the tropics to the Arctic.

The United States has had a separate free-trade agreement with Canada since 1989.

Clinton used the ceremony—held in a government auditorium because too many people were invited to fit into a room in the White House—to call for completing 116-nation trade talks in Geneva.

Trade negotiators are working against a Dec. 15 deadline to wrap up seven years of talks on a new set of trading rules under the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade.

Although the most contentious dispute—a long squabble between the United States and France over farm subsidies—appeared resolved in the talks, South Korea threw up a potential obstacle on Wednesday by balking at opening its market to rice imports.

Just like the free-trade pact with Mexico and Canada, the new GATT rules must be approved by both houses

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— President Clinton



President Bill Clinton

of Congress—and the battle next year could be just as contentious.

Clinton used eight pens in signing the free-trade agreement, giving the first one to his chief congressional lobbyist, Howard Paster, who is leaving the White House to accept a job with a major public relations company.

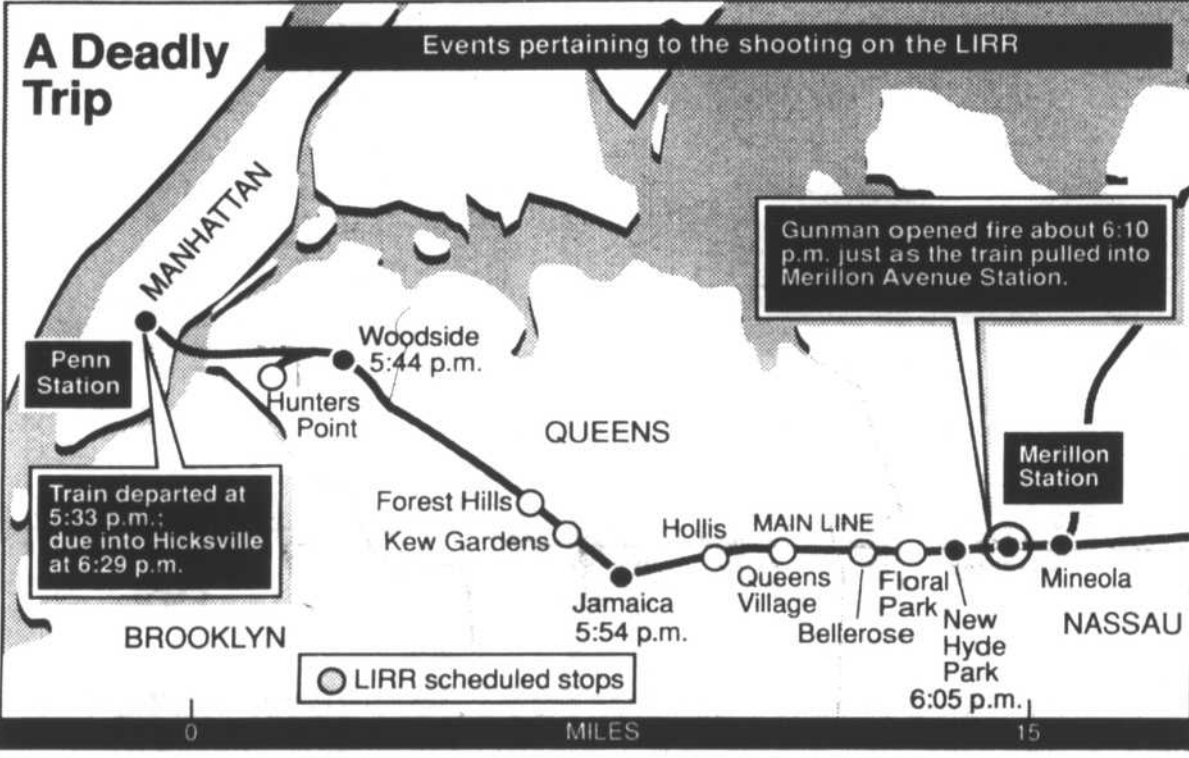
Clinton acknowledged the depth of concern over lowering trade barriers that in the past have sheltered U.S. industries. But, he said, "We cannot stop global change. We cannot repeal the international economic competition that is everywhere. We can only

harness the energy to our benefit."

