

2001:03PU WATER AND MULTILATERAL TRADE AGREEMENTS

Whereas: the Government of Canada is urged in the National Council of Women of Canada's Policy 93.1, Water, Free Trade and NAFTA to prohibit "all water related commitments" except "the sale of bottled water in containers of 5 litres or less in size under NAFTA"; and in Policy 85.6 "National River Basin Management" to prohibit the construction of structures which would permit the diversion of inter-basin transfer of water to a foreign country and any agreements between Canada and foreign governments in which Canada would agree to supply water to foreign nations", the wording does not specifically urge the prohibition of the export of water by pipeline, tanker, bulk carrier: and Whereas Policy 98.6 Globalization, Negotiating Multilateral Trade Agreements Resolved #2c urges the Government of Canada to only sign agreements which "guarantee Canadian ownership and control over the delivery of vital resources, such as water..." and

Whereas: the federal government drafted an Accord for the Prohibition of Bulk Water Removal from Drainage Basins which, as of May 2001, has been signed by all jurisdictions except British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan and Quebec (see reasons in Background); and

Whereas: in 2001, Newfoundland's new Premier is contemplating exporting bulk water from one of its lakes and there is a call for a federal public debate on the subject causing NCWC President, Elizabeth Hutchinson to send a letter of protest to the Prime Minister; and

Whereas: the Federal Government is being sued by Sun Belt Corp. for millions of dollars under chapter 11 of NAFTA because the British Columbia Government banned the export of bulk water to California, therefore be it

RESOLVED: that the National Council of Women of Canada confirm as principle and policy:

1. that protection of the long-term supply of water as a national/provincial resource is essential to the health and well-being of all Canadians; and
2. that bulk water is not a commodity; and
3. that there must be prohibition of the export of bulk water by pipeline, tanker, bulk carrier or pipeline and of surface or groundwater by watercourse diversion; and
4. that Canada must sign only those agreements that guarantee Canadian ownership and control of vital natural resources – Policy 98.6 Resolved 2c; and
5. that all provinces should be urged to confirm the above and not to act unilaterally; and be it further

RESOLVED: that the National Council of Women of Canada urge the Government of Canada to:

1. protect the long-term supply of water for domestic, agricultural, commercial, industrial, etc. uses; and
2. prohibit the export of bulk water by pipeline, tanker, bulk carrier or by inter-basin transfer; and
3. assert sovereignty over Canadian water resources, and ensure that multilateral trade agreements guarantee compliance with Canadian ownership and control over the delivery of vital natural resources such as water; and
4. work with the provinces to ensure the prohibition of water exports in order to avoid repercussions under NAFTA or any other trade agreement; and be it further

RESOLVED: that the National Council of Women of Canada urge the Provincial and Local Councils where appropriate to urge their respective governments to:

1. sign and abide by the Accord for the Prohibition of Bulk Water Removal from Drainage Basins; and
2. prohibit the export of bulk water, surface or groundwater from any source by any means whatever.