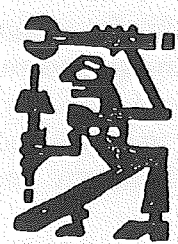
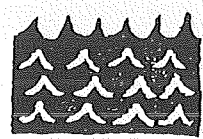




# INTERNATIONAL TRADE AND THE GREAT LAKES BIOREGION WORKSHOP

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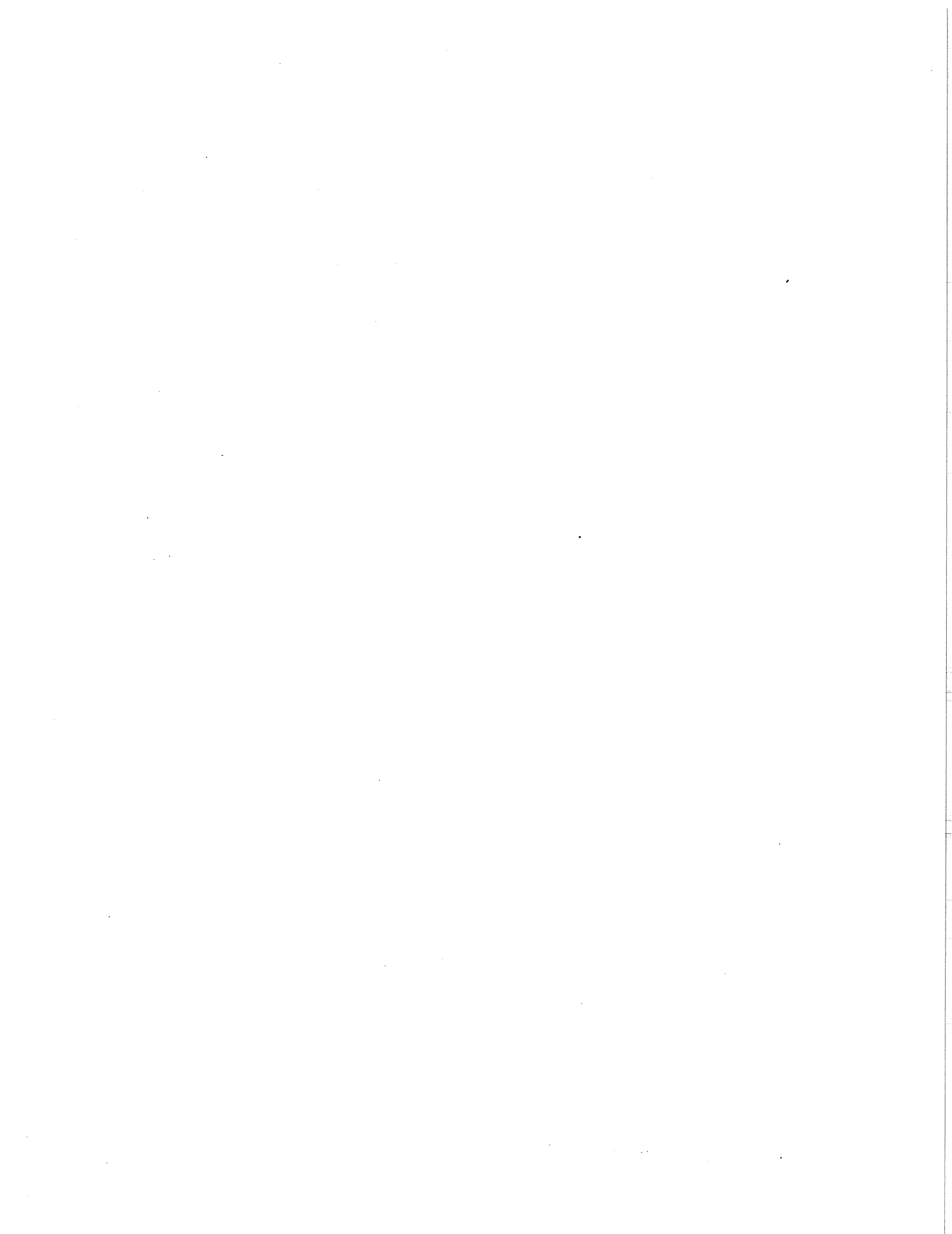
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## **PART 1: INTRODUCTION**

On July 23, 1993, prior to the NAFTA being passed in the United States, the Canadian Environmental Law Association and Great Lakes United held a meeting in Chicago to discuss the possible impacts of NAFTA and to develop strategies on how to avoid having NAFTA passed. After that workshop a paper NAFTA and the Great Lakes: A Preliminary Survey of Environmental Implications was published. This was one of the few attempts to apply the NAFTA to a bioregion and to predict what its impacts might be on the ecosystem and culture. The meeting also strengthened the coalition among environmental and other groups opposing NAFTA. Although NAFTA was passed in the U.S. Congress, citizen action in the Great Lakes Basin had an impact: most of the Great Lakes delegation to the Congress voted against NAFTA.

