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**WHOSE SECURITY? WHOSE PROSPERITY? - NAFTA ON STEROIDS  
Information Rally on the Security and Prosperity Partnership**

St. Catharines – A local citizen’s organization, the Niagara Coalition Against the SPP & TILMA (N-CAST) has organized an information rally regarding the Security and Prosperity Partnership of North America (SPP). Thursday August 16, at 11:30 the rally will begin at Montebello Park in downtown St. Catharines and will march to City Hall where they will distribute flyers and present information regarding this tri-national trade agreement.

The SPP is a White House-lead initiative, which was officially ‘launched’ by President Bush, Prime Minister Harper and then Mexican President Fox in April 2005. The agreement is about eliminating Canada’s ability to determine independent regulatory standards, environmental protections, energy, security, foreign, military, immigration among other policies. Of immediate concern is the potential for bulk water exports of Canada’s water to the United States. The SPP is not a signed treaty, unlike previous free trade agreements – it has proceeded without any parliamentary debate or public input; the only stakeholders involved or consulted have been representatives of big business.

The decision to hold the information rally comes as President Bush, Prime Minister Harper and Mexican President Calderon gather for the third summit of the SPP from August 20-21 in Montebello, Quebec. Thousands of people are anticipated to gather in Quebec to welcome the Presidents and Prime Minister and provide some public input on the SPP. Transportation to this demonstration from Niagara has been arranged by N-CAST.

“This is like NAFTA on steroids”, said Susan Corcoran, a member of NCAST and the chair of the Council of Canadians Niagara chapter. The deep integration proposed by the SPP comes out of a post 9/11-era where security trumps trade and sees the Canadian and Mexican government fully integrating their security apparatuses with the US in return for vague assurances of market access for their largest corporations.

The Niagara Coalition intends to send a clear message from Montebello, St. Catharines to Montebello, Quebec that public debate is non-negotiable.

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