

Submission to the Senate Select Committee on the Free Trade Agreement between Australia and the United States of America

FROM: Joanna OBrien

Having extensively followed the many discussions and much information on this Free Trade Agreement I have a very STRONG belief that it is NOT in the interests of Australia to sign it. It MAY be in the "economic" interests of some manufacturers and exporters, though in the long run I doubt this, but it is NOT in the interests of our social, environmental or cultural wellbeing. **OUR SOCIETY IS MUCH MORE THAN OUR ECONOMY.**

I am particularly concerned by the impact of the FTA on:

- our quarantine arrangements which have kept Australia free of many pests and diseases
- the control and pricing of our pharmaceuticals
- the local content of our mass media
- the Americanisation of our culture
- the Americanisation of our education
- our need to become better integrated with Asian nations

The exclusion of sugar and the postponement of beef for 18 years (and then qualified) makes a mockery of the whole process. I believe we have not been strong enough in standing up to the economic might of the US and are selling our social and cultural heritage for a very little possible financial gain only.

Please remember that we are much more than just our economy and dollars. I believe it is great folly to accept the terms and content of such an agreement and urge you very strongly to **ADVISE THE SENATE NOT TO SIGN THE AGREEMENT.**

Please listen to the people and not just the supposed financial gain.

Joanna OBrien
27 April 2004