On February 20, 1995, CELA and GLU held a follow-up meeting in Toronto. The purpose of this meeting was to bring together people active in a variety of trade and environmental areas to discuss how the implementation of these free trade agreements is affecting our goals for the clean-up and protection of the Great Lakes ecosystem and to discuss ways to counteract these impacts.

This report summarizes the presentations and discussions at the latter workshop.

Our objective in this series of workshops and in this report is to help activists better understand the impacts free trade is having or may have on their campaigns, to build new networks to help us develop regional alternatives that get around free trade restraints, and to give us information that will help us work better to confront the restraints imposed by free trade.

## **PART 2: IMPACTS OF FREE TRADE ON GREAT LAKES WORK**

### **A: NAFTA AND THE GREAT LAKES, Summary of report prepared by Paul Muldoon and Bruce Lourie, November 1993**

The North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) defines not only trade relationships among nations but much broader issues of economic and regulatory harmonization.

These concepts of harmonization are perhaps the issues of most concern for environmental and citizen organizations in the Great Lakes Basin. Free trade agreements effectively move decision-making out of the hands of publicly elected officials, into the hands of inaccessible, international bodies, where not only is there little opportunity for public input into decisions, but the entire process is exclusive. The concern is compounded by the fact that the role of trade decision-makers is focused on narrowly defined, short term economic benefits of liberalizing trade. Notions such as sustainability, resource conservation or environmental protection, do not enter into trade decisions.

The implications of NAFTA on environmental protection are serious. The Agreement effectively places private economic interests above the interests of the public, the environment and national sovereignty. For example, in the Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement and NAFTA, Canada, which currently exports 75 percent of its heavy crude oil to the United States, cannot reduce this proportion of export. Therefore, despite the outrageously inefficient consumption of energy by North Americans, shortages of supply, and efforts to achieve climate change targets, this proportion cannot be reduced, ever. The same policy applies to natural gas, coal and even fresh water.

This "proportionality" element is key to NAFTA. In fact, two primary goals of free trade in North America are for the U.S. to receive a guaranteed secure supply of fossil fuels, and for Canada to guarantee markets for petroleum companies' exports. This explicit encouragement of fossil fuel use runs counter to the most fundamental arguments of sustainability.

The public policy implications are equally disconcerting. First, governments subsidize natural resource exploitation indirectly by allowing oil companies and forestry companies to extract and sell resources without paying the full environmental and social cost. Trade agreements limit governments' power to introduce policies designed to compensate for these environmental externalities. Therefore, the system benefits the corporations on both sides of a trading relationship at the expense of the public good.

Second, the economic measurements of trade ignore ecological well-being. Increasing trade surplus and increasing GNP are fundamental measurements of economic success, but very poor measurements for sustainability. By ignoring the importance of measuring ecosystem health, trade agreements can override environmental policy.

Third, economic globalization places downward pressure on environmental standards and regulations, by forcing governments (under NAFTA) to prove that their policies fulfil "legitimate objectives" and are the "least trade restrictive" means of meeting these objectives.

Downward harmonization of standards is a critical concern for environmental and labour groups. Trade agreements are explicitly designed to eliminate differences in the way in which governments treat the production, export and import of goods. With this objective in mind, it is foolish to expect that standards and regulations will not be changed. Moreover, since the objectives are also to eliminate barriers, the direction of change will undoubtedly be toward lower standards. This is exacerbated by corporations which place pressure on governments to lower standards, by threatening to move to regions where standards are lower or not enforced.

The Great Lakes Basin provides an interesting case study for analyzing the impacts of trade on standards and regulations. This is because the Great Lakes Basin is a unique economic, regulatory and institutional bioregion. Four key characteristics define the uniqueness of the Basin.

1. It is the dominant watershed in North America and the largest freshwater ecosystem in the world;
2. It is a strong binational economic force comprising the industrial and agricultural heartland of North America;
3. It is a unique bioregional and binational framework for environmental law and policy; and
4. It has a well-established participatory governance structure.

Important concepts in Great Lakes environmental protection such as "zero discharge" and the "virtual elimination of persistent toxic chemicals" are included in the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement and have been endorsed by the International Joint Commission. Progressive binational approaches to environmental protection may be challenged under free trade if the environmental objectives are found to be illegitimate, the evidence not convincing enough for trade panels, or the regulatory practices are simply too trade restrictive no matter how effective they are.

