

Party coalition during the first election campaign of President Bill Clinton. But, as said Elwell (1995: 14), Mexico strongly resisted to NAFTA side agreements because of higher labor and environmental costs in Mexico could displace investment and jobs to other South American countries, or even in Asia. Moreover, NAALC actually is a side agreement of NAFTA. Only NAFTA has an accession mechanism for other countries like Chile. As said some authors (Compa: 1995: 357; Housman and Orbuch: 1993: 768), a country could join only NAFTA, without taking into account its labor and environmental side agreements, even without being submitted to a review process of its own labor rights regime. Lance Compa thus concludes that NAFTA Parties will soon have to decide if the new entrants have to sign the side agreements. It will not probably cause problems to Chile, but it will always be the case in the context of the hemispheric economic integration processes. On February 6th, 1997, an Agreement on Labour Cooperation has been signed between Canada and Chile and could serve as a bridge for Chile's entry into NAFTA. It is similar to the NAALC. However, it seems that Chile's accession to NAFTA will not be realized before the next Presidential elections in U.S., due to the impossibility for Clinton administration to get agreement on a "fast-track" authority.

In United States, Republicans exert some pressure to insure that the Clinton administration will keep trade sanctions from being included in future labor and environmental agreements (Cook: 1996-1997: 18). Indeed, some authors would agree that labor agreements should include greater monetary sanctions (fines) in the enforcement measures for violations of a country's labor laws, in order to insure that the developing country will not get an unfair advantage over the developed country by violating its own labor laws (Pomeroy: 1996: 800). It could mean the strengthening of the current NAALC, the widening of its labor principles. The expansion of NAFTA to other countries (South American or not) could provide the opportunity to widen the labor principles currently described in the NAALC, or it could be the "acid test" of the labor principles to the current NAALC.

The Labor Secretariat should have more independence, that is, the authority to conduct, and make public independent studies or to form expert advisory committees on topics of its own choice (Herzenberg: 1996: 25). The "evaluation committees of experts"