

Date Posted Posted By

07/21/1999 road_to_seattle@iatp.org

Subject: Road to Seattle Issue V

 Road to Seattle - Issue V July 21, 1999

Table of Contents

- I. WHERE CAN I FIND MORE INFORMATION?
 - WTO Booklet Available
- II. RECENT PRESS ON THE WTO/TRADE
 - Globalization Foes Plan to Protest WTO's Seattle Round Trade Talks
 - RECENT ARTICLES ON THE WTO
- III. WHAT IS HAPPENING NOW?
 - CAMPAIGN LAUNCHED TO DERAIL WTO PLAN
 - INDIA AND THE WTO PLANNING
- IV. WHAT ORGANIZATIONS ARE ACTIVE ON TRADE ISSUES?
 - 180/Movement for Democracy
 - INTERNATIONAL PEACE NETWORK FORMED TO ADDRESS GLOBALIZATION
- V. WHAT IS HAPPENING DURING THE MINISTERIAL?
 - NGO ACTIVITIES DURING THE MINISTERIAL WEEK
- VI. HOW CAN I GET INVOLVED?
 - IMPORTANT DATES IN PREPARATION FOR THE WTO
- VII. WHO IS DOING WHAT?
 - USTR NGO Outreach Person Named
- VIII. ARTICLES ON TRADE/WTO
 - Globalising designs of the WTO

 WHERE CAN I FIND MORE INFORMATION?

WTO BOOKLET AVAILABLE

This from Public Citizen:

"A Citizen's Guide to the WTO - Everything You Need to Know to Fight for Fair Trade" has been printed in 50,000 copies and you can order some for you and yours. Also, if you have access to the "internet" you can CHECK IT OUT by going to our "web-site" (<http://www.tradewatch.org>) and "clicking" on the GATT/WTO spot on the Big Globe (Southeast Pacific); however, you will need to hire an "Adobe Acrobat" in order to read it.

If you want to order copies for yourself and your Fair Trade networks, you can order the booklet from The APEX Press, where the prices vary by quantity

For more information, questions and to place orders, contact:

The APEX Press
 Attn.: Judy Rizzi
 777 UN Plaza, Suite 3C
 New York, NY 10017

Ph: 914-271-6500
JRizzi52@aol.com

We particularly direct your attention to the last paragraph of the booklet which appears before the list of Contacts on page 23, in the TAKE ACTION part, where you (the reader) are encouraged to

"Come to Seattle for the ministerial meeting! The meeting will take place from November 29 through December 3, and will include a major international Teach-In organized by the International Forum on Globalization (IFG) the weekend before, street festivities, education, cultural activities, protests and much more. Contact People for a Fair Trade Policy (Seattle based toll-free at 1-877-STOP-WTO or 786-7986) or <http://www.tradewatch.org>"

RECENT PRESS ON THE WTO/TRADE

GLOBALIZATION FOES PLAN TO PROTEST WTO'S SEATTLE ROUND TRADE TALKS

Wall Street Journal Front Page

July 16, 1999

By HELENE COOPER
Staff Reporter of THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

SEATTLE -- Mike Dolan is mobilizing against globalizing.

Descending in a flurry of leaflets on a meeting of the People of Color Against AIDS Network, he gives the activists a quick speech about the evils of drug-company greed and global trade. But Mr. Dolan can't stay long. He still has to hit a gathering of representatives from Friends of the Earth, Women's International League for Peace & Freedom and a group against hazardous-waste dumping called Toxics.

During a three-week blitz of Seattle, Mr. Dolan, field director of Global Trade Watch -- an offshoot of Ralph Nader's consumer group Public Citizen that is the scourge of free-traders the world over -- meets with just about every activist in town, from eco-warriors to carpenters opposing unchecked capitalism.

Not even the clergy is exempt. Mr. Dolan is especially effective during a quick meeting with the Rev. Kathlyn James of downtown Seattle's massive First United Methodist Church. After asking Mr. Dolan to "Help me to know what it is," that is the root of so much dissent, Ms. James enthusiastically agrees to pitch in. "We can get involved," she says. "It would be a wonderful ecumenical effort if we could get all the different churches to -- what was it? -- mobilize against globalization."