He called for strong enforcement of side agreements to protect worker rights and the environment.

Clinton insisted on those amendments in exchange for his support for the pact, which was initially negotiated by the Bush administration.

Former President Bush, talking to business leaders in Mexico, said Clinton got started "a little late, but I feel once he rolled up his sleeves and got engaged he did a first-class job of getting a recalcitrant Congress to do the right thing."



Racism blamed for shooting

MINEOLA, N.Y. — The gunman who turned a commuter rail car into a terror train brimmed with racial hatred and targeted the suburbs because he didn't want to embarrass New York's black mayor, authorities said Wednesday.

All those shot were white or Asian — two of the groups disparaged in four pages of rambling handwritten notes taken from the gunman after Tuesday's killings aboard the 5:33 p.m. Long Island Rail Road train out of Penn Station.

Colin Ferguson, a 35-year-old naturalized citizen from Jamaica, was held without bail Wednesday after his arraignment on four counts of murder and a weapons possession count. The heavyset black man did not speak or enter a plea at the hearing.

The notes listed the "reasons for this: Adelphi University racism, EEOC racism, Workmen's Compensation Board. Racism of Gov. Cuomo's staff ... Additional reasons for this: Caucasian racism and Uncle Tom Negroes." He also cited "Chinese racism."

Without saying a word, he opened fire on other riders just before the train arrived at a suburban Garden City station. Calmly walking up the aisle, he blasted away for three horrific minutes, pausing only to reload.

"He would turn one way and shoot, then turn the other and shoot, and I thought to myself, 'This can't be happening,'" said Carl Petersen, a banker who was seated near the front of the car.

When the shooting ended, four people were dead, 19 wounded by gunshots and two others hurt in the crush. A fifth person died Wednesday, and one of the wounded was being kept alive on a life support system.

It did not appear it was a random thing. . . . He had severe hostilities toward a lot of people.

—Kane, Nassau County Police Commissioner

The gunman unloaded 30 to 50 rounds as he walked through the third car of the train, said Assistant District Attorney Barry Grennan. He had apparently stopped to reload his 9mm Ruger semiautomatic when three commuters jumped and subdued him, authorities said.

One of his captors quoted him as saying, "I've done a bad thing," according to the Daily News.

Grennan said it appeared Ferguson began preparing for the crime more than 15 days ago.

The carnage could have been worse; the gunman brought aboard a small canvas bag filled with 100 more rounds of ammunition for his 16-shot weapon, enough to shoot dozens more of the 90 passengers aboard, authorities said.

Ferguson purchased the \$324.74 handgun in California after complying with a 15-day waiting period, said spokesman John O'Brien of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms.

"I consider this an outrageous crime motivated by bias," said Nassau County District Attorney Denis Dillon.

The railroad was investigating reports that the train's engineer told conductors not to open the doors when the train stopped at the station, trap-

ping commuters inside, said LIRR spokeswoman Susan McGowan.

Passenger Gene Mason, who works for a Wall Street firm, said the engineer announced, "Conductors, do not open the doors."

"I couldn't believe it," said Mason, adding he pulled at the wires near the doors until they sprang open. "I got it (an emergency panel) pried open and pulled the door release latch, so at least people were able to get out."

Ferguson, who lives in Brooklyn, boarded the train in New York City's borough of Queens, quietly speaking with the conductor at one point about his ticket, said Nassau Chief of Detectives Richard Fiero.

"It did not appear it was a random thing. . . . He had severe hostilities toward a lot of people, and he boarded the train because he targeted Nassau County," said county Police Commissioner Donald Kane.

The notes found on Ferguson indicated "New York City was spared because of my respect for Mayor David Dinkins," Kane said.

Dinkins said he didn't recall ever hearing from Ferguson, and called the gunman "a deranged person."

