

# The Union Movement and Extended Producer Responsibility

Presentation to the Canadian P2  
Roundtable June 12, 2003

Some Observations  
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# The Nature of the Union Movement

- social organizations based on collectivity in the workplace
- reach out beyond the workplace to represent their members interests
- see themselves as socially responsible (the CAW refers to this as social unionism)

# The Nature of the Union Movement

- social justice organizations
- tend to favour the rights of citizens over the market
  - health and safety protection depends on regulation and enforcement
  - social safety net, health care etc. require on a significant role for the government in the economy

# The Nature of the Union Movement

- not against the market
  - but constantly confronting the realities of the market place
- natural tendency to;
  - want to restrict market
  - lobby for market to operate in favour of particular workplaces (competition)

# Some Issues Raised Yesterday

- Since Rio things have worsened
- Environmental degradation is connected to poverty
- Need to fundamentally rethink and reorganize how we do things
- There are fundamental approaches that are economical and effective (Natural Capitalism)
- Environmental Transformation is a continuous process

# Two issues still up for grabs

- Power
- the role of the market

Workers have to constantly address the issue of power and the market from a particular perspective

- Dependent on our workplaces for survival
- Dependent on the market for our survival
- No fundamental power

# Power

- Employers ultimately have the power to eliminate work and shape the market
- This is particularly true in the global market which has been shaped in the last couple of decades
- Workers have to negotiate their wages and benefits in this context

# The Market

- **Workers have to deal with competition in the labour market**
  - **the labour market has deteriorated in the last two decades**
- **Jobs - a key driver in union activity and workers motivation**
- **Jobs - an immediate issue**
- **Jobs - a source of competition among workers**
- **Workers have to situate their quest for wages and benefits in the context of the effect of the market on their employer**
  - **primarily effected by factors that workers have no control of**

# Workers are not unique

Citizens in general, except for their right to vote, are in a similar situation

Workers can organize in their workplace

Citizens (mostly workers) can organize in their communities

# What Has This Got to Do with EPR?

- Extended Producer Responsibility can be a strategic pressure (starting) point for transforming production in the direction we have discussed – eg:
  - **Radical resource productivity**
  - **Biomimicry**
  - **Service and flow economy**
  - **Investing in natural capital**

# Extended Producer Responsibility impacts:

- safety and the conditions of work
- the market
- power relations

# Extended Producer Responsibility

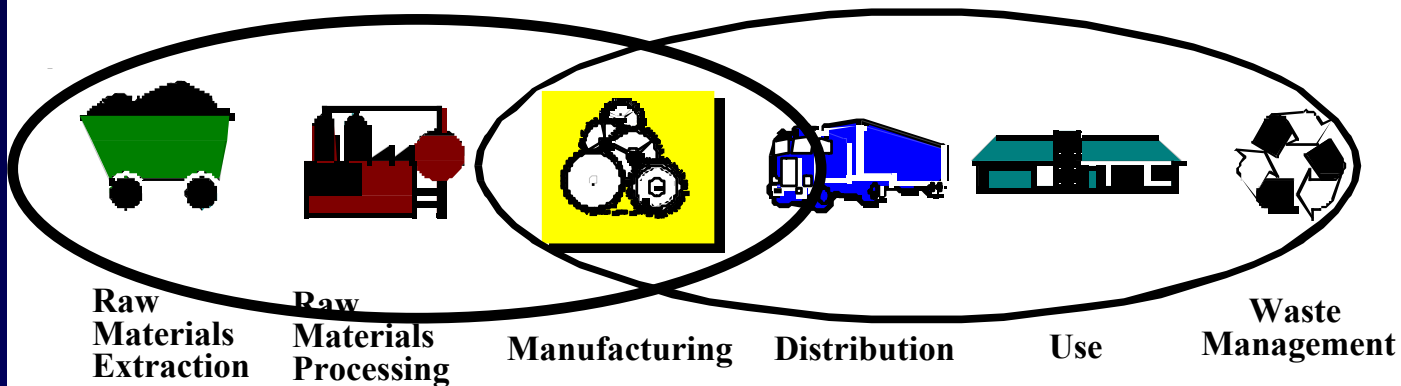
- campaigning for EPR offers an opportunity for workers in unions to impact their job security and their conditions of work

