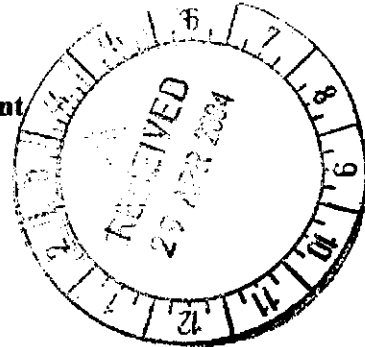


Noel Olive

Senate Select Committee on the US Free Trade Agreement
Parliament House
Canberra



22 April 2004-

Senators.

We believe that the Australian Government should not be party to this agreement.

An agreement presumes equality between the parties. This agreement is between two unequal parties, with the magnitude of potential benefits entirely disproportionate. The weaker, Australia, gains little economically as against potential long term exploitation of Australians and Australian resources by the United States Corporations.

One only has to view the extent of US investment in Australian minerals. In Western Australia Con Zinc Rio Tinto dominates the iron ore industry and is continuing to add more and more tracts of Australian soil to its sphere of interest. To lessen the degree of review on such investment is ludicrous.

Existing American corporation activity and influence on the Australian economy must be constantly monitored and reviewed, in addition to review of new investments.

The proposed FTA is but a vehicle for exchange of Australia's national sovereignty for international corporate control of the Australian economy. Australia must retain control over its environment, its resources, its culture and governmental ability to make laws in the interest of Australians. The FTA will give that control to overseas corporations.

The initial question to answer is: what does Australia need? And if that cannot be addressed in a FTA then do not proceed with the deal.

In the circumstances one is reminded of an old biblical message to the effect that when "the lamb laid down with the lion he lost his chops". Better to sleep in a safe bed or with a different bed-mate.

Faithfully

Noel Olive, Vilma McKinnon