Ferguson had no previous criminal record and was not licensed to carry a weapon in New York, authorities said. The single, jobless man was suspended from Adelphi University for disciplinary reasons in June 1991.

He lived in a single room of a private home. His notes said the people he lived with "are not my friends. I hate them with a passion."

Killed were James Gorycki, 51, of Mineola; Marita Theresa Magtoto, 30, of Westbury; Dennis McCarthy, 52, of Mineola; and Richard Nettleton, 34, of Roslyn Heights. Mikyung Kim, 27, died Wednesday.

Gas prices continue to drop across state

OMAHA — Nebraska motorists are getting a pleasant surprise at the gas pump — prices in many areas of the state are at their lowest level in years.

Self-serve unleaded is under \$1 a gallon in some places in Omaha, the lowest price since 1989, Rose White of the Nebraska Triple-A Motor Club said Wednesday.

The decline reflects a national trend following the fall in crude oil prices, Nebraska Petroleum Marketers Association executive director Fred Stone said.

"It could go down a little more, but it looks like it has bottomed out," Stone said.

Both Stone and White said future trends are difficult to predict.

Crude oil has been trading at five-year lows since an Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries meeting last month failed to bring a new agreement to cut production.

Gasoline prices in Nebraska peaked

in the range of \$1.25 to \$1.30 this year. The decline has not necessarily been noticed by customers, said Dennis Noble, manager of a Buchanan's Amoco station in Omaha, who said motorists aren't saying much.

"Not as much as when the price goes up," he said. Noble said part of the decline is seasonal.

"Generally, gas prices will fall in the winter," he said.

White agrees, but she said this year's decline is more dramatic than in years past.

"She said the drop would be greater if it weren't for the recent 4.5-cent increase in the federal gas tax."

Nebraska's gasoline tax will go from 23.8 cents a gallon to 26 cents effective Jan. 1, she said.

That will be the third-highest state gasoline tax in the nation, White said, trailing only Connecticut's 29 cents and Rhode Island's 28 cents.

Alberts, Ward head list of All-Americans

NEW YORK — Heisman Trophy favorite Charlie Ward, Lombardi Award winner Aaron Taylor and three-time selection Marshall Faulk were named to The Associated Press All-America college football team on Wednesday.

San Diego State running back Faulk made the team for the third straight year, the first player to do that since Georgia's Herschel Walker from 1980-82.

Ward directed Florida State's "fast-break" offense, which led the NCAA in scoring with a 43.2-point average.

Notre Dame tackle Taylor, the Lombardi winner as the nation's top lineman, and Arizona nose guard Rob Waldrop made the team for the second consecutive year.

Joining Ward and Faulk in the backfield is Northern Illinois' LeShon Johnson, the nation's leading rusher with a 179.6-yard average. Another record-setter, Wyoming's Ryan Yarborough, leads a trio of wide receivers on the squad. The other receivers are J.J. Stokes of UCLA and Johnnie Morton of Southern Cal.

The all-purpose player is Alabama's David Palmer, who was used as a runner, receiver, quarterback and kick returner.

Rounding out the offense are center Jim Pync of Virginia Tech; tackle Wayne Gandy of Auburn; guards Mark Dixon of Virginia and Stacy Seegars of Clemson; and placekicker Bjorn Merten of UCLA.

Along with Waldrop, the defensive line includes Dan Wilkinson of Ohio State, Sam Adams of Texas A&M and Kevin Patrick of Miami.

The linebackers are Trev Alberts of Nebraska, Derrick Brooks of Florida State and Dana Howard of Illinois. The secondary features Antonio Langham of Alabama, Aaron Glenn of Texas A&M, Jeff Burris of Notre Dame and Jaime Mendez of Kansas State.

The punter is Auburn's Terry Daniel, who finished second nationally with a 46.9-yard average.

Florida State, Auburn, Alabama, UCLA, Texas A&M and Notre Dame each had two players on the team.

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