When examining the relationship between free trade and the environment in the Great Lakes, environmental and community groups are most concerned with the erosion of these hard sought special environmental agreements and institutions which oversee the protection of the Great Lakes. Moreover, the concern is that the years of public pressure and public input in establishing this regime, and ensuring a continued role for the public, will be undermined by narrowly conceived, trade motivated decisions.

**B: IMPACTS OF GATT AND NAFTA, Summary of Presentation by Ken Traynor, Common Frontiers**

Both the GATT and the NAFTA set up a new set of corporate property rights which have encouraged and reinforced the "wise-use" and "share" movements. How these rights get defined on a day to day basis and how they will impact in Chicago and North Bay will be key. They are moving our ability to access and shape decisions to another more distant place. Both of these trade agreements essentially act as an insurance policy against creative public policy.

What have both of the North American Trade Agreements meant for us? They've changed the way our previously home grown corporate decisions are made. Corporations view the world very differently now from how they did a few years ago. Look at what these new rules have meant: we are shipping more lumber and pulp south, reinforcing our practice of exporting our natural resources out of the Great Lakes Basin. The fossil fuel component of resource export is significantly increasing. Before the FTA STELCO was making steel to be used in autoparts for cars assembled in St. Thomas, Ontario. Now those cars are still assembled in St. Thomas but the autoparts are made in the U.S. and then shipped back to Canada. What was steel for the domestic market has become an export to the U.S. in the trade statistics and is used to sell the success of Free Trade yet the outcomes cars assembled in St. Thomas is the same as before.

As you begin to continentalize production you cannot take advantage of the new trade rules unless you also continentalize the rules and regulations related to your activities. This has led to a push toward harmonization of our laws. Around 200 Canadian firms account for approximately 90% of the exports. These firms have the largest stake in making the new trade systems work for them. They are putting a tremendous amount of work into driving the regulatory changes and harmonization which we are seeing. We need to begin to define who these big 200 are to understand the forces of change.

Both the GATT and NAFTA look to international standards as norms to establish a ceiling. While they don't say you cannot have better standards, they create the dynamic that makes it very hard to sustain higher existing standards. For example, in the US the SALT Institute has begun to petition the US Trade Representative to adopt the Codex Alimentarius standard (the overarching international standard setting body on food safety issues). The corporate dominated salt institute is attempting to shift how standards are set for salt. The codex standard would allow higher levels of lead in salt than existing U.S. standards. They are trying to use international standards to undermine existing levels just as we predicted. We found this out by networking and by reading a footnote in an article. This raises the question of who among us will be searching for this kind of minutia.

There is also the cost issue. The American tobacco industry recently organized a preemptive strike against a Canadian effort to package cigarettes in plain packaging to discourage teenagers from smoking. They argued that Canada was putting in place a mechanism that



would steal their copyright and we would have to compensate them. The cost of making public policy can be increased by the kinds of corporate property rights that are entrenched in these agreements.

Another way in which this has played out in Canada is what has been called the "Achey Breaky" Trade War. One of the burning issues of our time has become whether we are going to listen to country music through Nashville or through a Canadian cable station. As a result of the introduction of a Canadian country music cable station, Canadian artists are being told that their videos will no longer be played in the U.S. These kinds of retaliations are upping the ante and increasing the cost of public policy.

A Canadian firm is challenging the Quebec law that says you cannot import garbage into Quebec so that they can ship garbage from the U.S. to Quebec. They are claiming that Quebec has no jurisdiction to prevent this because constitutionally it is a federal issue when it crosses national borders. As well they are arguing that NAFTA is intended to allow trade in garbage. It is interesting that it is a Canadian firm which is going after Canadian law in this case.

Another challenge is around the Canadian dairy, poultry and egg marketing boards. The U.S. has said that it will challenge the rights of those Boards to set prices in Canada because this contradicts the terms of the NAFTA. This amounts to high stakes bargaining. They are using these agreements as threats to force continental negotiations of these prices. This attack, which comes from large corporate interests, is on the way the marketing boards are setting their priorities and their ability to promote sustainable agricultural practices. This will give us very little ability to control the fossil fuel consumption component of food production and distribution. It is very hard to determine what the outcome of these challenges will be. These decisions will be made by a few very powerful people who make up the trade panels.

Finally, it is useful to describe what happened around the Inter-Provincial Trade Agreement in Canada. Terms like ecosystem integrity and other good environmental ideas were introduced around the table in these negotiations but they were ultimately largely lost to the dominate market forces spawned by the international agreements, which were shaping the political will of the Provinces.

What can we as activists do? A key area where we need to put our energies is in intervening around production process methods. This will lead us to better international connections. A lot of our colleagues in Europe have experience to share with us on the impacts of economic union.

Secondly, it becomes increasingly important for us to talk about the Great Lakes as an ecosystem and to understand what the flows of resources out mean - like increased air pollution from increased movement of goods. We need to describe the interests of those 200 firms and their activities in a way that is understood by those working on the ground in our communities.

