



Aug 11, 1997

To Whom It May Concern:

This item came out in ~~your~~ Saturdays Tampa Tribune
 When an article says made in the USA that's
 exactly what it means.

I don't want overseas materials to be labeled
 as such, to me that would constitute fraud.

My son-in-law is a mechanical contractor
 and he deplors tools made in Thailand, now
 what will happen if they are granted the honor
 of labeling their junk as made in the U.S.A.?

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LETTERS

'Made in USA' label may soon be meaningless

The Federal Trade Commission is about to close the comment period on its proposal to water down the standards that determine what products qualify to call themselves "Made in USA." Concerned consumers must speak up by the commission's Aug. 11 deadline.

Briefly, "Made in USA." will no longer mean what it says. Presently, consumers can have the **confidence** that "Made in USA" products are "all, or virtually all" made in this country. Incredibly, the Federal Trade Commission would have us believe that "this is not what consumers expect in an increasingly global economy," to quote a Federal Trade Commission press release. It's not what we expect? Nonsense! It is exactly what we expect!

The commission outlines some safe harbors in their proposal, whereby we are somehow protected. These include guidelines where a product's final stages must be a U.S.-based operation, **and if** it came in from overseas, it must undergo



MATT BARRINGTON/for the Los Angeles Times Syndicate

"substantial transformations" to earn the label "Made in USA."

It will be interesting to see to what lengths multinational manufacturers go to defend their U.S.-based "substantial transformation" piece.

Can a blue widget come in to the United States only to be painted red and be sold as "Made in USA"? My guess is that the **deception** of consumers may not be quite so blatant, but by any definition, future labels of "Made in USA" will have

such ambiguous meaning as to be **meaningless**.

The Federal Trade Commission proposals must be stopped, and public opinion has only days or even hours to be heard in **Washington**.

Those concerned may write to office of the **Secretary**, Federal Trade Commission, Room 159, Sixth and **Pennsylvania** Ave. N.W., Washington, D.C.; 20580. Label the correspondence "Made in USA Policy Comment."

The Federal Trade **Commission** is also taking comments on the World Wide Web www.ftc.gov. Deadline for all comments is Monday.

More than 100 members of Congress are co-sponsoring a bill, H. Con. Res. 80, to stop these disastrous standards in their tracks. Those concerned about this approach to the issue should contact their member of Congress immediately.

--RICK WALDEMAR
Inverness