

September 19, 2005

The Subsidy Dance

To the Editor:

I have to disagree with your Sept. 15 editorial "Hopeful Words: On Helping the Poor." The president's words were exactly the wrong words when he conditioned the elimination of "all tariffs, subsidies and other barriers to free flow of goods and services as other nations do the same."

The European Union and the United States are engaged in an elaborate dance of who goes first in reducing and ultimately eliminating their extravagant agricultural subsidies. These are empty words unless the president resolves to take leadership in eliminating America's own subsidies without conditions.

Until we do so, our trade policies will not be a poverty reduction strategy. Instead, they will continue to be a poverty creation strategy for many countries in the developing world.

June Zeitlin
Executive Director,
Women's Environment and Development Organization (WEDO)
New York, Sept. 15, 2005
<http://www.wedo.org>