Finally we need to come up with political strategies and decide how we are going to respond to the Standards Council of Canada and the whole move to voluntarism. We need to highlight the contradictions between these Acts and their implementation.

Most importantly, we must identify and work with our allies.

**C: POLITICAL AND REGULATORY DEVELOPMENTS POST-TRADE, Summary of Presentation by Paul Muldoon, Canadian Environmental Law Association**

The Great Lakes is a unique region from ecological, social and economic perspectives. It is also unique because it has created a regional ecosystemic policy and regulatory framework. These features contribute to a culture that is unique to the Great Lakes. One of its most distinct features is the level of public participation in policy development. NAFTA is damaging the Great Lakes in very insidious ways, just as termites undermine a house. While the wood on the outside may look strong it is being eroded and damaged from within.

The erosion and crumbling can be seen in three trends. One is that the focus is moving from the region to the continent. This brings impacts on institutions, impacts on standard setting and laws, and impacts on access to decision-making. The second trend is the move in political discussions from a stress on sustainability to a stress on competitiveness. That tells me that we are not now setting the agenda. The last thing is a move away from the rule of law, which will make it much more difficult to measure performance.

Harmonization is one of the most underrated issues. I have just come from a meeting in downtown Toronto where all the Provincial and Federal Government representatives are discussing a harmonization agreement. The agreement states that in eleven functional areas, areas including monitoring, environmental assessment and regulation, federal authority will be devolved to the Provinces. This means that you will only have consistent standards across the nation when all ten Provinces and two territories can agree. This will be extremely difficult to achieve and will have severe consequences. The real intent of the push for harmonization is that no Province have a more stringent regulation than any other. Ontario's pulp and paper regulations, which have a zero discharge provision, would be deemed unfair in this situation.

Harmonization is based on the notion that there is no role for the Federal government in environmental protection and that regulations must not impede competitiveness. This agenda is consistent with the agenda of NAFTA and GATT.

As environmentalists we are caught in a strange dilemma. For years we have criticized the federal government's inability to regulate. Now we find ourselves being their biggest cheerleaders because we are trying to insure that the federal government retains a role. Look for an example at the pulp and paper regulations. Only British Columbia and Ontario have regulated residues from pulp and paper facilities. In BC the industry has been very aggressive in its efforts to destroy this regulation. The other Provinces have refused to

regulate pulp and paper. With harmonization the federal force for regulation would disappear.

Federally and Provincially, the agenda is moving to voluntarism. Right now the Ministers of the Environment are meeting on global warming; the agenda there is to move away from a legislated target to voluntary targets. Toxic regulation and pollution prevention are moving in the same direction. Industry is winning in their promotion of voluntarism.

NAFTA is having negative impacts on regulation making in Ontario. In the Municipal Industrial Strategy for Abatement (MISA), one of the criteria for assessment is "does it offend any of the provisions of the trade agreements?". Trade barriers are also impeding the regulation of pesticides. NAFTA and GATT are also impeding progress on the phase-out of persistent toxic substances. A few years ago there was a substantial movement towards the phase-out of toxic substances. This is now being replaced by risk-based regulation, an approach that comes from the trade regimes. As a result, the Provinces are no longer willing to consider other approaches such as the weight of evidence approach because it is counter to the risk-based approach. NAFTA and GATT result in a regulatory deep chill.

We will begin to see governments' capacity disappearing in this climate of deregulation. Environment Canada is about to have a 35% decrease in its budget; that means a loss of 1500 positions. Most of those are coming from those people who regulate.

We have a unique institutional culture in the Great Lakes, consisting of almost 23 special institutions linked to the lakes. One of the most unique of these is the International Joint Commission.

One of the consequences of the environmental side agreement to NAFTA is the formation of the North American Commission on the Environment (NACE). That trade institution is being staffed from the pool of Great Lakes folks. The US Director is a former IJC Commissioner; the Canadian Director is the former director of Pollution Probe; a former staff scientist at the IJC has become a staff person and two or three other people have a Great Lakes focus. This means that the momentum is moving away from the IJC to the NACE where the power and the money is. All of a sudden, because the IJC said a few radical things (in support of the phase-out of toxics), because they criticised governments (for their lack of progress on cleaning up the Great Lakes) and because it found a powerful public constituency, the governments are finding another game to play. That game will be played out by another institution, the NACE. The IJC may soon be a lost child.

I am at a loss to come up with real strategies that could reclaim what we have lost. But the one thing I am becoming expert at is saying "NO". To think that we can sit down and renegotiate the federal-provincial rules, to think we can sit down and negotiate the rule of law, to think we can sit down and negotiate a 35% cut in the Ministry of the Environment is not acceptable to me. All I can do is say "NO".