The focus of Mr. Dolan's frenzy is the World Trade Organization -- the Geneva-based supreme court of international trade -- which is coming to Seattle in November for the biggest trade gathering ever held on U.S. soil. About 5,000 delegates from 150 countries will descend on this city

to launch a new round of global trade talks -- thence to be known as the Seattle Round. Like the Uruguay Round begun in 1986 and the Tokyo Round started in 1973, the Seattle Round will look to slash tariffs, abolish subsidies and open up investment for companies seeking to get into global markets.

Leaving a Legacy

"One hundred years from now," Sen. Patty Murray of Washington recently enthused at a dress-rehearsal trade conference leading up to the WTO event, "our grandchildren will be talking about the Seattle Round."

If Mr. Dolan has his way, future generations will be talking all right, but it won't be about tariff cuts. "Those faceless bureaucrats are leaving Geneva and they'll be met with a protest by the Puget," he says. "We're going to have marches and demonstrations and press conferences and seminars. It's going to be a massive mobilization against globalization."

As Mr. Dolan and others like him see it, the Seattle gathering is the ultimate chance to stem a tide of international corporate greed that is destroying the environment, sending developing countries deeper into poverty and generally running amok. "The World Trade Organization represents a model of international commercial relations that benefit a very narrow range of civil society: transnational corporations," he says.

With President Clinton, Vice President Gore and a host of foreign dignitaries expected to come, the free-trade foes say this is their moment to strike a blow.

By all accounts, demonstrators will outnumber trade envoys from the 150 countries in attendance. The list of angry protesters keeps growing: Steelworkers, livid that both President Clinton and Congress in June refused to endorse a bill putting quotas on steel imports, have already reserved 1,000 hotel rooms in nearby Tacoma and Bellevue to help house the thousands who plan to make the trip. Longshoremen say they are bringing 3,000 to 5,000.

Greenpeace and Friends of the Earth activists are leading the environmental brigades. Labor representatives from India, militant anticapitalists from Germany and AIDS activists from New York are all busy making plans to, among other things, form a human chain around the Washington State Trade & Convention Center in downtown Seattle, where the WTO conference will be held. There are even whispers among the free-trade foes that the Zapatistas, southern Mexico's peasant-based rebel group, are coming by caravan.

International trade bureaucrats and lawyers are already bracing themselves. "We're going to get some real blood and guts," says Washington, D.C., trade economist Gary Hufbauer.

Smoke Bombs, Spray Paint

Protestors have already held one test run: In June, as leaders from the Group of Eight industrial nations were meeting in Cologne, Germany, rioters there and in London and New York staged a synchronized Carnival Against Capitalism. London's financial district was the hardest hit: About 4,000 protesters, some with signs reading "Make Love, Not Profit," set off smoke bombs, smashed windows and spray-painted graffiti on the

Bank of England. After an invasion of rioters, the London International Financial Futures and Options Exchange abandoned after-hours trading and evacuated 400 of its staff.

Anticapitalist Demonstrators Stage a Violent Rampage in London (June 21)

Many activists say Seattle will see a much bigger ruckus. Indeed, one group, aptly called Ruckus, already is planning training sessions to demonstrate tactics for blockades and other forms of civil disobedience.

Seattle police officers say they are prepared for whatever happens. "We have access to pepper spray," says Officer Carmen Best, a spokeswoman for the department. The police department has set up a WTO planning commission, which is coordinating with the U.S. Secret Service, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the State Department, Federal Emergency Management Agency, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms, and numerous other law-enforcement types. Officer Best says Seattle's aim is to let protesters exercise their right to free speech, but notes, pointedly, "Our SWAT team is flexible."

On Their Side

As it happens, the protesters already have the Seattle City Council and King County Council on their side. Known for their environmental bent, both government groups recently voted unanimously to make the city a "MAI-Free Zone," ostensibly to prohibit the WTO from reaching any Multilateral Agreements on Investment during the November gathering. While the move is largely symbolic, city and county council members have been busy working with the protesters.

At a recent lunch at a Pioneer Square Italian restaurant, Mr. Dolan and four council members hold a strategy session. King County Councilman Brian Derdowski, the Republican who championed the MAI-Free Zone proposal, is particularly excited. "If there are police officers walking around, then there should be elected officials in the street standing with the people," he says.

