

April 22, 2010

OPEN LETTER TO PREMIER BRAD WALL

It has come to the attention of the undersigned that the Saskatchewan government intends to sign the New West Partnership with British Columbia (B.C.) and Alberta.

We also understand from statements made in the B.C. legislature that this agreement is modelled after the Trade, Investment, Labour Mobility Agreement (TILMA), to which B.C. and Alberta are signatory.

We, the undersigned individuals and organizations, presented our viewpoints regarding TILMA during the Committee hearings of the Standing Committee on the Economy in June 2007.

Those hearings resulted in the Saskatchewan government deciding not to sign TILMA. In fact, your government, who was in Opposition at the time stated that you “would not sign TILMA in its present form” (June 28th 2007 Saskatchewan Party news release).

Mr. Premier, you also stated in a June 28, 2007 news release:

“Our Enterprise Saskatchewan plan for the economy involves direct input from stakeholders including the municipal sector. How could we enter into a major trade and investment agreement without their formal input and assessment?”

Then deputy leader of the Saskatchewan Party Ken Krawetz (the current Deputy Premier) stated in a letter to the editor, published in the Leader-Post on March 10, 2007:

“A future Saskatchewan Party government would not sign on to the agreement unless certain it was in the best interests of Saskatchewan people and removed barriers to growth without negatively impacting on the public ownership of the major Crowns, environmental standards in the province and well-being of workers. Given the impact of TILMA across the province, we also believe the provincial government has an obligation to consult with stakeholders and the public prior to accepting or rejecting Saskatchewan's participation in TILMA.”

Nothing substantial has changed to justify a reversal of the Saskatchewan government's position on a TILMA-like agreement.

We request that before signing this, or any, interprovincial trade agreement, the Saskatchewan government undergo a legislative review, and hold a full and transparent public hearing on this issue.

Mr. Premier, you made a promise not to sign TILMA without consulting. We expect you to keep your promise.

Is the Saskatchewan government signing on to the New West Partnership? If so, when?

We ask that you respond to this letter attention SFL Trade Committee c/o Saskatchewan Federation of Labour, 220 – 2445 13th Avenue, Regina, SK. S4P 0W1.

Respectfully submitted by:

Roy Atkinson
Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives
Canadian Labour Congress – National Office
Canadian Labour Congress – Prairie Region
Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) Saskatchewan
Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) Locals #7 and #21
Communication, Energy and Paperworkers Union (CEP) National
Council of Canadians Moose Jaw Chapter
Elaine Hughes
Humboldt and District Labour Council
Joe Kuchta
Henry and Joyce Neufeld
Wes Norheim
Public Services Alliance of Canada - Prairie Region
Regina and District Labour Council
Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union
Saskatchewan Federation of Labour
Saskatchewan Federation of Labour – Trade Committee
Saskatchewan Federation of Union Retirees
Saskatchewan Government and General Employees' Union – Local 6080
Saskatchewan Provincial Building Trades Council
Saskatchewan Seniors Mechanism
Saskatchewan Union of Nurses (SUN)
Saskatchewan Veterinary Medical Association
Saskatoon and District Labour Council
Saskatoon Food Coalition
Service Employees International Union (SEIUWest)
Dr. A. Gerhard Scholten
United Food and Commercial Workers Local 1400
United Steelworkers District 3
B.L. Wagner
Stewart Wells

cc: Ken Krawetz, Deputy Premier
Dwain Lingenfelter, Leader of Official Opposition