# What is EPR?

- EPR requires producers to:
  - 'take back' their end-of-life products
  - create closed looped systems that prevent pollution and the inefficient use of resources

# EPR: UP AND DOWN THE CHAIN

## EPR AS A PRINCIPLE FOR PRODUCT POLICY



# Essential Elements of EPR:

- **Mandatory**
- **Focus on products**
- **Assignment of responsibility**
  - to the brand owner
- **Physical or financial responsibility**
- **Performance standards and deadlines**
- **Mandated phase-out of hazardous materials**
- **Just Transition**

# EPR

- **extends manufacturer's responsibilities to also include responsibility for life cycle costs of their products and associated packaging**
- **enforces a design strategy that takes into account the upstream environmental impacts inherent in the selection, mining and extraction of materials, the health and environmental impacts to workers and surrounding communities during the production process itself, and downstream impacts during use, recycling and disposal of the products. The ultimate goal of EPR is to encourage cleaner, safer materials and production processes, as well as to eliminate waste at each stage of the product's life cycle**
- **new, meaningful jobs in redesign, repair, reuse and recycling**
- **EPR closes the loop**

# Extended Producer Responsibility impacts:

- safety and the conditions of work
  - requires cleaner materials in the production process
  - requires higher standards workplace safety up the supply chain
- the market
  - new, meaningful jobs in redesign, repair, reuse and recycling (labour market)
- power relations
  - restricts the operation of the market – jobs cannot be exported - toxics and waste cannot be exported

# EPR Part of Broader Concept

## STEPS TO SUSTAINABILITY

BioSociety

Clean Process

### Introduction

Toxic Use Reduction  
Pollution Prevention

"Safe manufacturing  
and production systems"

Clean Products

### Introduction

Product Policy  
Life Cycle Thinking  
Product Labeling  
Green Procurement  
Eco-Tax

"Green products  
from cradle to cradle"

Closed Loop Systems

### Introduction

Extended Producer  
Responsibility  
Zero Waste  
Industrial Ecology

"Material reuse  
and recycling - just  
like nature does"

### Introduction

Ecological Engineering  
Intelligent Design  
Biobased Materials  
Nutrient Recycling  
Safe Chemicals  
Dematerialized Economy  
Fair Trade  
Organic Farming  
Renewable Energy

"Human societies and  
the world's ecosystems  
maintain stability and  
diversity"

