

To the Senate Select Committee on the Free Trade Agreement  
between Australia and the United States of America:

Senators,

Based on the information I've received to date, the proposed "Free Trade Agreement" is a misnomer. One might suspect that the very name was designed to mislead the public. How could a "free trade" agreement restrict, for example, the amount of Australian content on TV? To do so is an unwarranted and unjustifiable interference in Australian domestic activity. It would be better described as a "Restraint of Trade Agreement". Interesting that the USA itself has spent billions in the last century trying to extirpate such restraints of trade, whether at home or abroad.

Further, some announcements have implied that further restrictions on Australian activity may be made, not by Australians or their governments, but by Americans and their governments or regulatory bodies. This is astounding! Australia is a sovereign nation, and should accept no limitation on its freedom of action being imposed by any other nation. I think the correct term for such limitation is "colonisation".

One may ask what we might gain in return for such generous "concessions" as the FTA proposes. The correct answer is that no price is high enough for our birthright: freedom of self-determination.

It is essential that Australia retain the maximum possible freedom to determine its own policy. Of course we will always be mindful of the interests of our friends and allies. Many of these are our near neighbours geographically, while others are near to us culturally. But we cannot love our neighbours as ourselves, if we do not first love ourselves enough. Only by putting Australia's own interests first can we ever realistically hope that we will be able to protect those interests.

For these reasons, I urge that the committee find that the Senate should NOT pass legislation enabling the proposed FTA.

Sincerely,  
Yahya