Mr. Derdowski frets over how to get folks from his affluent conservative district on Seattle's East Side to join with the mostly left-leaning protesters. "We need a diversity of protests," he says. One possibility offered by his staffer, Maria Cain: Get buttoned-down David Korten, author of the antiglobalization bestseller "When Corporations Rule the World," to speak to conservatives. "He fits the image they can accept," Ms. Cain says.

She is on a roll now. "If we can help the people in the suburbs to understand why people are p_____ off, causing a ruckus in Seattle, maybe they'll come join," she says. "Maybe we could close I-90. That way, they can walk into Seattle -- the East Side people. These people aren't going to drive into town when all these demonstrations are going on."

For Mr. Dolan, this is all sweet music, though he doesn't take much time to savor it before dashing off to his next stop, to close a deal on office space that his group can use during the WTO gathering.

"This is nice," Mr. Dolan says, as he surveys the neighborhood from in front of the office -- a storefront in downtown Seattle next to a Harley-Davidson shop. "It's a stone's throw, figuratively speaking, from the trade and convention center."

RECENT ARTICLES ON THE WTO

<http://www.hinduonline.com/today/stories/03210003.htm>

THE HINDU, Wednesday, July 21, 1999: WTO ends leadership dispute, By Thomas Abraham

LONDON, JULY 20. The World Trade Organisation ended a long dispute over who was to head the organisation with an agreement that the two candidates for the post of Director-General, Mr. Mike Moore, a former New Zealand Prime Minister, and Dr. Supachai Panitchpakdi, the Thai Deputy Prime Minister, would split the post between them. Today's agreement breaks a deadlock that has left the WTO leaderless since the last Director-General, Mr. Renato Ruggeiro's, term ended at the end of April.

-----<http://www.hindustantimes.com/nonfram/190799/detEDI03.htm>

HINDUSTAN TIMES, Monday, July 19, 1999, New Delhi WTO's split heads

After almost four months, the controversy surrounding the appointment of the head of the WTO has been resolved, albeit in a clumsy and unsatisfactory manner....

-----<http://www.news.com.au/business/4354019.htm>

APEC passes free trade baton, By FLORENCE CHONG, 16jul99

THE Asia-Pacific Economic Co-operation forum has handed over liberalisation negotiations in 15 industry sectors, including the highly sensitive food and oilseed sectors, to the World Trade Organisation.

WHAT IS HAPPENING NOW?

CAMPAIGN LAUNCHED TO DERAIL WTO PLAN

A coalition of forest protection leaders from around the world launched a campaign June 28 to derail World Trade Organization plans to write trade agreements that the coalition says threaten the world's forests. "The World Trade Organization clearly sees its area of focus as expediting trade, removing any obstacle to the flow of money and products," said Mark Westland, a spokesman for the Rainforest Action Network. "This is extremely dangerous without human rights and environmental safeguards."

Full Story at:

http://www.enn.com/news/enn-stories/1999/07/070299/forest_4136.asp

INDIA AND THE WTO PLANNING

Research Foundation for Science, Technology and Ecology; on Monday the 16th of August 1999 at New Delhi the Research Foundation is holding a day long consultation on INDIA AND THE WTO: THE ROAD TO SEATTLE. This endeavour is to articulate the Indian peoples agenda for the WTOs Third Ministerial Conference at Seattle.

For more information contact Shalini Bhutani at
mailto:divwomen@ndf.vsnl.net.in

WHAT ORGANIZATIONS ARE ACTIVE ON TRADE ISSUES?

180/MOVEMENT FOR DEMOCRACY

As a small part of larger organizing against globalization on the road to Seattle, 180/Movement for Democracy and Education announces Democracy Teach-In IV: The World Trade Organization.

For more information contact...

180/Movement for Democracy and Education Clearinghouse
731 State Street
Madison, WI, USA 53703
608-262-9036, 608-251-3267 (fax)
mailto:clearinghouse@tao.ca

To get on our listserve, go to our website at
<http://www.corporations.org/democracy>

INTERNATIONAL PEACE NETWORK FORMED TO ADDRESS GLOBALIZATION

(Vancouver) The relationship between globalization and disarmament will be the focus of a new international organization formed at the Hague Appeal for Peace civil society conference held in the Hague, the Netherlands.

The International Network on Disarmament and Globalization (NDG) was created at a special meeting on May 12th of peace activists, economists, and researchers from ten countries. They identified the need to better investigate how economic globalization and the rise of transnational corporations are affecting efforts to promote peace and international disarmament.

