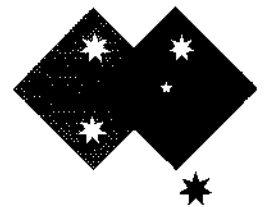


Sydney Branch

Retired Metalworkers & Printers

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BY:.....

A.M.W.U Granville
N.S.W. P.O Box 2142
April 2004

AMWU

Submission No: 24

Julia Morris.
Inquiry Secretary
Commonwealth Parliament Treaties Committee
Parliament House Canberra A.C.T 2600

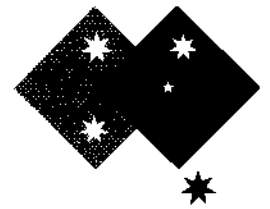
Firstly it is well to recall the discussion on the Multilateral Agreement on Investment that the present Federal Government refused to sign (to their credit) Its also well to recall that there was no repercussion following this refusal to sign.

Our Organisation has been disadvantaged in its efforts to analyse in depth the Free Trade Agreement / Between the Commonwealth of Australia and the USA , by our inability to obtain a Hard Copy of this Treaty from the committee secretariat, but not withstanding this problem we have researched with the assistance of qualified persons in economics and trade law to the best of our available resources and on that information our Organisation believes that this treaty is a unbalanced agreement in favour of the United States of America which seems to have as one of its main centre points the unrestricted entry of USA foreign capital into Australia a provision we believe could have very serious consequences for Australia ownership

As a association that covers many hundreds of members in all States and Territories that is made up of senior Australians retirees, we express our real concern that the American /Australian Free Trade Agreement could lead to the Americanisation of our Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme and Health System Whilst we concede that there are many short comings in our own State and Commonwealth health Systems, never the less at this point in time we believe our system is far superior to the USA. health service which through the lack of medical private health insurance can preclude the ill from hospitals or medical treatment a system that Australians would not want to see imposed on them because of a American / Australian Free Trade Agreement

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Our Association is also concerned that USA drug companies through this agreement will attempt to challenge the legality of our Australian P.B.H scheme as being unfair and restrictive irrespective of the benefit this scheme gives to all Australian citizens (under Annex 2c of the A.A.F.T.A)



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We also express concern that the powerful USA Agricultural and Farm lobby group will invoke those articles in the Treaty to exclude Australian Farm produce if they find that such produce is causing loss of market share to their own producers in the home country, yet our understanding is that there is no similar clause in this treaty for Australian Farm Producers to exercise the same rights. We believe that the exclusion of Australian produced sugar from this agreement demonstrates a real weakness in the Treaty in regard to the free trade of Agricultural produce .

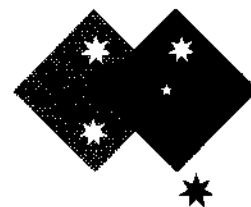
The import of subsidised fruit and vegetables from the USA under this trade agreement may lead to the illusion of cheaper food cost but in truth may well be costing Australians more by the virtue of increased unemployment in the Farm sector.

The motor vehicle and spare parts manufacturing industry in Australia in the main is controlled by large American Corporations (ie) Ford , General Motors again this F.T.A will make it much more profitable and easy for these Companies to move manufacturing to the USA on the basis of greater mass production per volume of vehicle manufacture components at lower cost and then reimport these components into their Australian Home Companies as a Australian Made Product resulting in the loss of employment for Australian Workers in the vehicle and spare parts industry , further the erroneous proposition that this F.T.A will open up export markets for Australian manufacture vehicles to the USA. does not take into account the fact that all Australian motor vehicles are right hand drive and would have to be re manufactured to left hand drive at added cost, then compete against their own company product in the USA !

Our Association believes it is reasonable to bring to the committees notice free trade agreements that the USA have entered into with other Nations and the consequences of such agreements such the North American Free Trade Agreement (N.A.F.T.A) Treaty was heralded as a guarantee to solve the economic problems of Mexico and give the USA and Canada greatly enhanced trade opportunities into the Mexican market of 105 Million people for Mexico the transferring of USA manufacturing Companies to that country has created some employment opportunities but at a cost to the health and the environment of its people.

Plants producing toxic chemicals/ solvents/ Lead smelters/ glass factories burning old tyres as fuel , Resulting in the worlds highest rate of Lupus occurring in the Mexican Sonora area

The fact that over 10 million Mexicans have entered the USA in recent time as



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illegal migrants, that President George .W .Bush has been forced into considering the granting a Amnesty to try and stabilise a serious social and economic problem for people who have in the main fled to the State of California and in doing so have caused a massif economic problems to the once richest State in the USA in there endeavour to seek a better way of life that the N.A.F.T.A was supposedly created to give them, has led to many Australians question the benefit of F.T.As the simple fact that 1999 the Harris Polls conducted a survey that disclosed 57% of USA people had stated that NAFTA had been good for Mexico but not good for the USA Conversely the same poll showed that more than 73% of Mexican people believed that NAFTA had been good for the USA. but bad for them Even the previous supporters of NAFTA the Economist magazine journal and that champion of the free market, Citizens for Tax Reform publication in Canada freely admitted that the majority of Canadian people did not believe NAFTA had been good for them

We strongly question the proposition that A.A.F.T.A, will give Australia better access to the strongest economy in the world and its markets the correctness of this thinking that Australia will become a partner in USA prosperity should be view against the facts that in the year 2003 the USA had a deficit budget of \$521 Billion Dollars the largest deficit in USA economic history ! The all up National Government Debt in the USA now stands at \$20.6 Trillion Dollars , When adding the amount of private sector debt to the overall deficit the total rises to \$ 39. 4 Trillion Dollars Thus the USA at the end of 2003 had a negative worth of \$13. Trillion Dollars our concern is that USA economy seem to be based on its power to absorb the Economies of other Nation to balance it own serious deficits

The A.M.W.U Retired Members Association sincerely hopes that this submission will be view by the committee as genuine written concern for the well being of future generations and a attempt to protect there birthrights from a Trade Treaty that our members see as a agreement full of double meanings and dubious wording

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Yours Faithfully

T. Shiner N.S.W /R.M.A State Sect.