

Report to CCLS Board of Directors

Of: NAFTA Official Meeting No. 5

By: Wayne Brubacher, Chair. CCLS NAFTA Committee.

Date: Oct. 28, 2000

Place: Oaxaca, Mexico

The fifth Official NAFTA Meeting was held in Oaxaca, Mexico on October 28th, 2000. The name is pronounced WAH-HAH-CA. This is one of the poorest states economically but richest in native culture with almost thirty distinct Indian languages and several dialects in each of those. Everyone in the larger centres also spoke Spanish.

There are twenty-six churches, not the residential street corners we see in new subdivisions in Canada but large downtown cathedral types. Looking at the splendor and treasures associated with these churches you can see why the people are so poor.

Oaxaca looks like a small sleepy Mexican town because of its low buildings most of which are only one storey high but the city of 400,000 inhabitants spreads between the hills like long entwined tentacles.

On one of these hills stands the site of Monte Alban, which was excavated and restored about forty to seventy years ago. When it yielded up its secrets there was evidence of brain surgery having been practiced a thousand years ago. It is one of three sites in the world where medical practice was so advanced. The similarity to Egyptian architecture, astronomy, medicine and culture is striking.

October is one of nine months that brings little or no rain and the daily temperature throughout the year is between 22 and 28 degrees Celsius. At 13 degrees north latitude, the sun merely swings back and forth through the year always almost directly overhead. It is the high elevation that keeps the temperature moderate.

The meeting venue coincided with a meeting of AMDROC, an association of municipal engineers and assistants.

Ing. Braulio Mercado Gutierrez, Chair of the Mexican NAFTA Committee and a member of AMDROC was one of the speakers making it a convenient place to hold our NAFTA meetings. His duties at the main meeting did not interfere to any measurable extent with the NAFTA meetings, allowing us to complete and put to rest several items of old business as well as to refine the Mutual Recognition Document (MRD).

As usual, the three NAFTA committees were present at the opening and closing exercises of the main meeting as well as the evening entertainment and dinner function. During the day, from about nine o'clock till ten or eleven, we worked behind closed doors except for the two hour lunch that usually finished at about five o'clock with pallet cleansing straight shots of tequila. This was also a precaution against bad water.

The format that provides for ample unofficial time before the official meeting once again proved sound. The ratio is about five hours of unofficial discussions and translations to one hour of official meeting time.

Representing the Federacion de Colegios de Ingenieros Topografos de Los Estados Unidos Mexicanos, (FECITEUM) A.G. and chairing the meeting was Ing. Braulio Mercado Gutierrez accompanied by Committee member Ing. Ignacia Marcial Figueroa.

The US delegation was comprised of Robert Prescott, Chair, Rita Lumos, Malcolm Shaw and the talented Al Flores who was pressed into the role of translator.

Canada was represented by Wayne Brubacher, Chair and Dick Wright.

The objectives for this Meeting were: (Summarized from the minutes)

- a) to prepare the MRD for presentation to the countries.

The Committee members present passed a unanimous motion to approve the MRD, now referred to as MRD6 for presentation to the three countries for their approval. The English version of MRD6 was signed by the Canadian and U.S. committees. The Spanish version was almost complete but it required translation for the amendments. If the other members of the Mexican NAFTA Committee approve the English version, the remaining Spanish translations will be done. Ing. Mercado will then sign the English version and circulate the Spanish one for signatures. This is scheduled to be done by Nov. 30th, 2000, the date of the next National Society of Professional Surveyors (NSPS) meeting in Rhode Island. This does not mean that we have an MRD in place. Mexico must still translate the amendments made at Oaxaca, which are minor in nature, before Ing. Mercado signs the MRD as a Committee report.

The National Council of Examiners for Engineering and Surveying (NCEES) will want to consider the MRD on behalf of the US state licensing boards. Here labour mobility will meet protectionism head on. However, we see by the FIG Task force on Mutual Recognition of Qualifications that mobility is gaining world favour. Note this quotation from the Task Force Report for the 23rd General Assembly. "Mutual Recognition allows each country to retain its own kind of professional education and training because it is based, not on the process of achieving professional qualifications, but on the nature and quality of the *outcome of that process*." (ed. emphasis added.) The Task Force will present its final report in Washington in 2002.

- b) to complete the Glossary of Terms. This task is considered to be complete but eligible for reopening if needed.
- c) to complete the Questionnaire. This was treated the same as the Glossary.

The Mexican delegation will review these items after translation

Wayne Brubacher was assigned the task of Schedule Coordinator. This involves tracking tasks between meetings. Those assigned to Canada are in the table below. For more details and dates, consult the draft minutes attached. The writer will coordinate actions required by the Board with the CCLS executive.

Update definitions of Schedule A and Schedule B in MRD (Richard Wright)
Collect complete set of documents with signatures where necessary for each country (Wayne Brubacher)
Acceptance by CCLS Board of Directors of the committee report for distribution to and acceptance by the Canadian Provincial Associations
Acceptance by Canadian Provincial Associations
Ratification by CCLS

The contributions made by Manuela Crossley of The Focus Corporation for translating the MRD and other documents into Spanish was recognized by the three Committees representing Canada, The United States of America and the United Mexican States. A testimonial signed by the three chairs will be presented to her by Dick Wright.

The next Official meeting will be held in Las Vegas, Nevada in March 2001.