

Please reject the dangerous Trans-Pacific Partnership deal.

For the past few years i have keenly followed the political shenanigans regarding the Mad Monk / Turnbull Misgovernment's shamefully egregious policy desecration of Oz society & environment, not to mention the pure evil of their asylum seeker crimes. Their malfeasance & incompetence knows few bounds. The blessed removal of Abbott, with replacement by Turnbull, has brought no policy relief, given the asinine continuation of bad policies against environment, asylum seekers, social justice, marriage equality, et al. **My current submission concerns the TPP.**

This misgovernment signed us up for the KAFTA in early 2014 despite its inclusion of ISDS clauses. It seemed hell-bent on replicating this idiocy in the JAFTA also, until ISDS were removed following public outcry. ISDS allows foreign corporations to sue our government over policies and regulations in the interest of the public or the environment, and is a serious risk to our sovereignty and democracy.

It has proved impossible to effectively carve-out the environment and public health from ISDS clauses in other agreements. Investors are able to sue over the process, as well as the content of the legislation, by claiming the process of developing the law did not include "fair and equitable" treatment for them. Because of this, many investors in other countries have pursued cases even when there have been so-called exemptions for health and environment laws.

In its 2010 report, the Productivity Commission stated that there did not "appear to be an underlying economic problem that necessitates the inclusion of ISDS provisions within agreements." The report also noted the "policy and financial risks" for governments posed by ISDS.

It is to my near-astonishment that this pack of incompetents relentlessly pursued the TPP despite its inclusion of ISDS as well. Andrew Robb publicly vacillated between dismissively lambasting dissenting community voices as liars, trouble-makers or both, or alternatively uttering half-hearted pseudo-assurances that he would never sign us up for anything that would hurt us. With the miserable record of this misgovernment's assaults on public good, social cohesion & environmental protection, not to mention its repeatedly demonstrated concern for corporations over community & citizens, such weak verbal assurances are worth less than the paper on which they're printed.

I ask the TPP Senate inquiry not to endorse the TPP deal, given it includes ISDS provisions. ISDS should not be included in ANY trade agreement. Australians don't want to see us make an agreement that would give special privileges for foreign companies (including companies from the United States) to sue our government.

Everything to do with TPP containing ISDS provisions should be reason enough to reject such a proposition. However there are additional reasons. The TPP will also cause higher prices for medicines, threaten our Internet freedom, and reduce Australian content in film and television.

This misgovernment appears so truth-averse that it has even rejected offers by the Productivity Commission to conduct a TPP analysis. This deliberate sustained strategy of keeping the public in the dark about the TPP is reprehensible. Nonetheless, a recent World Bank study earlier in 2016 found

that there are minimal economic benefits for Australia.

Again i submit that the TPP Senate inquiry should not endorse the TPP deal. It should be rejected. Australia should not be a signatory to it. Any politician & political party that would cede our sovereign rights & protections in such a manner would be treasonous. The Trans-Pacific Partnership trade deal would reduce the rights of future governments to act in the public interest for all Australians. Downsides of the TPP include:

1. Stronger monopolies and higher future prices for expensive biologic medicines. Medicines will be more expensive because of stronger monopoly rights for pharmaceutical companies to charge higher prices for longer.
2. Rights for foreign corporations to bypass national courts and sue governments in unfair international tribunals over changes to domestic laws for health, environment and public interest.
3. Contains no enforceable protection for rights or migrant workers, with no testing if local workers are available before bringing in temporary overseas workers.
4. Weak and unenforceable labour rights and environmental standards regarding commitments to key international agreements; does not mention climate change and allows corporations to sue over new environmental laws.
5. Restrictions on use of government purchasing to assist the steel and other industries.

I'm aware that RWNJs, especially but not only including the COALition LIeberal pollies, members & acolytes, like to portray TPP critics as protectionist &/or anti-trade. I am philosophically neither of those, & i have no innate objection to a TPP per se... but it must not be allowed to override the serious points of concern listed above.

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Sincerely,
Steffie Baird