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Committee Secretary
Joint Standing Committee on Treaties
Dept of House of Representatives
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

RECEIVED
30 APR 2004

BY:.....

Madam/Sir,

Submission on the proposed Australia-United States Free Trade Agreement

We would like to register our strongest objections to the so-called Free Trade Agreement, which is anything but "Free". It is at best a restricted trade agreement by, for example, leaving sugar out altogether and taking 18 years to achieve the increase in beef access. We would lose any credibility we had when criticising EU and US farm subsidies, if we finish up subsidising our sugar producers as a result of this deal, thus compromising our position in future WTO negotiations.


Australia's competitiveness in "the world's most dynamic and richest economy" (a point the government likes to stress) does not only depend on tariffs and quotas but largely on the exchange rate, which this deal does nothing to return to more favourable levels.

We object to an agreement, any agreement, entered into by one government, that is binding not only on a future (and possibly different) one, but also on future generations of Australians, to the point of leaving us open to court action not only by foreign governments, but also by multi &/or transnational corporations!

There is no doubt that Australia's numerous and diverse interest groups will have differing perceptions on what constitutes the "national interest". Our overwhelming concern is with the consequences other US "Free Trade Agreements" of this nature have had in other countries, South American generally and Argentina in particular.

We are profoundly worried that by entering into this deal with the United States, we will be signing up to a similar fate.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Peter Dutton". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "P".A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lugeborg Fine". The signature is cursive, with "Lugeborg" written in a larger, more prominent script than "Fine".

28 April 2004