**D: THE REGULATORY EFFICIENCY ACT AND FREE TRADE, Summary of a presentation by Michelle Swenarchuk, Canadian Environmental Law Association**

The Review of the Sustainability of Forestry is another example of the negative impact of trade agreements. The Canadian Provincial governments along with the Canadian Standards Association, a voluntary industry association, are drawing up sustainable forestry indicators, which they have taken to the GATT Committee on Trade and the Environment. Their main focus, instead of being on how to make Canadian forestry practices sustainable, is on how to avoid losing markets internationally, particularly as the Greenpeace boycott in BC gains momentum. Their intention is to join with groups worldwide to utilize these indicators to determine sustainability. These indicators are vast generalizations that mean nothing on the ground, especially when they are not tied to a specific ecosystem. In the case of Ontario, where the level of the clear-cut and the regeneration strategy's effectiveness, forest harvest practices, ecological damage, and destruction of the tourist industry are all huge concerns, they will be attempting to certify them as sustainable and we will have to point out that they aren't. In the current forest manuals in Ontario, there is one section on forestry standards. This section contains nothing on standards but instead focuses on sustainability certifications. The people managing this process are quite upfront about their goal being competitiveness in international trade.

In Canada, The Regulatory Efficiency Act is an attempt by the Liberal government to take out the entire federal regulatory structure in all sectors and in all departments in one single blow. This is an initiative that originated with the multinationals and the Canadian Manufacturers Association. A powerful lobby was mounted to support this Act, which would allow companies to sign private deals with the Federal Ministers rather than be subject to regulation. The sectors covered by this Act are food, health, therapeutic products, biotechnology, automotive products, forestry, aquaculture and mining.

In the course of campaigning against The Regulatory Efficiency Act, one of our useful contacts from the industry side said something to me that I found very helpful. He said "the Greenpeace approach is very threatening to them". Did he mean direct action? No, he meant doing our homework and mounting a targeted intelligent corporate campaign.

We cannot deny the reality that the power is moving from governments to multi-nationals. The tactics used by these industries will be very different from those we've come to expect from our governments. We only have to look at what happened at Clayquot Sound to understand that they do not hesitate to use violence and their means of response are not as limited as government's are.

We all know that as far as we are concerned our governments do not regulate or enforce nearly enough. In Canada we have one of the world's worst records for occupational health and safety accidents and death. I'd like to give two examples of just how close our government is to industry. The Monsanto lobbying campaign on bovine growth hormone was revealed on a recent tv show to involve a Monsanto offer to give the government of Canada

2 million dollars in exchange for approvals for bgh. When the tv crew went to interview Health Canada, Health Canada immediately called Monsanto, so that when the crew went immediately after to speak to Monsanto they were already aware of everything that had been discussed with Health Canada.

A few weeks ago on a Friday morning several groups opposed to the Regulatory Efficiency Act met with members of Treasury Board to outline their concerns. Treasury Board officials immediately called industry lobbyists on the Friday afternoon to brief them on their concerns about the strength of the public interest groups.

I agree that we have to say "No" but I think that the international trade agenda will happen as will deregulation. We will have to be prepared to change our tactics and work internationally.

### **E: NOTES FROM THE DISCUSSION**

Parallel events are happening in the States. We should make no mistake what this whole unfunded mandate issue is about. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is developing the Common Sense Initiative with the US EPA. The first thing that industry brought to the table was to propose that regulations be gotten rid of. This deregulatory strategy of industry is continental.

NAFTA is backfiring with Mexico's monetary and political crises. This is a sharp contrast to the recovery NAFTA promised. GATT's provisions were not nearly as liberalizing as NAFTA'S so there is probably not as much concern in the wake of the GATT.

There is a potential conflict between NAFTA and GATT. GATT sets out to create a global organization that governs global trade. NAFTA is a regional agreement.

Free trade is the antithesis of sustainability. Labour people and environmental people have to come to grips with what growth means. What are its limits? Until we start to talk about no growth in some places and regrowth in others, we are not talking about the fundamental issue that is driving trade.

What is actually going on is the decline of the nation state. GATT and NAFTA are the mechanism to accomplish this decline. As a result, the US, the most powerful colonial power in the world, is becoming a colony of the most powerful corporations in the world. As people come to fully appreciate that a great deal of anger will be created.

While I don't like these voluntary agreements between industry and government, I have been made uncomfortable by the people who were the strong critics of governments' poor regulatory records turning into their last defender. The alternative to regulation is the sunset strategy. The real answer will be to have blunter penalties.

We are not wrong to argue in favour of what governments should always have been doing under the laws. That's quite consistent; we have always argued in favour of governments enforcing their own laws and responsibilities and this means we should now defend their right to continue doing what we always expected them to do.

