

Professor Crispo singled out Ontario's coolness to a free trade pact as contrary to the province's as well as the national interest.

Role of multinationals

The United Steelworkers of America, National Office (Gerard Docquier, national director), Canada's largest industrial labour organization, said it welcomed increased trade between nations. But it argued that "free trade in the sense being employed meant putting Canada's economic future in the hands of transnational corporations."

About 70 per cent of what statisticians called "trade" constituted transfers within transnational corporations, as subsidiaries of a conglomerate pass items back and forth.

Canada's interest should be to ensure that trade be fair, be managed in the broad social interest rather than "manipulated by a few giant companies."

The Steelworkers noted that models of free trade assert that freer trade will produce long-term gains in income and economic efficiency. But to whom would those benefits flow and where will the jobs be?

The union charged that some free trade proponents were motivated by seeing it as the only alternative to a more active industrial policy and a more public interventionist kind of political economy. "We believe that working Canadians will suffer if they are abandoned to the free play of the market, which in this case means the multinational corporations through the Trojan Horse of free trade..."