Sustainable Consumption

Adoption of the Precautionary Principal

Right to Know and Public Participation

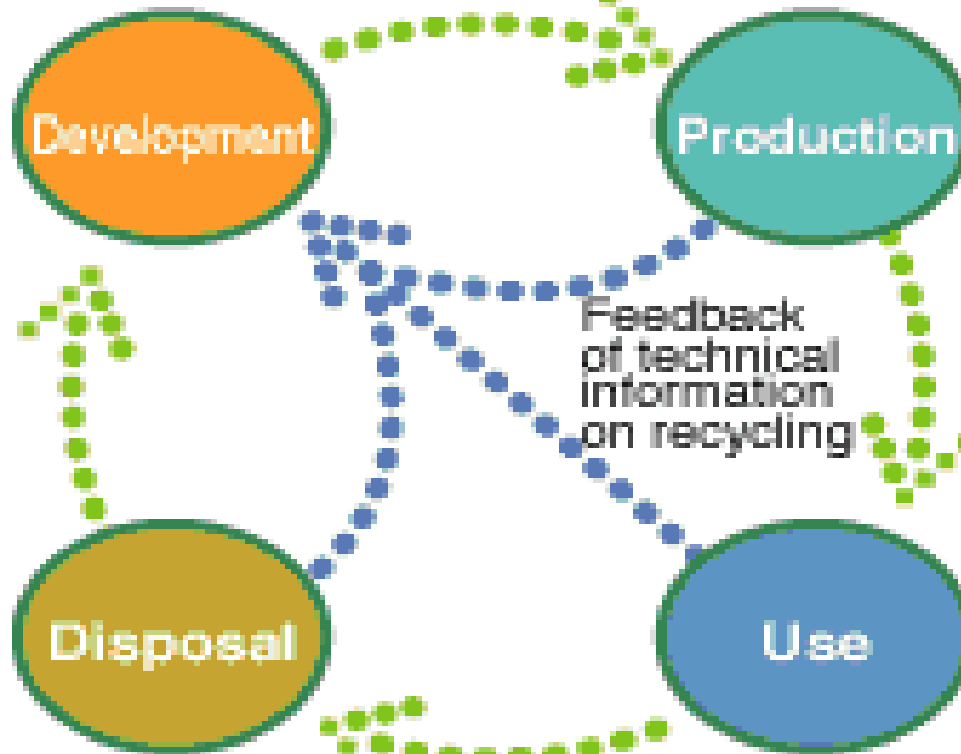
# EPR in the Auto Industry

- Auto Companies are dealing with design for disassembly

# Toyota

Development of easy-to-recycle materials and designs that take removability into consideration

Development of various recycling technologies and pursuit of enhanced efficiency



Research into efficient dismantling technologies for end-of-life vehicles, and utilization of shredder residue

Establishment of system for collecting and recycling bumpers replaced at the dealers

# Europe End of Life Vehicle Legislation

(Credit – Mark Bartlett)

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- ✓ **Covers vehicles and end of life vehicles (ELV's)**
  - ✓ including their components and materials
- ✓ **Applies irrespective of how the vehicle has been serviced, repaired or fitted**
- ✓ **Original Equipment Manufacturers responsible**
  - ✓ to ensure that vehicle can be returned at no cost to owner
- ✓ **Directs the Treatment and dismantling of ELV's**

# Treatment

- treatment operations must be registered
- ELV's must be stripped before further treatment
- Hazardous materials and components must be removed and segregated
  - prevent contamination of shredder waste
- Stripping and storage must ensure suitability for reuse and recovery

# EUROPEAN UNION

## END OF LIFE VEHICLE DIRECTIVE

- **July 1, 2001** -Provide dismantling information to recyclers to meet requirements
- **July 1, 2002** -Publish recyclability and recoverability information on vehicles and component designs
- **July 1, 2003** -Eliminate/reduce required hazardous materials-
- **January 1, 2005** -Establish new vehicle design requirements for reuse/recyclability and recovery
- **Jan. 1, 2006 & Jan. 1, 2015**- Establish ELV reuse/recycle and recovery requirements
- *Encourage increase of recycled material content in new vehicles to establish new markets for ELV materials.*

# Auto Dismantling

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## CAW EPR Campaign

- History of Activity

- CAW Environment Conference
- Great Lakes United and CAW (CAW Local 1520 and CAW Windsor Region Environment Council)
- Environmental Activists (OEN, TEA, GLU)