Why do companies institute environmental protection programs? We just got a study by a Toronto consulting company that surveyed this question. When asked what the biggest motivating factor was for their initiating their programs, it was regulation. Only 14% said their motivation was voluntary.

There needs to be real consequences for committing crimes over and over again (the death penalty). There needs to be simpler more punitive government actions. The way the regulatory systems have been set up they provide an infinite sink of resources to consult, monitor and oversee but you never get much out of it. What is needed is much blunter instruments. You can have voluntary agreements if there are consequences. If cancers are on the rise, etc., then there has to be strict liability. A more punitive alternative is needed to the kind of regulation where the government gives you a permit to discharge the poisons.

## **PART 3: STRATEGIES FOR ADDRESSING THE WORLD OF FREE TRADE**

### **A: CAMPAIGNS IN THE WORLD OF FREE TRADE, Summary of Presentation by Nikos Valance, New York Campaign for Fair Trade**

The Fair Trade Campaign against NAFTA was a momentous time for progressive organizing in the US. It brought together millions of diverse people, but it wasn't as diverse as it should have been. There were gender disparities and a failure to involve women's groups as well as communities of colour, particularly the Latino community. The debate was really wide ranging and created an awareness of these issues.

However after the NAFTA debate and the debate over national health care in the U.S., there was a lot of burnout among progressive groups. When GATT came along there was not the same kind of public focus. The NAFTA Debate became a debate about jobs, which is not really the issue. The real issue is global capital. The fear about job loss was translated into Buy America Campaigns and the true international scope of the issues was obscured by the national focuses.

After GATT, my group, the New York Campaign for Fair Trade, which includes over 50 organizations in New York State, has been working on global/local impacts and economic democracy issues. During the trade debates there was not a good discussion of tangible alternatives. There was lots of talk of ideas like sustainable communities but after all WHO HAS ONE? It was hard to counter the nightmare with success stories. So now we are focusing on local community economic development initiatives.

The Council of New Yorkers is organizing community economic democracy co-operatives. They engage in commerce and cultural exchanges and are looking to broaden their network to become global. They are trying to form an international distribution network for goods produced co-operatively. It gives people a sense of being able to participate in a global grass roots economy.

The Fair Trade Campaign continues its work through several projects. We have a GATT/NAFTA monitoring project. Local groups monitor local changes like plant closings or rumoured plant closings, job relocation blackmail at the bargaining tables, etc. This is linked to a national effort of the same sort through the Trade Consortium. By calling people every several weeks, it is simple to make sure the changes are captured and knowledge of trade impacts does not disappear but is accumulated.

We are also looking at exchanges with countries such as Haiti to develop common strategies and promote grassroots solidarity rather than continue the notions that we are stealing each other's jobs. We are also looking at how we can use the Labour Side Agreements, which were announced in NAFTA but never made part of legislation. A powerless commission was set up to hear complaints about non-enforcement of labour laws. Everyone thought that

Mexico would be the subject of these complaints, but we thought that it would be good to have Mexican workers complain about the non-enforcement of US labour laws. This will generate publicity as well creating solidarity because US workers would see Mexican workers advocating on their behalf. We also want to keep trade in the public eye by focusing on child labour practices.

We would like to make global trade issues relevant to very distressed inner-city communities. These communities usually don't respond to this kind of campaign because everything we are criticising that's happening somewhere else is happening to them. We are using the Timberland Campaign to make this connection. Timberland makes very expensive boots, which African-American kids struggle to buy. But the boots are made very cheaply and each part is shipped off to be made in a different place escaping tariffs. We are trying to link the exploited workers in a Timberland factory with their inner city consumers to connect that they are being exploited. We hope this will force Timberland to stop the circle of exploitation by locating a factory in a US inner-city.

The Campaign for Fair Trade feels it is very important to bring an understanding of the perspective of southern communities and educate northern communities in their discussions of trade. Northern communities tend to not understand southern communities' experiences and positions on trade. Southern communities have experienced the pressures in a much stronger way over a much longer period of time -- not just the pressures of global trade but the pressures of the imposition of the neo-liberal paradigm. For them the Contract With America is really an International Monetary Fund austerity program or a structural adjustment program being imposed on the US. Southern Republican governors in their cutting of deficits, privatizing of industry, laying off workers and deregulating of the economy have already forced southern communities to respond by establishing sustainable communities. Self interest as the motivating factor in terms of economic activity is the most efficient if you have communities which have developed around cooperation. This may contradict the whole premise of democracy. The contradictions we are experiencing are that democracy is based on cooperation and the new economy is based on corporate and individual self-interest.

Then we have the School for Economic Democracy which focuses on community education, tying students into the network of goods produced in sustainable ways.

