

To the Senate Select Committee

I am writing now to express my deep concern about the US Free Trade Agreement which is currently being negotiated; one main concern is the proposed 'Investment Chapter' allowing US companies unprecedented rights to sue our government for 'creating barriers to their profits', in past US free trade agreements such barriers have included suing against Environmental Laws and other matters of public interest (such as when the Canadian government banned the use of the fuel additive MMT for public health reasons and Ethyl Corporation, which produces MMT, sued the Canadian govt for \$13 million for breaching the Free Trade Agreement).

The FTA could have devastating affects to our country our people and our nations sovereignty

I am also very concerned about the affects on the Australian media, as you must be knowing the media is a key method of influencing public opinion and the Australian thinking and culture, I am very concerned that moves to leave Australian media vulnerable to being overwhelmed by cheap American productions would undermine our proud Australian culture, reducing our children to a generation of 'American-wannabes'.

Another strong concern is attacks on our Pharmaceuticals Benefits Scheme; this scheme is the result of years of the Australian culture of a fair-go and equal concern to all. I assume I don't need to tell you that it is the American Pharmaceuticals Corporations that wish to remove this, for profit-making purposes. But do think for yourself, in the reality of the world are not the health and happiness of real people, the people of this country, the people who have voted you in; more important than the profits made by these American corporations?

I am also aware and concerned about the undemocratic nature in which these negotiations are being carried out, why aren't the people who are affected by it, this is not democracy, I implore that all details of previous meetings and all negotiations in the future be open for public observation.

Privatization of public services and resources is also a serious concern, you may be aware of the Bolivian water crisis which arose out of the North American Free Trade Agreement. Already the Australian Conservation Foundation has released a report on the FTA, which states that it fears the FTA could lead to the privatization of our National Parks.

These issues are the people's issues, our children's issues, my issues and your issues, you have power to make a real change in the course of history, I urge you to take a stance and stop these problems from eventuating.

Help create a world that our children will be proud to receive

Sincerely

Nishan Disanayake

