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A Net Loss for American Workers

By Jeff Faux

Richard Mills of the U.S. Trade Representative's office cited the strong growth of the U.S. economy in the past seven years as evidence that the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) has "worked" for American workers [letters, July 28]. His claim makes no sense. A look at the components of our national economic accounts clearly shows that all of the net growth since 1994 has come from the domestic sectors of the economy.

Mr. Mills writes that we have gained jobs from rising exports. True, but we have lost more jobs from imports, which have risen faster. The correct way to measure NAFTA's impact is by the standard set by its promoters, who assured us that the agreement would generate net new employment here because of a rising trade surplus with Mexico. Seven years later, we are running a trade deficit of some \$35 billion, which translates into a loss of about 367,000 jobs this side of the border.

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[[Back](#)]