"Globalization has changed all of the rules," said Steven Staples, a

Canadian activist and researcher from Vancouver. "Globalization is about much more than international commerce - in fact globalization is fundamentally challenging international diplomacy, the role of governments, and even democracy itself," said Staples.

Corporate-driven international trade agreements and financial institutions are limiting the ability of governments to govern on behalf of their citizens. The creation of a single world economy is not distributing wealth evenly, but instead is increasing the concentration of wealth into the hands of a tiny minority of people. This inequality is creating poverty and degrading the environment, setting the conditions for conflict and even war.

At the same time, mega-mergers are creating powerful transnational corporations that produce most of the world's weapons and military technology. These corporations lobby governments to divert greater amounts of public treasuries to military spending. The largest of these corporations include such aerospace and defence giants as Lockheed Martin, Boeing/McDonnell Douglas, Raytheon, British Aerospace/Marconi, Aerospatiale/Matra and DaimlerChrysler Aerospace.

"As globalization creates the conditions for war and provides the weapons to wage it, activists working for peace and disarmament must confront globalization," said Staples.

The NDG will address the relationship between militarism and globalization, and will begin by creating an e-mail network and educational resources which will be available on the Internet to build a body of knowledge for peace activists, economists and researchers.

(30)

Contact: Steven Staples, [sstaples@canadians.org](mailto:ss Staples@canadians.org)
International Network on Disarmament and Globalization
405-825 Granville Street, Vancouver, British Columbia V6Z 1K9 CANADA
tel: (604) 687-3223 fax: (604) 687-3277

WHAT IS HAPPENING DURING THE MINISTERIAL?

NGO ACTIVITIES DURING THE MINISTERIAL WEEK

To: CTC Friends and Family
From: Lori Wallach and Mike Dolan
Subject: Seattle Logistics

As discussions -- including with many of you involved -- have begun to gel, the likely structure and format for NGO activities in Seattle is emerging. A full schedule of NGO strategy, education and action parallel to the official Ministerial itself will involve successive days devoted to particular, related themes or substantive issues (the various critiques of the WTO). Each day will follow a similar functional agenda, along these lines:

8:30ish Press briefing over breakfast

Subject: that day's themes and issues.
Interviews scheduled.

10:30ish
Panels on the issues
Our opportunity to educate one another.
Reports from country-based campaigns.

Noonish Pressworthy public events -- rallies, marches, demos, Giant puppets and street theater (who knows?) A featured issue each day, dramatizing the critique.

2:00ish Strategy Sessions of activists working on related issues. We often do not take advantage of international events to plan forward while in the same city: organizing international campaigns, movement building, skills sharing.

4:30ish Report back on day's news.
Debrief from issue leaders.
Inside/Outside coordination.

5:15ish Adjourn and Dispatch
All clear for concerts, cocktail parties, chasing negotiators

SATURDAY, 27 Nov
IFG Teach In

SATURDAY & SUNDAY, 27-28 Nov.
ICFTU Leadership Conference
NFU/IFAP
Other Preparatory Conventions

MONDAY, 29 Nov
Environment
Health
TRIPS Part I

TUESDAY, 30 Nov
Livelihoods
Labor rights
Standard of living

Note: Tuesday is the day proposed for the main civil society event
One Big March on the WTO -- arm in arm to the Convention Center
Rally beforehand -- and then all hands around the WTO

WEDNESDAY, 1 Dec
I Democracy/Sovereignty
Development
Women

II No Patents on Life

THURSDAY, 2 Dec
Food/Agriculture
Food security
Food safety
TRIPS Part II

HOW CAN I GET INVOLVED?

IMPORTANT DATES IN PREPARATION FOR THE WTO

[This was forwarded from Margrete Strand at Public Citizen]

There are two important dates coming up in in preparation for the WTO Ministerial:

- 1) In order to secure space through the Seattle Host Organization (SHO), groups need to apply by August 1.
- 2) To get accredited as an NGO, groups must apply to the WTO by August 15.

Below are links to the SHO and WTO web-pages.

Make sure that your group applies before these deadlines pass, and please forward this information to other organizations.

Seattle Host Organization (SHO) - Space

<http://www.wtoseattle.org/educationoutreach/ngo4.html>

World Trade Organization (WTO) - accreditation

<http://www.wto.org/wto/ngo/ngojune.htm>

WHO IS DOING WHAT?

