

BULLETIN

## WTO talks a threat to medicare

October 1, 1999

### **The Report: October / November 1999 vol.20 num.3**

Canadas health care system is once again at risk as the "Millennium Round" of trade talks begins on November 30. Government leaders from around the world will be meeting in Seattle for the World Trade Organizations Third Ministerial Conference.

This round of negotiations will include discussions on expanding the General Agreement on Trade in Services, and the United States and other countries are pushing hard to have health and social services included in these discussions.

Large US health care companies have made it clear what they're after ... access to foreign health care - markets." As part of the US Coalition on Service Industries, they have lobbied their government to put health care on the table.

And while the US knows what it wants out of this round of talks, the Canadian government has continued to talk out of both sides of its mouth. Trade Minister Pierre Pettigrew, while denying that Medicare is in jeopardy, has also said that exporting Canadas expertise in health care is a priority. But he can't have it both ways. Either health care is on the table or it isn't. It's time to let our government know what you think.

#### ***What you can do***

##### **Learn more about the WTO**

Contact the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives to get your very own copy of A Citizens Guide to the World Trade Organization by Steven Shrybman. CCPA can be reached at: 815-207 West Hastings St, Vancouver, BC V6B 1H7

Tel: 604-801-5121 Fax: 604-801-5122

email: [ccpabc@intouch.bc.ca](mailto:ccpabc@intouch.bc.ca)

##### **WTO teach in**

Attend the teach in on WTO in Vancouver, to be held November 12 (7:30 - 10 pm) and 13 (9am - 5:30 pm) at Robson Square Conference Centre, 800 Robson Street. Registration \$5 to \$20; contact 604.878.5424 for information or registration.

##### **Check out these websites**

[www.citizen.org/pctrade/gattwto/wto-book.pdf](http://www.citizen.org/pctrade/gattwto/wto-book.pdf)

[www.seattlewto.org](http://www.seattlewto.org)

[www.ei.gov.bc.ca/Trade&Export/FTAA-WTO/](http://www.ei.gov.bc.ca/Trade&Export/FTAA-WTO/)

##### **Go to the Seattle March**

The AFL-CIO is organizing a massive rally and march at the WTO on Tuesday November 30th, and Fair Trade networks throughout the world are mobilizing to march with them. People will be meeting at the Seattle Center Memorial Stadium, gates open at 10 am.

### **Attend the BC Federation of Labour Event**

Labour and community activists will join together at the opening of the BC Fed's annual policy convention at the Hyatt Regency Hotel. If you can't make it to Seattle, this will be the place to be! Contact BC Federation of Labour, 604.430.1421.

### **Tell the provincial government what you think**

Send any comments to:

Mr. Noel Schacter

Director, International Branch

Ministry of Employment and Investment

PO Box 9327 Stn Prov Govt

Victoria BC V8W 9N3

Email: [FTAAWTO.WTO@gems8.gov.bc.ca](mailto:FTAAWTO.WTO@gems8.gov.bc.ca)

### **Tell the federal government what you think**

Call or fax your Member of Parliament. You can find the numbers for your MP in the blue pages at the back of your phone book, or contact them through their website at:

[www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/tna-nac/consult-e.asp](http://www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/tna-nac/consult-e.asp)

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