



COMBINED PENSIONERS AND SUPERANNUANTS ASSOCIATION OF NEW SOUTH WALES INC.

Founded 1931.

Serving pensioners of all ages, superannuants and low-income retirees.

Consumer Protection Awards – 2002, 2003, 2004

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Australia - US Free Trade Agreement: when will Labor find a backbone?

“Combined Pensioners and Superannuants Association of NSW Inc (CPSA) expresses great concern that the ALP is reluctant to oppose the US-Australia Free Trade Agreement (USFTA),” said CPSA President Morrie Mifsud.

“When will the ALP find a backbone and stand up for Australians, especially the most vulnerable, who’ll be affected by this deal?”

“Labor must know that the USFTA gives US pharmaceutical companies a chance to meddle with the PBS which will make essential medicines even more expensive than now. And this is after the ALP allowed Howard to increase PBS items by 30 per cent!”

“This agreement is not about free trade. It’s about American companies expanding their operations. As Tim Colebatch said in *The Age* (20 July):

‘This is really half a free trade agreement. It will mean free trade for American exports to Australia. The day the agreement begins, 99 per cent of US exports will enter Australia duty-free, with complete free trade within 10 years. But it will not mean free trade for Australian exports to the US: not ever. The US will retain a ban on exports of Australia’s world-leading fast ferries. It will limit Australia’s sugar exports to token levels. It will exclude most Australian textile exports by tailor-made rules of origin.’

“We couldn’t agree more. But Labor can’t seem to see this. What on earth are Latham and his party thinking?”

“If Labor thinks this spineless act will win them votes then they have another thing coming. CPSA will urge people to vote for parties opposed to US multinational takeover of Australian social services and willing to stand up for the PBS and Australia’s health system” said Mr Mifsud.

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