



If the World Trade Organization (WTO) gets its way, Canada could become a shadow of itself...



A SHADOW ON OUR FUTURE



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What in the world is the WTO?

In the alphabet soup world of international institutions the World Trade Organization (WTO) is the most powerful on the planet.

Even though its stated goal is to liberalize trade, it also has the legal clout to strike down the laws of countries that are seen as too "trade restrictive."

Now the WTO's 134 member countries are gearing up for a new round of negotiations in Seattle this November.

Canada and Canadians stand to lose plenty.

Not without reason, supporters of the WTO's heavy-handed trade policies are worried that the wrong trade message is getting out.

Recently U.S. Trade Representative Charlene Barshevsy said "governments must persuade a sceptical public that open markets bring benefits to average citizens."

"There is a growing distrust, not just in the developed world, but also in developing countries, about markets opening," she said. "There are concerns about a race to the bottom; concerns about the impact on jobs of intensified competition in local markets; concerns about whether wages can keep pace with the needs of workers."

What's at stake?

Canadians have a right to be sceptical. After 10 years of being hammered by free trade agreements and the MAI near miss, Canadians are naturally gun-shy about embarking on another leap of faith.

Consider what the next round of WTO talks could cover:

- Surrendering control of municipal water services to competing international corporations and further opening the door to the for-profit export of Canadian water.
- Opening up health care systems to foreign ownership. This could further weaken Canada's already fragile Medicare system.
- Ensuring guaranteed market access to genetically engineered food, which could jeopardize food safety.
- Putting an end to cultural subsidies. That could further endanger Canada's cultural independence.
- Allowing foreign companies specializing in education to set up shop in Canada. That could mean Canadian public schools would be in a life-and-death struggle with American for-profit educational institutions.
- Opening up world markets for agriculture. This could end Canada's unique marketing board system.
- Compelling countries to get rid of tariffs on forest products which would hamper conservation measures.
- Doing away with the right of governments to refuse to do business with countries that have a flagrant human rights record.

With those prospects on the horizon, is it any wonder there's growing distrust about the WTO?



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Don't let Canada be caught in the WTO's shadow.

Ask your politicians to put the brakes on the new WTO talks.

Join the campaign to stop the upcoming WTO trade talks.

Call 1 800 387-7177

To find out more about the World Trade Organization, what's at stake, and where we *should* be headed, visit The Council of Canadians' web site at www.canadians.org

Yes, I want to support the Campaign to stop the WTO!

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