

GERARD SONT
ACTOR TEACHER

The Secretary
JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON TREATIES
Re: Free Trade Agreement

11 APRIL 2004

HAVE A NICE DAY

This innocuous little platitude has come to symbolise all that is America today.

On the surface, it appears friendly, courteous, professional and gracious. Yet Australians have always wondered why the phrase engendered suspicion. This could be partly due to its diffident delivery. Maybe it's the automaton like repetition. Perhaps it's the feeling that we are listening to carefully constructed verbal. A formulary pleasantries born from years of research by zealous sales directors designed to maximise McDonalds profits. Either way, at a very human gut level, Australians know it's phoney and that we are being conned.

Having lived in America for 2 years I am acutely aware of how provincial the majority of its people are. For Americans the world starts and ends in LA and New York. That is why they don't know the name of our Prime Minister. That's why they won't let an Aussie fly the flag outside her home in the States. That's why they don't know the difference between a Moslem and Mossad. Peace keeping and profit taking? No problem. Have a nice day.

Americans are obsessed with control and security hence the majority own weapons. Xenophobia is endemic. This explains their obsession with entertainment that features killing, maiming, shooting, explosions, conspiracy and murder. This is their world. It is not Australia. And this is the world your **agreement** would seek to **saturate** Australian lives with.

Already 50% of castings I attend require an American accent. I do not wish my child to speak with an American accent. I do not wish my children to adopt America's political agenda, national ideology or social philosophy. **We are Australian. Keep our content Australian.**

America proudly went into Iraq as liberators from a totalitarian state and a UN sanctioned Global Police Force entrusted to search out and destroy any Weapons of Mass Destruction. There are none. There never were. The only thing in Iraq is oil. Have a nice day.

America only cares about America. That's simply the American way. One has only to read the numerous 'Self Help/ Get Ahead/ Motivational' manuals spawned from the US to understand their rationale. The FTA in its current form is a tremendous boon for the United States. Their appreciation for our support in Iraq would appear mere lip service. Have a nice day.

I listened closely to America's pre-war rhetoric – "We are saving a starving nation. We are freeing an abused and terrorised people. We are protecting the world from a potential nuclear threat". Between the lines we hear – We are the good guys. Trust us. Support us. We care about you. We're professionals.

It all had that same familiar ring to it.....HAVE A NICE DAY

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