

STATEMENT OF DISSENT

BY

NEW DEMOCRATIC PARTY MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE

1. Bilateral Trade

Given emerging problems in Canada's trading relations, we strongly endorse Committee recommendations concerning multilateral trade and the need for discussions and new mechanisms to resolve Canada-U.S. disputes.

We disagree, however, with the recommendation to launch unconditional freer trade discussions with the U.S. There is no national consensus in favour of a grand bilateral freer trade initiative, and we believe that moves in that direction would distract us from resolving current bilateral disputes and from building a more diversified and self-reliant economy.

Bilateral freer trade could damage important sectors of the economy and limit our freedom to pursue independent economic policies. Detailed examination of these implications, clarification of trade goals, preparation of detailed sectoral impact studies, related labour and community adjustment plans, development of a broad national consensus for change, and detailed Parliamentary scrutiny and approval of any proposed initiative must, in our view, be preconditions for freer trade negotiations with the United States.