

IN THE NEWS

In the past months, chapter activists, board members, and staff of the Council of Canadians have appeared on television and radio and in newspapers across this country. Here is a brief sampling of how the Council made the news recently.

COURT CHALLENGE TO NAFTA TRADE TRIBUNALS FAILS; APPEAL ANNOUNCED

An Ontario court decision upholding part of the North American Free Trade Agreement that critics argued puts Canada's health care system and other public services at risk will be appealed, the plaintiffs said Monday ... Ottawa lawyer Steven Shrybman, who acted for the plaintiffs, expressed disappointment with [the court's] "flawed" reasoning. "The notion that somehow this is some distinct sphere of law that doesn't touch on constitutional issues is just out of step with the new global reality," Shrybman said.

— *Canadian Press, reprinted in 20 papers, July 11 and 12, 2005*

NEW FILM CLAIMS B.C. IS SELLING OUT FORESTRY COMMUNITIES

Environmentalists and forestry workers are coming together in support of a new film titled *Exporting Jobs*, the story that claims the B.C. government is selling out the province's forest communities. "The opportunities being given up with the export of raw logs is immense," says Karen Abramsen, chairwoman of the Council of Canadians Kelowna Chapter ... The Council of Canadians developed the video to raise awareness of the issues that are threatening jobs and forest communities as a whole and hope to generate more support from people in Victoria and Vancouver who they say tend to forget the importance of our resource-based industries and the people employed in them.

— *Reprinted with permission from The Kelowna Capital News, June 12, 2005*

CRITICS RAP LAKES PLAN; THEY SAY THE INTERNATIONAL PROPOSAL TO BAN DIVERSIONS DOESN'T GO FAR ENOUGH

The Council of Canadians said the new draft contains significant improvements but doesn't go far enough to address concerns about water diversions. "We still feel that Canadian sovereignty continues to be threatened in terms of water resource management over these shared waters," said Eduardo Sousa, the Council's Ontario organizer. Sousa said the draft, as written, bans diversions, but allows exceptions ... "We think it's a slippery slope to allow these exceptions without defining them," Sousa said.

— *Reprinted with permission from The London Free Press, July 1, 2005*

PRIVATE HEALTH CARE ALREADY A THRIVING AFFAIR: DOCTOR SEES RULING AS POSSIBLE FIRST STEP TO SYSTEM MELDING PUBLIC, PRIVATE DELIVERY

While Maude Barlow, national chairwoman of the Council of Canadians, agrees that the long waits are unacceptable, she is concerned that the Supreme Court of Canada decision opens the door to large U.S. health insurers to set up shop in Canada. "The only way we maintain our exemption from health care under the North American Free Trade agreement is if it's done in the not-for-profit sector by government or a government agency," Ms. Barlow said. "Once you have privatized, you cannot say to an American chain that you'll only allow Canadians."

— *Reprinted with permission from The Globe and Mail, June 10, 2005*



Photo: Juliette Fisher

Tara Scurr, at the launch of the Council's GE-Free Canada Campaign in June.

ACTIVISTS PUSH FOR NO-GM ZONES

The Council of Canadians has launched a national campaign to limit the spread of genetically modified crops. "It's part of the international movement that's taking place for communities to declare themselves GM-free zones," said Tara Scurr, British Columbia organizer for the Council. The goal is to have 50 communities in Canada declare themselves GM-free over the next two years, following the lead of countries like Ireland where 1,000 communities [counties, town, farms, producers and restaurants] made a similar declaration on Earth Day 2005.

— *Reprinted with permission from The Western Producer, June 9, 2005*

Jan Malek is The Council of Canadians' Communications Administrator.