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From: Paul Hamilton [SMTP:pjhamilton@bigpond.com]
Sent: Friday, September 15, 2000 4:58 AM
To: 'jsct@aph.gov.au'
Subject: Individual Submission - Australia's relationship with WTO

Dear Sir/Madam,

With respect, I submit the following points to the Joint Standing Committee on Treaties with respect to the inquiry into the nature and scope of Australia's relationship with the WTO.

1. The scope of the issues identified with respect to the inquiry generally "beg the question". It is apparent that the concern is to "how to increase the depth or improve Australia's relationship with the WTO" rather than address more fundamental questions. For example, should Australia be involved with the WTO at all? What's wrong with developing trade agreements bilaterally?
2. Since when was it proclaimed to the Australian people that there has been and will increasingly be an effective transfer of sovereignty to the WTO? Apart from various fashionable mutterings about the "inevitability" of it all. Whilst the WTO doesn't specifically direct the Australian Government, there would be few who would argue that the WTO has little influence in Australian affairs.
3. Over recent decades, there has been a significant reduction of Australian's equity with respect to previously owned assets - i.e. Australian's own less and less of Australia. Does the committee expect this trend to reverse by getting more involved with the WTO? What are the long term implications of involvement with the WTO?

Regards.

Paul Hamilton.