

National Farmers Union

N.F.U. Makes Submission to Standing Committee on External Affairs and International Trade
Re: FREE TRADE

The National Farmers Union made a submission to the Standing Committee on External Affairs and International Trade on the subject of the Canada/U.S. Free Trade agreement.

Ontario Region 3 Co-ordinator Raye-Anne Briscoe says she believes Canada should cut and run from the proposed Canada/US Free Trade agreement before the United States makes a basket case of us.

Briscoe made these comments immediately after appearing along with N.F.U. President Wayne Easter and Executive Director Stuart Theisson at the Standing committee on External Affairs and International Trade.

Briscoe was commenting on a recent revelation that Washington has continued to offer highly subsidized deals on millions of tonnes of wheat, oilseeds and milk to the Soviet Union, China and India even after the conclusion of the Can/US agreement which undertakes that "both sides agreed that the primary goal is the elimination of all subsidies which distort agricultural trade".

The Ontario Co-ordinator stated the Canadian interpretation of this undertaking had been implied to be much broader than the narrow U.S. interpretation which limits it to Can/US agricultural trade.

"It is quite clear to us that the U.S. would be delighted to hog tie Canada in a Free Trade pact and eventually absorb all our potential foreign markets into its own trade accounts. This continuing cut throat business of the United States has no intention of altering current subsidized international trading practices and is aimed at undermining Canada's trade potential as much as those of other exporting countries" Briscoe charged.

Briscoe stated a Canada/U.S. Free Trade Agreement would result in Canada's rapid demise as a world trading nation in general and for agriculture products in particular and will lead to an economic absorption of this country as well as emasculation of our political sovereignty.

The proposed Canada/U.S. Free Trade deal is so incredibly one-sided that it is an insult to every Canadian who cares about being Canadian and about the future generations of this nation. We find it extremely difficult to understand exactly what the United States has given up in this agreement that will be specifically beneficial to Canada. Large Canadian corporations and Financial institutions will gain investment access to the United States; however, it is questionable how that would be beneficial to this country. Corporations may wish to become United States citizens---BUT WE DO NOT!

Briscoe concluded "we agree with those who believe this agreement should not be passed by the Parliament of Canada until the people of Canada have expressed their views through a National election. Nothing short of an election on this issue will be satisfactory...".

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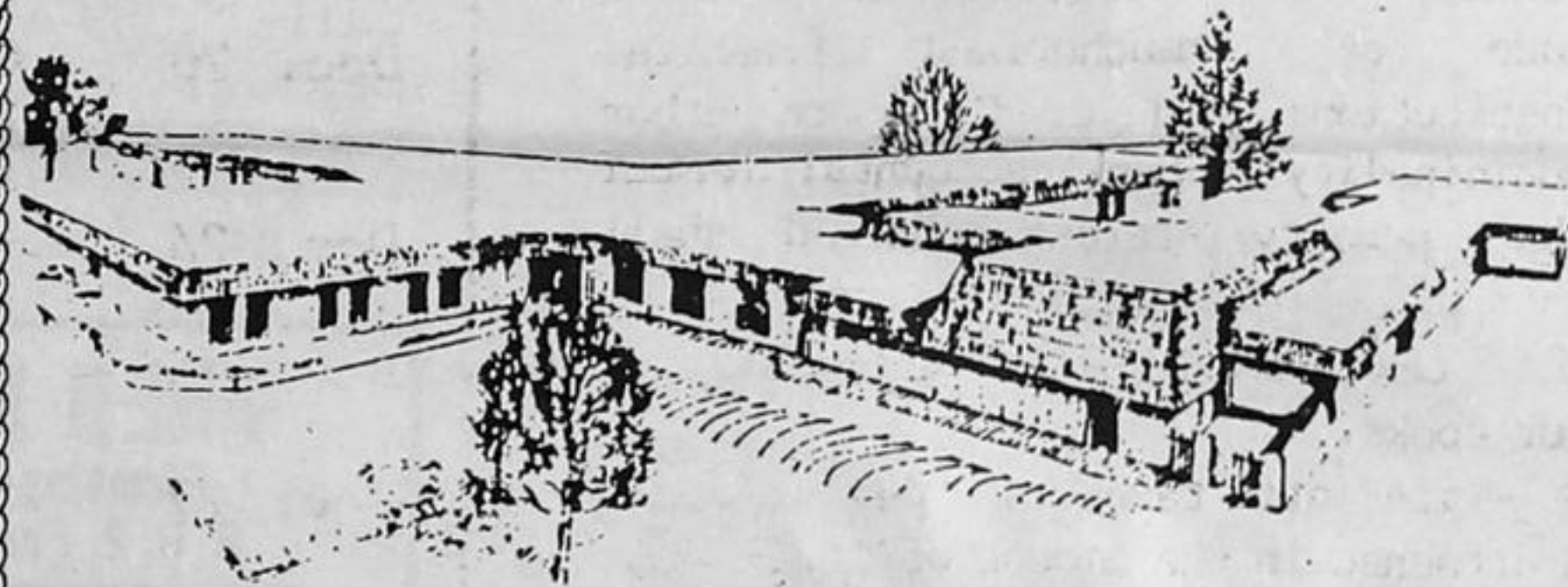
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