USTR NGO OUTREACH PERSON NAMED

Ms. Janet Hall, Counsellor for the U.S. Trade Representative (USTR), has been designated as the USTR NGO Outreach person for issues related to the WTO Ministerial Conference to be held in Seattle. She will serve as the USTR point person on NGO activities and will be part of the US Government interagency task force working on NGO issues in the context of the Ministerial Conference. Ms. Hall has many years of experience in the public and private sectors, and has worked frequently with NGOs. She can be contacted at <mailto:JHall@USTR.gov>

ARTICLES ON TRADE/WTO

GLOBALISING DESIGNS OF THE WTO

STATE SOVEREIGNTY UNDER THREAT

Header (Appendix of Monde Diplo redaction):

The Atlantic Alliance's intervention in Kosovo is a spectacular example of the erosion of state sovereignty, helped along by globalisation and the "right to interfere". This evolution is spreading to a growing number of spheres < first and foremost the economy. However, the principle of sovereignty is not breaking down with any degree of uniformity: the social and environmental spheres remain relatively unaffected, while a higher economic order is emerging only too clearly < founded on the primacy of the markets and guarded by irresponsible and complicit international organisations, led by the World Trade Organisation.

by SUSAN GEORGE *

Despite the victory against the Multilateral Agreement on Investment (MAI) - thanks to France's withdrawal from the negotiations in October 1998 - questions remain. Why were governments ready to sign this scandalous treaty and renounce huge areas of their sovereignty, without any discernible advantage in exchange? The only explanation seems to be, as Marx and Engels put it, that "modern state power is merely the executive committee charged with managing the affairs of the bourgeoisie" (1).

This "bourgeoisie", now embodied in huge transnational industrial and financial corporations, makes itself heard loud and clear by "state power" via multiple lobbies. Among these, the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) has a special place, claiming, as it does, to be "the only representative body that speaks with authority on behalf of enterprises from all sectors in every part of the world" (2). It makes its demands known directly to heads of state.

All matters concerning Europe and trade, including negotiations at the World Trade Organisation (WTO) are handled by the outgoing European commissioner, Sir Leon Brittan, who appears not to have noticed his resignation and still speaks for all the governments of the European Union. These governments have accepted their individual loss of sovereignty in trade as in other areas because they consider that the advantages of cooperation outweigh the drawbacks of limiting their room for manoeuvre. But cooperating is one thing. Choosing the ultra-liberal heir presumptive of Margaret Thatcher as spokesman is quite another. In the case of the WTO, we risk witnessing a contest of sovereignty-stripping, making the prospect of a social and political Europe recede.

Sir Leon is after exactly the same thing as the ICC - a world ruled by free trade. Their views on the big WTO ministerial meeting in Seattle next November are interchangeable both in form and content (3). For the time being, our "sovereign" European governments have fallen behind them with gusto, making them look suspiciously like Marx and Engels' perfect

executive committee.

The Brittan/ICC tandem believe that agriculture must be further liberalised, which will put the future of rural communities in danger.

The poorest risk losing control over their peoples' food security. The Agreement on Intellectual Property - going under the banner of Trips (the Trade-related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights) and including patenting of life - is also up for discussion in Seattle.

Less well known than these two important dossiers is the General Agreement on Trade in Services (Gats), which is also on the agenda. Here, Sir Leon and the ICC seek the "breaking down of domestic regulatory barriers across a wide range of services" in order to "expand the number and improve the quality of countries' commitments on market access and national treatment"

(4). Services should be open to foreign investment worldwide, it being understood that the agreement will include "commercial presence" and "the movement of natural persons" in order to furnish the said service. We may ask what is wrong with that? Here are some fine prospects for our own firms. But do governments have any idea of the huge losses of sovereignty they are likely to undergo?

"Services", which are about to fall under the yoke of the WTO, represent thousands of billions of dollars worth of commercial transactions. This seemingly innocent terms take in almost every imaginable human activity: distribution, wholesale, retail and franchising; construction, architecture, decoration, maintenance; civil, mechanical and other types of engineering; financial services, banking and insurance; research and development; real estate services, rental, credit and hire-purchase; communications, postal services, telecommunications and audio visual, information technologies; tourism and travel, hotels and restaurants; environmental services including road construction and maintenance, rubbish collection, sewage disposal, water delivery, protection of the landscape and urban planning; recreational, cultural and sports services, including entertainment, libraries, archives and museums; publishing, printing, advertising; transportation by every imaginable conveyance including space-travel; and also education (primary, secondary, tertiary and adult) and human and animal health. In all this covers over 160 sub-sectors and activities (5).

