

## **BEWARE THE TRANS-PACIFIC PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT!**

### **Should we be concerned about the Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement (TPPA)?**

If negotiations for the TPPA succeed they will create a mega-treaty across nine or more countries that puts a straightjacket on the policies and laws our government can adopt for the next century and give massive new powers to corporations.

### **Which countries are involved in these negotiations?**

There are currently nine: the US and New Zealand, plus Australia, Brunei, Chile, Malaysia, Peru, Singapore, and Vietnam. Japan, Canada and Mexico are in the wings.

### **When did negotiations begin and when are they expected to end?**

There have been numerous rounds since negotiations began in March 2010. They originally aimed to finish it in late 2011; now they say 2012 (... or 2014 or ... never?)

### **What could the TPPA affect?**

Almost every area of policy you can think of – and run roughshod over democracy, tino rangatiratanga and people's sovereignty.

### **What is in the proposed agreement?**

We don't exactly know because the negotiations are secret and the only documents that are in the public domain have been leaked. Worse still, the nine governments agreed that none of the background documents will be released until four years after the negotiations end (or collapse), so we won't be able to hold them accountable for any tradeoffs they make until they are no longer in power.

### **What kind of policies could be targeted in the negotiations?**

We know from various sources that they include

- stronger restrictions on foreign investments
- tobacco control laws
- restrictions on sale and manufacture of GMOs and labeling of GM foods
- the Pharmac scheme for buying drugs and subsidies
- the ability to reverse privatisations in the future
- stronger regulation of mining
- parallel importing, especially for music and computer programmes
- Intellectual property protection in the digital media
- hot money flows in and out of the country.

### **If it covers all these things why is it described as a 'trade' agreement?**

That's a clever branding exercise. This is really a charter of rights for foreign investors based in any of the TPP countries - think entertainment (Warners and Sony), pharmaceuticals (Merck and Pfizer), mining (RTZ and BP), tobacco (Philip Morris, BAT), retailers (Wal-Mart and Woolworths), finance sector (Merrill Lynch, Westpac, AIG, Macquarie, JP Morgan), agri-business (Cargill, Monsanto), private water operators (Bechtel, Veolia) and much more.

## **How would a TPPA give foreign investors special rights?**

The lax rules on foreign investment would be locked in for the indefinite future, except for a few areas the government excluded in the agreement.

Foreign firms who might be affected by new laws would have to be consulted and the government would have to show how it had responded to their views.

Foreign investors could sue the government for hundreds of millions of dollars for breaching their rights under the TPPA, for example by changing our laws in ways that affect their expected profits or share value. The case would be heard in a secretive international tribunal, not in our domestic courts.

## **That sounds like Warners and the Hobbits on a massive scale!**

What happened there shows how much leverage these corporations already have. One powerful company could pressure the government to change our labour laws overnight -- and get massive tax subsidies from a government that says there's no money for health, early childcare, public transport, etc. ... Imagine the 'chilling effect' if a mining or tobacco company threatened to sue the government under the TPPA if it went ahead with a law that affected their profits? There are lots of international examples where governments have caved in rather than trying to defend themselves through a long and expensive legal battle.

## **How does the NZ government justify the TPPA?**

The standard rationale is that better access for Fonterra into the huge US market requires some sacrifice. As US economist Joseph Stiglitz said "Most of these 'free trade' agreements are ... managed for the advantage of the United States, which has the bulk of the negotiating power." There is no real negotiation and "one can't think that New Zealand would ever get anything that it cares about." A Wikileaks cable showed that even New Zealand's lead negotiator didn't expect any significant gains.

## **So why would the government secretly sell out our tino rangatiratanga and sovereignty?**

Partly because they are true believers in free trade ideology. Partly because they think a TPPA can morph into an Asia-Pacific wide FTA that will spread their gospel to the new powerhouses that will dominate the 21st century. Partly to pander to the US in its moves to counter the influence of China.

## **What we can do about it and how can we find out more?**

Get the word around all your networks, facebook pages, websites and media

Organise meetings and action around the TPPA

Ask your MPs, local government and iwi leaders if they know what's going on

Demand the government holds an inquiry to bring the negotiations into the daylight

For information and campaigning websites on the TPPA in Aotearoa and internationally see [www.tppwatch.org](http://www.tppwatch.org), [www.tppdigest.org](http://www.tppdigest.org), [www.nznotforsale.org](http://www.nznotforsale.org), and follow the links.

Add your name to the list of New Zealanders opposing the TPPA and sign up to receive the TPP Watch bulletin: <http://tppwatch.org/what-can-we-do/register-your-support/>

Join the *TPPA Action Group* [facebook page](#) [there is a link on the [www.tppwatch.org](http://www.tppwatch.org) homepage].

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