

I am concerned about the proposed free trade treaty with the USA. I am a private citizen who feels like I would like to be heard on this issue.

I agree generally that trade should be without unnecessary encumbrances, however free trade is not a right and should never be allowed to interfere with a sovereign country's internal affairs.

It should never be used to diminish public services, local employment, working conditions or wages. Nor should it be used to increase the privatisation of public services. Furthermore there should not be coercion or an obligation to trade with any country with substandard civil rights, or working conditions, or wages. In fact trade can be, and has been a powerful force of moral pressure.

The United States of America has many worrying and inefficient aspects that should be taken into account.

1. The increasing power of the Homeland Security Act, with its devastating effect on freedoms, and increase in the power of police in that country.
2. Their championing of Genetically Engineered goods, which the Australian public overwhelmingly rejects.
3. The irresponsible over-incarceration of the own populace, and the barbaric continuation of the death penalty.
4. Their cavalier disregard of the Sovereign rights, and interference in the internal affairs of other nations. The recent coup in Haiti showing the continuance of this practice under the present regime.
5. Their substandard health and welfare systems
6. Their uneven distribution of income
7. The chronic substandard wages and conditions of their own citizens.

Trade could be a means to leverage their policies in these areas, and increase quality of life in both countries. If however these issues are not addressed, trade could be used to pull Australian conditions down further.

The government of a country has an obligation to the citizens of that country, not to any foreign power, nor to the best interests of any company or to the shareholders of any company including reserve banks, international banking or trade organizations. Such organizations should only be supported if their practices coincide with the best outcomes for the majority of citizens in our country.

Thank you,
Brenten Ireland