Privatising health

The countries of the European Union have a maximum of a few dozen civil servants working on these questions, for which the European Commission is in any event setting the parameters. In contrast, the US is devoting the talents of several hundred specialists to these issues and whetting its knives for full liberalisation of services in all branches.

The US Special Trade Representative (USTR), Charlene Barshevky, instigated Washington's successful battles over bananas, genetically manipulated

organisms and hormone-fed beef. Naturally she is working hand in hand with American business interests. She asked them to list their demands for Seattle - a request to which the Coalition of Service Industries responded with a detailed 31-page document (6).

Not all of the dozens of service sectors listed above have yet got themselves organised to extract maximum concessions via the WTO. Nor are all the areas cited objects of potential US aggression - at least not yet.

The European health sector has, however, been singled out as a special target of liberalisation. Expenses are exploding due to an increase in their aged populations, the demographic segment that uses health care services most intensively. The coalition is sure that it "can make much progress in the negotiations to allow the opportunity for US business to expand into foreign health care markets".

Until now, unfortunately, "health care services in many foreign countries have largely been the responsibility of the public sector ... [making] it difficult for US private sector health care providers to market in foreign countries." But the WTO offers a way out. Among the "barriers" Barshevsky is expected to help demolish are "restricting licensing of health care professionals" and "excessive privacy and confidentiality regulations."

Her "negotiating objectives" include "encouraging more privatisation" and "promoting pro-competitive regulative reform". The coalition also wants "market access and national treatment allowing provisions of all health care services cross-border" as well as "allowing majority foreign ownership of health care facilities". To sew the deal up, health care should also be included in the WTO public procurement rules so that foreign firms can bid on all government contracts in this area (7). If an agreement on health services including all these provisions is actually tabled and signed at the WTO, we can kiss goodbye our public health-care systems in Europe.

In addition to this already-approved agenda, the ICC, Sir Leon and our own governments have many additional goals. They start with the elimination of remaining industrial tariffs, a classic demand. Then there is "trade facilitation", meant to "harmonise, modernise and simplify" bureaucratic, obsolete customs procedures, which, translated, means many fewer controls and inspections. Next comes government procurement which represents upwards of 15% of any nation's GNP. These markets must be opened up to suppliers from anywhere in the world according to the sacred principle of national treatment. Brittan and the ICC also seek a legal agreement on competition policy that requires developing a legal framework of binding international rules.

Enemies of the MAI can rest assured: an agreement on investment has not

been forgotten. Since the agreement was defeated at the OECD, Sir Leon has been trumpeting everywhere that he was always in favour of the WTO as a forum for negotiating a "comprehensive framework of international rules".

Finally, the WTO should take up the environmental question because there are disparities and sometimes clashes between its rules and the content of Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEA) concerning climate change, the ozone layer, biodiversity, toxic wastes, endangered species, etc. A question to our governments: why sign MEAs if it is to call them into question at the WTO?

This concern for the environment is touching, since up to now the tribunal-panels of the WTO have decided all disputes with environmental or public health implications with no regard whatsoever for either. The icing on the environmental cake is the Forest Products Agreement that is under way. This would eliminate all barriers to trade in forest-derived products and remove all obstacles to forest exploitation. Barshevsky was formerly a lobbyist for the Canadian timber industry; now she is being advised by the largest US transnational wood and paper products companies (8).

This assortment of measures - the Seattle "built-in" agenda plus all the new subjects - has already been christened the Millennium Round by Sir Leon. He sees it as already approved, as do the ICC and the G-7 governments. He insists on a "single undertaking", meaning that "all participants have to accept the whole outcome of the negotiations rather than pick and choose".

Sir Leon wants to have a multitude of issues on the WTO agenda negotiated at once: "Issues which are difficult for some but important for others cannot be blocked in isolation but must be weighed up as part of the overall calculation of advantage which each WTO member needs to make on the outcome ... it is this ability to make political calculations on the overall balance of advantage which enables trade-offs to occur between different issues" (9).

