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12/9/00**

**The Secretary,
Joint Standing Committee on Treaties,
Parliament House,
Canberra, ACT 2600
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Dear Sir/Madam,

Regarding your letter asking for a submission on Australia and the World Trade Organization.

Thank you for this opportunity to make a submission.

At the time of writing, the World Economic Forum (WEF), as an adjunct of the World Trade Organization, (Formerly GATT) is holding meetings at the Crown Hotel, Crown Casino in Melbourne, which is heavily protected by police and barricades against invasion by hordes of protesters who surround the premises and have, at times, threatened to break through, according to the mass media. Odium has been cast on the demonstrators by Melbourne newspapers at their protest and the threat of violence. Yet the fact that the WEF meeting has to be held under armed guard is a sign of its great unpopularity around the world, an unpopularity which was experienced in Seattle, which led to police brutality against dissenters who opposed it.

Previous to this meeting, the Australian Parliament rushed through a highly authoritarian and totalitarian bill, titled "The Defence Legislation Amendment (Aid to Civilian Authorities) Bill 2000, which has no sunset clause and makes no adequate distinction between peaceful protesters and those intending to do

physical or bodily harm. It authorises Australian troops to fire on civilians. This is the background to the events at the WEF, where government strongarm tactics are to be used to stifle protest. A meeting which depends on such totalitarian methods to survive is a sure sign of a move towards a slave state in which what little remains of “democracy” is to be extinguished. It is an illustration of Mao’s maxim that “power grows out of the barrel of a gun” instead of growing out of God’s power to guide humanity and even, in a humanist sense, power growing out of the will of the people. The use of force to hold a conference is a sign of the times. Australia has no Second Amendment such as exists in the United States, to allow private citizens means to resist an autocratic state: the people have already been disarmed.

The tactics of the WTO are being opposed by people around the world because they represent an attempt to foist a centralized, authoritarian, global power on countries in a way that will ignore the needs of citizens and smash national sovereignty. It gives power to multinationals and richer countries at the expense of poorer ones. It involves no consultation at grassroots level, no matter how disastrous its policies may be for the public interest in countries concerned, and the WTO and similar agencies, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank, push globalism at the expense of the popular will.

Why is the meeting during Sept. 11-13, 2000, being held in Melbourne? The WEF’s managing director, Claude Smadja, says” “we felt that bringing the summit to Australia was a way for the forum to play a modest role in the process of Australia’s integration into the Asian region.”

At no time have the Australian electors been consulted about whether they favour integration into the Asian region. In view of the fact that Australia has been flooded with Asian imports that have undercut Australian goods and driven them out of business, and that many local industries have been bought out by foreign and/or multinationals; and at a time when many farmers, who

cannot compete with imported supplies, have been driven out of business, it is likely that they would oppose “integration” with Asia. It is more likely they would favour protectionism rather than “free trade” which is not the same as “fair trade”. But they have not been asked their opinion and, if given, it is not heeded by the WTO, the Government or the “Loyal Opposition.”

This attempted WTO economic integration is a first step towards political integration, just as happened in Europe under the European Union, deemed the “United States of Europe” in which Brussels and not London is in control of British affairs.

Australian administrations, both Liberal and Labor have favoured a sellout to these globalist interests, adopting a “bi-partisan” support which pays no heed to deep popular opposition to their policies.

Big Business and government are in bed together. If a Parliamentary committee has any genuine interest in reform, it could take heed of the way subservience to global interests overrides local concerns causing hardship to individuals and national groups, needing protection against cheap imports.

They could take note of the way in which WTO carries out its decisions in anti-democratic fashion, behind closed doors, and the way in which it has become a “power elite”, a kind of “super-government.” If the WTO is to be retained, instead of being totally discarded as it should be, limits should be put on its power to bulldoze through whatever rules and regulations maximise its profits in the interest of a few.

Australia should be reminded of the fact that it can issue its own currency debt-free and that it could be issued as a credit rather than a debit. The first World War and Second World War were financed at low cost by the Commonwealth Bank. Having to “borrow” money from financiers at usurious interest places a tremendous burden on taxpayers and our posterity.

The committee should investigate the way the elector's wishes are being trashed. A letter to the *Financial Review*, July, 1997, said that in an AGB McNair survey 82% of the population were willing to leave cheap foreign imports to protect local jobs and industries, and 88% of Australians believed that reducing tariffs would cost job. At a time of widespread unemployment, matters of this kind should receive priority.

In addition, the same survey says that 77% of company directors are opposed to unilateral tariff reductions, 62% think Australia had already lost from trade liberalisation and nearly half of Australia's business leaders oppose free trade. (cited from *Australian Financial Review*, June 26,1997)

This sellout to multinationals has the potential to ruin the world. The committee could heed the words of Dr Nandana Shiva, Director of the Research Foundation for Science, Technology and Natural Resources in India. Dr Shiva told an audience that multinationals had created environmental destruction. She mentioned the way multinationals had left poverty in their wake. She mentioned that at one stage India had imported 2 million tonnes of wheat and exported 2 million tonnes of wheat, yet people still starved. This she called "bio-piracy".

In terms of disregard of the human factor, she gave the example that a U.S. Multinational forced India to build an iron smelter on a fertile plain. The women in the area had formed a human chain to block the bulldozers.

Part of the WTO agenda is the Multilateral Agreement on Investments (MAI) which wanted to promote the Multilateral Investment Agreement (MIA) that would allow multinational unlimited right to buy and sell as they wished, and disregard local regulations at will. Accountability to the public or to individual governments would not be part of their policy.

World debt is the big financial problem. The money changers must be thrown out of the temple if the world is to survive and avert global crisis. What will the Australian government and its agencies do, while there is still time? What steps will the committee take to avert the catastrophe?

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