

**SENATE FOREIGN AFFAIRS, DEFENCE AND TRADE  
REFERENCES COMMITTEE**

**INQUIRY INTO GENERAL AGREEMENT ON TRADE IN  
SERVICES AND AUSTRALIA/US FREE TRADE AGREEMENT**

**SUBMISSION**

**Submission No:** 18

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77, Weller Street,  
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Dear Sir/Madam,

Senate Inquiry - General Agreement on Trade in Services  
and Aus/USA Free Trade Agreement.

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My comments are on (d) ~~THE IMPACT~~ of GATS on the provision and access to public services provided by Government such as Health, Education and Water; and (e) the impact of GATS on the ability of all levels of Government to regulate services and public assets.

The penultimate paragraph in Alan Freeman's paper "The New World Trade Order - GATT and the World Trade Organisation" reads as follows:-

"The alternative in the first instance does not lie in the adoption of any economic nostrum but in reasserting the sovereign POLITICAL rights of all humans over their own activities and results: to decide for themselves how they will arrange for their production, their welfare, their lands, their education and their means for informing themselves."

In other words, the right of economic self-determination for all free peoples in a democratic society.

To me private enterprise works in some economic activities, Government provision in others. It is a matter of finding out which. What I dislike is this either/or mentality. What works for us all is what matters. Sometimes parts of both, sometimes neither but something else, a voluntary non-profit organisation, for example, or a co-operative.

Governments, it seems to me, are not functioning for the benefit of all of us but for some ideology of "small Government, leave it to the Market". This makes nonsense of democracy since in the end this means money power, not people power. If Governments are not going to govern for us all, why do we bother? I find it curious that our politicians are so keen on making themselves redundant.

I have read or been told that National Governments rights will be respected. I am sceptical. Money is power and can be used to influence Governments and their peoples, with the best of intentions of course and we all know about good intentions. The transnationals and the big banks carry out their functions well enough but it is not on their agendas or indeed interests to be concerned with the rest of us. This is the role of Governments, their agencies and the public service.

How does private enterprise intend to make a profit from the Third World? Most of the people will be too poor to pay for services. By debt to Western Banks? Or is this a take-over ultimately of the whole country by private enterprise?

p.t.o.

May I suggest that the Government and public service scan closely the small print of any agreements.

This applies also for the projected Australia/USA Free Trade Agreement, otherwise we may be unable to protect ourselves from disease, toxic substances and owning our own resources.

I have read that Ricardo argued that three conditions are essential for free trade to be fair trade: capital must not be allowed to cross national borders from a high wage to a low wage country, trade between the participating countries must be balanced, and each country must have full employment. These conditions do not apply at this time. Moreover nations aim for a surplus over imports not a balanced trade system.

I realise that what I have written is familiar because these points have been put forward by the Democrats, N.G.O's and others.

Nevertheless, I cannot help feeling that what is going on will result in a betrayal of the people. Therefore, in an echo of Oliver Cromwell, I beseech you to consider that the W.T.O. et al, may be mistaken.

Yours faithfully,



Notes: Alan Freeman: Chapter 7 in "What Everybody really wants to know about Money" by Frances Hutchinson.

Ricardo: quoted by Michael Rowbotham in "Grip of Death"

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