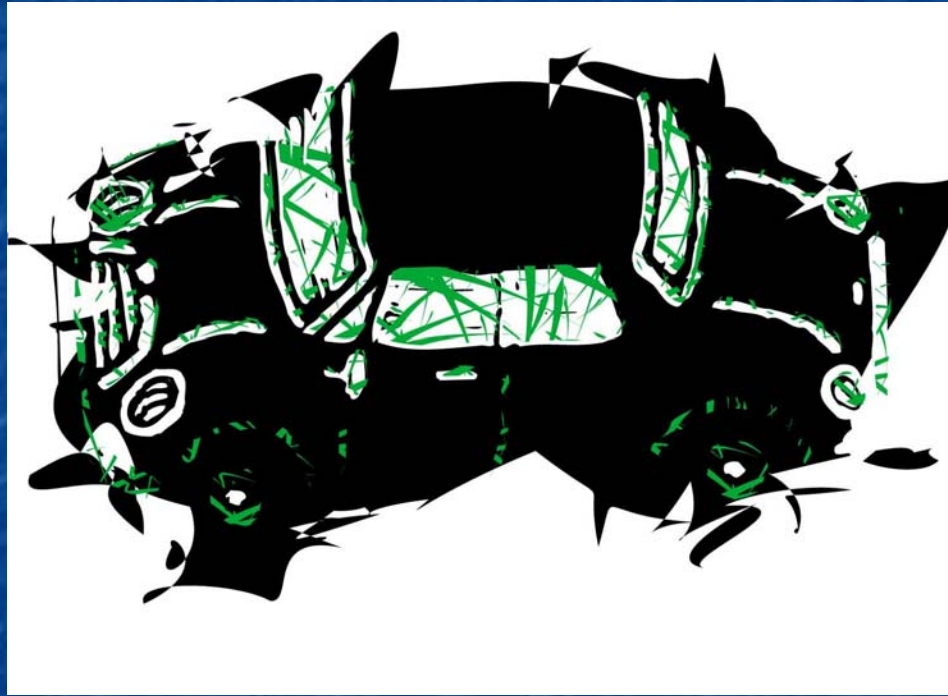
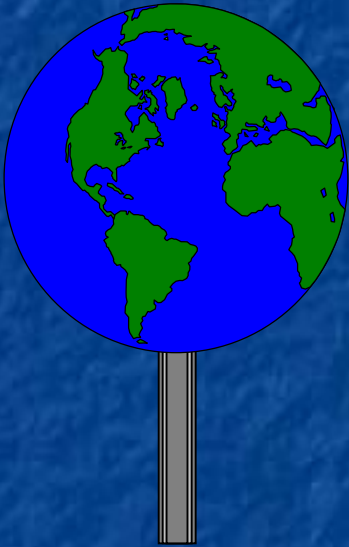
# **Auto Dismantling**

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## **CAW EPR Campaign**

- CAW Windsor Regional Environment Council Launches Campaign – October 2002
- Endorsed by CAW National Executive Board – November 2002

# Extended Producer Responsibility (*EPR*)



*Taking Back Cars*  
*Protecting Our Environment!*  
*Protecting Our Jobs!*

# **Auto Dismantling**

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## **CAW EPR Campaign**

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# **Auto Dismantling**

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## **CAW EPR Campaign**

- Extended Producer Responsibility system
- Obligation on all auto companies who sell in Canada to take back the car at end of life
- Deconstruct it and recycle or reuse it in Canada

# Auto Dismantling

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## CAW EPR Campaign

- Components:

- Letters

- Post Cards

- Petitions

- Other Tools

# Auto Dismantling

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## CAW EPR Campaign

- How to Conduct the Campaign
  - Do a Special Session at Your Membership Meeting
  - Bring the information into the workplace
  - Talk to your fellow workers at work
  - Organize special workshops

# Extended Producer Responsibility

- is a strategic pressure (starting) point
  - reversing slide to complete deregulation (total market dominance)
  - shifting burden of environmental degradation to the source
  - building social justice issues into the environmental agenda

# EPR

- consistent with union objectives and workers' interests
- consistent with societies interests
- ***BUT***
  - there is a long way to go

# The Challenges - Union Movement

- cannot transform society only by action in the workplace
  - need political and community action and transformation
  - need allies
- generally operates within management rights forced to accept market conditions
  - is beginning to and needs to further expand its concept
    - bargaining what we produce and how
    - strengthening the role of workers and citizens in shaping societies direction - democracy

# The Challenges - For Everyone

- Environmental transformation
  - every change impacts on every thing else
  - the market (unrestricted) solves this unevenly
    - some suffer, some gain
  - Current global reality allows powerful interests to shape the market
  - no effective mechanism for dealing with this
- ***need an overarching mechanism globally and nationally***

# A Long Way to Go

- recognize the identity between social needs, environmental needs and democracy
- build a recognition and acceptance of need to challenge the market and power relations if we are to protect the environment
- establish allies

***Think Globally, Ally Globally  
Act Locally, Transform Globally***

