

# **Australia's relationship with the World Trade Organisation**

## **Submission**

### **Joint Standing Committee on Treaties**

Monday, August 28, 2000

Chairperson

Australia's relation with the W.T.O. is in my view a relationship with the Star Chamber that represents Multinational Organisations that rule the world.

As Australia is now owned by foreign interest to the tune of over 85 Per Cent our involvement is one of parent and child relationship, asking for handouts that is of some equality.

As the world is now made up of huge multinationals, who's only interests, are the welfare of shareholders, who contribute to their interests; And complete dominance of third world countries which are exploited by these multinationals. Australia is becoming very close to being part of that banana republic ethos.

I must echo the feeling of the trade union movement's assertion that in Australia we are not living on a level playing field scenario.

Free trade instead of fair trade is costing Australia dearly in as much as the fabric of living that we once all enjoyed are gone, all major big companies are now being run by foreign management and consultants who's learning is shareholder orientated.

American university trained executives are now running huge companies like B.H.P. and Telstra. Humanity and compassion does not come into the equation where profits at any costs are concerned, as the rich get richer and the poor get poorer.

The whole fabric of living is declining and the good living condition that were bought about by the trade union movement are constantly under threat by the national Liberal Party who represent these unscrupulous multinationals.

There was a recent public input into Defence Review 2000 on what was the best way to spend, on Australia's defence, some sections of our population saying that they will not fight for foreigners who own our country and what contribution will they make to the defense of their interest.

That is what the World Trade Organisation represents and Australia has and will continue to have no clout while our country is owned by multinational shareholders.

The United States President Clinton is on the public record saying that the only interest that he has, is that of America and he does not care whose toes he treads on to achieve that goal. America stole our beef and grain markets when their farmers demanded it and were strongly subsidised by their government, our only reaction was to put in a rhetorical protest.

America embraced China to be part of the so called free trade policy, there are no cows in China, who are one of the beneficiary of letting China be part of the free world trade, with a Mcdonalds outlet on every corner, it will be the American cattle industry that will benefit.

The World Trade Organisation is a one way street. Australia is now suffering dearly in the infrastructure of the manufacturing industry with cheap imports produced by labour

that would not be tolerated here, although back yard operators who migrated from these Asian countries have bought there customs with them.

Globalisation has not improved many living conditions in these exploited third world countries, that are the cause of Australian Factories closing down, we can not compete with the inhumane conditions that these people are subjected to, for the sake of profits for the multinationals who dominate the W.T.O.

Globalisation in the Maritime industry with Flag of Convenience shipping or for a better word Ships Of Shame is a heritage shame in itself, our environment is in grave danger with these ships running around our coastline, because of the ideological hatred that this government has for the Maritime Union of Australia and the Australian seafarer who sacrificed their lives in the defence of our country in the second world war.

Australia needs desperately their own shipping identity, which they had when the defense dept. had control over the Australian National Line. Globisation has bought with it, a massive drug problem with evidence that Foreign shipping plays a huge part in the importation of narcotics that is doing tremendous damage to our fabric of living. The human cost to our own citizens is not worth the foreign takeover of our shipping industry.

What is the W.T.O. all about; the International Commission on shipping [ICONS] is holding worldwide meetings. Submissions sent to that commission has also exposed the greed of the multinational whose environmental credentials are a sham and an indicator of what these ships are doing to the ecology of the planet, all because of free trade, which should be put in the right context, its free greed and exploitation at the expense of the Australian and world environment.

Australia has repeatedly been victim of the dictates of foreign capital and until we make a stand concerning our national pride we will always be playing the role of the puppet in a world dominated by foreign multinationals. This I submit.

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