

*Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement*

Recently Thomas D'Aquino spoke in the United States arguing that the U.S., by which he means U.S. workers, must accept a decrease in their living standards to solve the economic problems facing the U.S. We are going to unite with a country, according to D'Aquino, that has to decrease its living standard. Thomas D'Aquino is the head of Business Council on National Issues. That organization is promoted by the American Ambassador and is a leading advocate of free trade in Canada, spreading the lie that it will defend or increase the living standards of Canadians. The same man tells the Americans their standard will go down but promises Canadians that ours will go up if we join them.

That is what the free trade is all about. Who shall have the right to decide the future of Canada? Does the Canadian economy exist to serve the drive for profit or the needs of people? During the campaign it became fairly evident that the Liberal Party does not seriously offer an alternative different from this on the trade deal. The Liberals' alternative is a slightly different route to the same end. For example, trading with more countries than just the United States.

A free trade agreement with more of the specifics nailed down, or with more countries, is simply another way of encouraging the dominance of our lives by the logic of profit. Whether we sell to the United States, Japan, Europe, or Chile, the rule will be the same: cut wages, working conditions, and living conditions directly or indirectly. In other words, cut anything that stands in the way of profit.

There is no basic difference between the convictions and principles of the Liberal Party and the convictions and principles of the Tory Party.

The only real alternative to this is democratic socialism.

That is why Canadians have created a democratic socialist Party through which to defend ourselves from the kind of big business control this trade deal would impose. Democratic socialists oppose the economic system that puts the needs of people second to the goals of big business that says: "What is good for General Motors is good for Canada". Instead, we recognize that we have to put the needs of the working people first.

Our Party's constitution has a preamble which sets out our principles as follows:

The New Democratic Party believes that social, economic and political progress of Canada can be assured only by the application of democratic socialist principles to Government and the administration of public affairs.

It goes on to set out some of the principles:

That the production and distribution of goods and services shall be directed to meeting the social and individual needs of people and not to the making of profit.

To modify and control the operations of the monopolistic productive and distributive organizations through economic and social planning. Towards these ends and when necessary the extension of the principle of social ownership.

Another principle reads:

The New Democratic Party holds firm to the belief that the dignity and freedom of the individual is a basic right that must be maintained and extended.

By the way, we pledge respect for individual human beings, not the fictitious corporate persons so beloved by corporation lawyers. The third principle reads:

The New Democratic Party is proud to be associated with the democratic socialist Parties of the world and to share the struggle for peace, international co-operation and the abolition of poverty.

Upon these principles, Mr. Speaker, we base our programs which can be grouped roughly under three general heads: programs for full employment, programs for social efficiency, and programs for world peace. These are not the goals of the great corporations which provide the drive behind this trade deal. The Deputy Prime Minister said a year ago that the Mulroney-Reagan trade deal would protect the owners of large corporations by blocking the people from voting in a democratic socialist program. Let me give some examples.

Under full employment we aim to ensure that everyone able to work has the opportunity to make his or her contribution to work under good conditions and to be recognized with fair pay and a share of responsibility for the conduct of the enterprise, be it public or private. This would require intervention by publicly elected representatives, federal, provincial or municipal, such as this trade deal would either prohibit or hinder.

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The New Democratic Party demands that the direction of our country be shared among Canadian Governments, public institutions, employers, unions, and communities, without having to ask the permission of multinational corporations or the Government of the United States, as this trade deal in many cases would require.

Our next principle is social efficiency rather than economic efficiency. We aim to be redefine the main goal of enterprises by social efficiency. Neither profit nor Gross National Product alone or together can truly