

4th May 2004
Secretary
Senate Select Committee
FTA Between Australia & the USA
Suite S1.30.1,
The Senate
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600



Dear Committee Members,

I am aware that this submission is submitted past the dead line, however I am a voter and wish to voice my objection.

I can not see the any real benefit to Australia or her primary producers regarding the FTA that has been negotiated. I have read as much as I possibly can (without real access to the actual document) and I would like to raise a couple of points.

1. It is claimed by our esteemed local member Mr Brough that Australian farmers will have *"improved access or tariff reductions for hundreds of primary products"*. Has anyone done any real cost analysis regarding Australian produced products and that which is like to flood our market from the USA?

2. We are such a small global player, why is it that under this agreement the USA will have more than 99% of their manufactured & agricultural goods exported into Australia becoming duty free immediately upon entry into force of the agreement whereas some Australian goods exported to the USA will have to wait 4, 10 and 18 years or be restricted to a percentage of growth per annum (again quoted by Mr Brough) *"Tariffs on the majority of agricultural products will be zero from day 1 of the Agreement, further elimination of other tariffs will take place over period of 4, 10 and 18 years"*. Will our farmers, such as our beef and dairy, be able to survive the onslaught of imports while these restrictions are in place. It is fare trade, not free trade, Australia requires.

3. When Australia's quarantine measures are changed to suite the USA imports of pork, citrus, apples and stone fruit, who will be accountable when things go wrong? I would like to see those making these decisions now held accountable to the Australian people in future. Perhaps their decisions would be more legitimate if, in the event of some problem, they were liable to loose their home or for a jail sentence. I don't see this as extreme because if something happens, the results would not be reversible and the cost immeasurable.

4. In relation to workers rights, it is proposed that both parties shall strive to ensure that their domestic laws provide for labour standards, as members of the International Labor (sorry about the American spelling of Labour) Organisation, that are consistent with international recognised labour principles. What are the international recognised labour principles? Is this where Mr Alexander Downer steps in and urges Australian business to exploit cheap India labour, for example. Does this benefit Australians?

Be under no illusions, the decisions you make today will effect your children and grandchildren.

Please realise many hundreds will loose their lives over this issue. They will not, and are not coping with harsh conditions imposed on them. Consider, when making your decision, that it is your job to tell these families that their way of life is over.

Yours sincerely,

Susan Meredith