This is the agenda for the Fair Trade Campaign and for the Foundation for Economic Democracy. We think that a lot of the time groups working on economic justice forget environmental justice. We need to integrate our work.

## **B: REPORT FROM WORKSHOP ON BIODIVERSITY**

Discussion focused on methods of communication on how resource exports out of the Great Lakes have impacted the region's health and sustainability. The focus could be the lack of a sustainable economy in the Great Lakes, one of the most resource rich regions in North America and the world.



The history of the use of the Great Lakes as a trade route has profoundly affected the health of the ecosystem. We could use a map that shows the ecological footprint of trade through and from our region as a communications tool. Such a map has been made to demonstrate the ecological impacts of the Netherlands on the rest of the world. This would allow graphic communication of the gains and the drains from our region resulting from trade.

The group was also interested in focusing in on the effects of the 200 companies fuelling global trade. A corporate campaign like this could contrast the corporate sector's unsustainable behaviour with our own vision of sustainability, pollution prevention, resource protection, biodiversity and community-based economic development. The current trade agreements are not sustainable. The 30 worst actors should be targeted from this list. Boycotts are still a powerful tool in changing corporate behaviour and allow us to suggest clean alternatives.

Great Lakes history demonstrates that resource wealth has meant boom and bust. The best current example is the devastation and costs resulting from the newest invasive species, the zebra mussels and roughy. A cost-benefit analysis could well make the case for the closing of the St. Lawrence Seaway if the cost to the ecosystem were factored in. There was consideration of launching a campaign of this nature to raise awareness of the perils of trade.

It was pointed out that biotechnology and patents of intellectual property rights could have far reaching impacts.

We need basic information sheets for community organizing which make trade transparent to the grassroots communities. This would assist us in linking the global issues to our local struggles. For instance a local fight against an incinerator can link their campaign to the unsustainable practices of moving garbage far from its origins and to international trade in toxics and the many ways this depletes energy and ecosystems.

The trade fact sheets produced by CELA and the Action Canada Network made a big difference in people's understanding of the impacts of NAFTA. Simple fact sheets on areas which the GATT and north American Agreements will effect the Great Lakes are needed ie. resources, biodiversity, economy, our campaigns for clean-up and pollution prevention, and the culture of involvement in Great Lakes decision-making. These should include a simple glossary of trade lingo for luddites.

The Great Lakes community needs to be communicating on the internet on how trade is impacting our environments.

**C: REPORT FROM WORKSHOP ON "WHOSE ECONOMY? THE FUTURE OF WORK AND CLEAN PRODUCTION IN THE GREAT LAKES."**

Great Lakes activists will need to redefine the issues facing us arising from trade by redefining the issues from our vision and the foundations which we have built for pollution prevention and clean production.

We will need to make trade understood by our coalitions and interpret what it means for our vision.

A major barrier to our achieving this is the additional work which it means. The campaigns for clean production already are huge and demanding because of the scope of change they promote for society.

Many of the people we need to involve are unemployed and struggling to survive; international trade seems remote from their daily concerns.

What powers are we given to deal with trade? We need to identify the ways we can develop capacity to access decisions about production processes by working more closely with unions. We need to understand what changes are possible from within production processes before we can assess the need to move to other arenas for action.

We need to raise the level of anger and tap into it. We need to direct it toward corporations...while part of our vision has to be a more civilized society. This is the paradox we have to work with. There has to be some level of anger directed at those who have created this climate.

As a movement in the Great Lakes we have had our institutional history stolen from us. The language that embodies our culture's vision of ecosystem ethics and pollution prevention has been appropriated and turned to profit making public relations by corporate interests.

There are tools which we can use to target the corporate images of the industries by targeting their production methods and their products. While targeting corporate behaviour is difficult in a materialistic society, we do need to talk about their corporate behaviour in a systematic way.

We need to forge better links between the groups working on trade and environmentalists. Even without altering our work we have a lot of information that would be valuable to each other.

Transition planning needs to be a major focus. If we wait until its clear the transition is inevitable or predetermined, we have waited too long. We need to figure out how to engage the stakeholders in the conversation about how to carry out the transition when its desirability is still in dispute.

Market discussions always turn into supermarket discussions. If we are trying to impact markets, we have to address purchase policy, procurement policies and cultural patterns. This means we have to favour some corporations and governments against other corporations. If we simply take a broad brush to all corporations, it will be difficult to engage in the debate on markets and clean production.

We have identified places for action both inside and outside the existing frameworks. We may need to create new structures. It will be a critical question for us as to how far we are willing to go into engaging in the debate with corporations whose *raison d'être* is consumerism.

