



E-Newsletter, April 2007



Leaked documents, damning evidence, and one fabulous teach-in!

The energy was palpable in Ottawa two weeks ago. From March 30 to April 1, over 1,500 people crammed in a concert hall and a high school to learn about the Security and Prosperity Partnership of North America and how to fight it. Activists, academics, workers, policy experts, journalists, artists, musicians, facilitators – and even breakdancers – congregated in Ottawa for Integrate This! Challenging the Security and Prosperity Partnership of North America, a free teach-in sponsored by the Council of Canadians, the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives and the Canadian Labour Congress.

Here at the Council of Canadians, we still can't decide what was our favourite part of the weekend. Was it seeing Capital Music Hall overflowing with over 500 people dancing with their fists in the air, proving that the SPP is no match for our Power In Numbers? Could it have been the amazing performances by over 30 artists, including Soul Jazz Orchestra and Nomadic Massive? Or the excitement in the air as over 700 people filled the auditorium at the Ottawa Technical High School on March 31, to participate in panel discussions and workshops featuring such dynamic speakers as Maureen Webb, Antonia Juhasz, Avi Lewis and Judy Rebick?

We could go on, talking about the solidarity we felt when Bertha Lujan, Minister of Labour for the Legitimate Government of Mexico spoke about how important it is for Canadians to resist the SPP and fight for the rights of Mexican workers. Or the momentum we felt on April 1st, when we all pledged to make the Security and Prosperity Partnership a key issue during the upcoming federal election.

Now you can experience a taste of Integrate This! online. Visit www.IntegrateThis.ca to see a slideshow of photographs from the teach-in and to watch footage of the four panel discussions that took place on March 31. Don't forget to keep visiting www.IntegrateThis.ca, as we'll be posting a follow-up report on the teach-in and information about upcoming actions against the SPP in the weeks ahead.

Meanwhile, here's what's new at www.canadians.org:

- [Leaked document reveals bulk water exports to be discussed at continental integration talks](#)
- [Turning off the taps on water profits](#)
- [It's not too late to fight TILMA!](#)

Leaked document reveals bulk water exports to be discussed at continental integration talks

Leaked documents obtained by the Council of Canadians reveal that government officials and business representatives from Canada, Mexico and the United States are scheduled to discuss bulk water exports in a closed-door meeting at the end of the month as part of a larger discussion on North American integration.

Under the title "North American Future 2025 Project," the U.S. Center for Strategic and International Studies is working with the Conference Board of Canada and the Mexican Centro de Investigación y Docencia Económicas to hold "closed-door roundtable sessions" in an effort to "analyze, comprehend and anticipate North American Integration."

A roundtable on the "Future of the North American Environment," is planned for Friday April 27, 2007 in Calgary, and will discuss "water consumption, water transfers and artificial diversions of bulk water" with the aim of achieving "joint optimum utilization of the available water."

The documents are damning – not just for the secrecy they describe, but also because of what we now know is being discussed by government "practitioners" and corporate "stakeholders."

The documents also reveal that "trilateral coordination of energy policy" and the development of "North American security architecture" are being discussed by high-level government officials from Canada, the U.S. and Mexico.

- To read the Council of Canadians' analysis of the leaked document: http://www.canadians.org/water/documents/NA_Future_2025_backgrounder.pdf
- And to read the original text: http://www.canadians.org/water/documents/NA_Future_2025.pdf
- Also, check out an article that ran in today's *Ottawa Citizen*: <http://www.canada.com/ottawacitizen/news/story.html?id=43173e89-e34a-4642-bc1e-5644088b7358>

Turning off the taps on water profits

Last week, the media was buzzing with the news that Ontario was considering charging water bottling companies \$3.71 for every million litres of water that they remove from the province. Environmentalists and water profiteers were quick to jump into a debate over whether or not this type of measure would help conserve Ontario's water, or simply cement the commodification of Canada's most precious resource.

According to Susan Howatt, the Council of Canadians' National Water Campaigner, Ontario's pricing proposal misses the point, and is "nothing more than a band aid fix for a misdiagnosed problem."

In an interview with Anna Maria Tremonti on CBC's *The Current*, Howatt asked, "why bottled water in the first place? Why are we even giving permits for companies to sell water back to us at prices higher than gasoline?"

According to Howatt, what Canada really needs is a National Water Policy that bans the bulk export of water and ensures that Canada's water will continue to be managed on a public basis that ensures access to everyone. That's



the message that she took to Environment Minister John Baird on March 21, when she delivered over 45,000 petitions from Council members, demanding a National Water Policy for Canada. The visit to Baird's office kicked off over 58 events that were held by chapter activists and coalition partners in support of World Water Day on March 22.

To learn more about the Council's vision for a National Water Policy, visit our website at www.canadians.org/water/.

It's not too late to fight TILMA!

TILMA, the Trade, Investment and Labour Mobility Agreement between British Columbia and Alberta, came into force on April 1, but the opposition to TILMA continues to grow. Building on months of sustained opposition, the Council of Canadians is organizing a day of action to oppose TILMA in Alberta today.

Touted as an agreement to erase inter-provincial trade "barriers," TILMA strips local government entities, including municipalities, school boards, and publicly-funded academic, health and social service bodies, of protection from any private investor who deems a regulation to "restrict or impair" their ability to profit.

The threat of TILMA also looms large for the rest of Canada. The Harper government's Budget 2007 states, "The federal government...will work with interested provinces and territories to examine how the TILMA provisions could be applied more broadly to reduce inter-provincial barriers to trade and labour mobility across the country."

Opposition to the far-reaching free trade pact continues to grow thanks to municipal action, where one successful tactic has been to consult municipal governments directly on the dangers TILMA poses to their ability to govern in the public interest. For more information on municipal strategies, and about TILMA, including fact sheets, backgrounders and media reports, visit our website at www.canadians.org/DI/issues/TILMA/.

Join the Council of Canadians today!

Founded in 1985 by a handful of citizens including Farley Mowat, Pierre Berton and Margaret Atwood, the Council of Canadians is Canada's pre-eminent public watchdog organization. The Council receives no money from government, corporations or any political party. To preserve our complete independence, we ensure that almost all our revenue comes from generous individuals like you. Visit our website at www.canadians.org/join/ and **join the Council** today, and help us prove that a better Canada is possible.