If this huge programme is hard to manage even for developed countries, it is quite beyond the reach of developing countries, which will be even more heavily penalised than they are already. Many of them do not even have permanent representation to the WTO; some share an embassy. Even the large countries of the South lack the necessary numbers of qualified personnel to stay on top of complex, simultaneous negotiations on a wide variety of subjects. The declaration of the French prime minister, Lionel Jospin, according to which the WTO is "a more democratic venue" than the OECD because the countries of the South are included, takes no account of these realities. In fact, the "Quad" (the US, EU, Canada and Japan) will continue to impose its will and the US, with its plethora of highly

professional personnel, will have the most influence of all.

"Don't worry, everything's under control", our national civil servants, concerned with state sovereignty, will no doubt reply. But what we will really need in Europe is a kind of "combativeness index" on a scale from one to ten to register what our governments are prepared to defend, since it is obvious they will not be able to defend all the interests of their peoples. So, national negotiator, what will it be? Public health or small farmers? Hormone-fed beef or forest destruction? Audio-visual property rights or respect for the Lomé Agreement, now forbidden by the "banana decision"? In this globalised world, you have to know what you are really willing to fight for.

Governments need to make up their minds fast, because this whole agreement should be sewn up within three years. Why the rush? Quite simple: "Multilateral rule-making has to adapt itself to the faster pace of change in a global marketplace in order to keep the rules aligned with rapidly-evolving business realities and requirements" (10). And as we all know, the requirements of business supersede those of citizens - so full steam ahead for January 2003.

This prospect of "overall calculation of advantage" and "trade-offs" has not, so far, given rise to any public debate. Yet such a debate is badly needed because civil society has no desire to be governed by the "executive committee" of the transnationals, and is massively opposed to any extension of the powers of the WTO. Civil society wants to participate in a full evaluation of this organisation (11). The real urgency lies in taking time to examine the present and likely future impact of the WTO and its overweening ambitions. Otherwise, sovereign states will have little left to say or do.

* President of the Observatoire de la mondialisation (Globalisation Observatory), Paris; associate director of the Transnational Institute, Amsterdam

1. In the Communist Party manifesto.

2. ICC statement on behalf of world business to the heads of state and government attending the Cologne summit, 18-20 June 1999, Paris, Business and the Global Economy, 11 May 1999; see also ICC, World Business Priorities for the Second Ministerial Conference of the World Trade Organisation, doc. 103/202, 3 April 1998.

3. Compare the ICC documents in note 2 with those of the European Commission [i.e. Sir Leon Brittan], note for the 113 Committee, 26 April 1999, EU Trade Ministers' Informal Meeting, Berlin 9-10 May 1999; and Sir

Leon Brittan, The Contribution of the WTO Millennium Round to Globalisation: and EU View, speech delivered to the Herbert Batliner Symposium, "Europe in the Era of Globalisation, Economic Order and Economic Law", Vienna, 29 April 1999.

4. ICC, Business and the Global Economy, op.cit.

5. The author thanks the personnel of the WTO for sending her the Schedule of Specific Commitments, European Communities and their Member States, GATS/SC 31 and following, 14 April 1994.

6. Coalition of Service Industries, Services 2000, USTR Register Submission, Response to Federal Register Notice of 19 August 1998 [FR Doc 98-22279].

7. Services 2000, op.cit. pp.14-16.

8. For more information, contact Mark Vallianatos: MVallianatos@foe.org

9. Sir Leon Brittan, The Contribution of the WTO Millennium Round to Globalisation, op. cit.

10. ICC, Business and the Global Economy, op. cit. p.5.

11. Statement from members of international civil society opposing the Millennium Round, signed mid-May by over 600 organisations from 75 countries.

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED | 1999 Le Monde diplomatique

To subscribe to The Road to Seattle, send an email to listserv@iatp.org. In the body of the message write: subscribe road_to_seattle. To unsubscribe, send an email to listserv@iatp.org, with the message unsubscribe road_to_seattle.

The full text searchable archives to this and other news bulletins produced by IATP can be viewed on the World Wide Web at: <http://www.newsbulletin.org>.

Submissions to the Road to Seattle should be sent to Renske van Staveren at: rvanstaveren@iatp.org, or faxed to Renske at: (1) 612-870-4846.