#### **D: NOTES FROM DISCUSSION**

Great Lakes activists have forced an ecosystem approach to be accepted. Great Lakes activists have developed common campaigns and strong agendas. To now place our work in a global context is overwhelming and threatening to me. I see the trade agreements forcing us to back away from our regional focus, a focus which was born of a biological imperative. It will force our governments to revert to narrow nationalism and competitiveness which will endanger our ecosystem approaches.

It is not one way or another. It isn't regional or local or global. What you are dealing with is capital. If General Motors makes a decision that affects the Great Lakes, then you should make this a regional organizational effort. If you can find a global aspect, then you can involve groups outside in your campaigns. The whole point is to never lose site of one end of the spectrum versus the other.

The decline of democratic rights and the threats of increased toxic pollution because of deregulation need to be articulated. They will create anger and fear. Up until now its been the people who have been driving the process in the wrong direction who have done a good job of capitalizing on that fear. We now need to harness these fears to mobilize people around a more empowering vision. We find ourselves at a time where environmentalists, who have been one of the strongest critics of governments, are acting as their defenders as they devolve their role in environmental protection. If we are going to mobilize during this time of insecurity, we will have to have a vision that goes beyond where we are now.

We must describe and talk to people about what trade regionally means. We can name it as General Motors identify how they download their economic recovery on our region. We can name how many women we have in the basin with breast cancer and name the processes and companies who have likely caused this. If our goal were to recapture these jobs, we could build a vision of what it would take to do this.

We need to look at the world and Canada from a bioregional perspective. How many regions of the world truly have the ability to be self-sustaining? We can identify them and work on helping them realize the potential to be sustainable without forgetting to help the other

people. We need to learn how to facilitate releasing ourselves from our dependence on global capital.

If people are talking about new models, we need to come to terms with our societies' dependence on continuing growth. I live in a community where people have had to learn to live without jobs and money. The results are crime, drugs and real desolation. It has not stimulated the creation of new forms; it has driven us further away from a desirable goal. When we talk about sustainability, we need to recognize people are now hanging on by their fingertips. People are looking around for who can give them the best package. The question is not who gets and defines growth. Sustainability will not be possible if we are not allowed to replace imports or to challenge the fundamental basis of wealth -- unlimited growth.

We need to develop a new broad-based political movement. So many people are now struggling to survive and have a quality of life they always expected to have. This creates a tremendous potential for those who have means to make change happen.

We need to develop transition paths. Often when a company closes up shop and moves to Mexico, there are strong community networks already existing. We have to understand community structures and work with them on transitions. In conceiving transition paths, we have to evaluate social, economic and ecological sustainability.

One of the causes of our dilemma is the language used. Look at the euphemisms we have: "free" trade, the Regulatory Efficiency Act, the takings legislation, the Job Creation and Wages Enhancement Act, and the share and wise-use movements. We are overwhelmed in euphemisms. We need to be careful when their euphemisms sound as convincing as our holy truths. We too should beware of the dangers of euphemizing.

There is no one way in the multitude of the diverse communities which are experiencing these forces. It is a long term economic justice issue comparable to the civil rights movement. We need to keep our eyes on the prize, on the integrity of what we are trying to do and understand that it is going to take a very long time.

## **APPENDIX: WORKSHOP ATTENDEES**

Karen Clarke, Canadian Institute for Environmental Law & Policy, Toronto, Ontario

Alan Corbiere, EAGLE Project of the Assembly of First Nations, Manitoulin Island, Ontario

Lin Kaatz Chary, Environmental Health Consultant, Gary, Indiana

Tracey Easthope, Ecology Center, Ann Arbor, Michigan

Jeanne Jabanoski, Environmental Protection Office, City of Toronto

John Jackson, Great Lakes United, Kitchener, Ontario

Sally Lerner, Department of Environment and Resource Studies, University of Waterloo

Brennain Lloyd, Northwatch, North Bay, Ontario

Jamie Linton, Environmental Consultant, Cantley, Quebec

Bruce Lourie, Environmental Consultant, Toronto, Ontario

David Mahoney, Great Lakes United, Buffalo, New York

Burkhard Mausberg, Great Lakes United, Buffalo, New York

Sarah Miller, Great Lakes United, Toronto, Ontario

Paul Muldoon, Canadian Environmental Law Association, Toronto, Ontario

Ramani Nadarajah, Canadian Environmental Law Association, Toronto, Ontario

Ellie Perkins, Faculty of Environmental Studies, York University, Toronto, Ontario

Michelle Swenarchuk, Canadian Environmental Law Association, Toronto, Ontario

Ken Traynor, Common Frontiers, Toronto, Ontario

Nikos Valance, New York Campaign for Fair Trade,

Jack Weinberg, Greenpeace, Chicago, Illinois

Jane Wilkins, Sierra Club of Eastern Canada, Belfountain, Ontario

