



Written by [Joe Wolverton, II, J.D.](#) on June 19, 2012

Mexico and Canada Invited to Join the Secret TPP Negotiations

This week President Obama and [U.S. Trade Representative](#) (USTR) Ron Kirk announced that Canada and Mexico have been invited to join the secret negotiations aimed at establishing the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP).



In [an announcement published Monday on the USTR website](#), Kirk wrote:

We are delighted to invite Mexico, our neighbor and second largest export market, to join the TPP negotiations. Mexico's interest in the TPP reflects its recognition that the TPP presents the most promising pathway to boosting trade across the Asia Pacific and to encouraging regional trade integration. We look forward to continuing consultations with the Congress and domestic stakeholders as we move forward.

That statement was followed by [a similar one on Tuesday welcoming Canada to the TPP](#) fold:

Inviting Canada to join the TPP negotiations presents a unique opportunity for the United States to build upon this already dynamic trading relationship. Through TPP, we are bringing the relationship with our largest trading partner into the 21st century. We look forward to continuing consultations with the Congress and domestic stakeholders regarding Canada's entry into the TPP as we move closer to a broad-based, high-standard trade agreement in the Asia-Pacific region.

Notably, in both statements Ambassador Kirk places the approval of "domestic stakeholders" (read: large corporations) on a level with that of the Congress. It is precisely this exalting of big business that has troubled many of the people's representatives in Congress.

For example, last week Zach Carter of the Huffington Post reported that Senator Ron Wyden (D-Ore.), the chairman of the Senate Finance Committee's Subcommittee on International Trade, Customs and Global Competitiveness, was stonewalled by the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative (USTR) when he attempted to see any of the draft documents related to the governance of the TPP.

In response to this rebuff, Wyden proposed a measure in the Senate that would force transparency on the process and that was enough to convince the USTR to grant the Senator a peek at the documents, though his staff was not permitted to peruse them.

Wyden spokeswoman Jennifer Hoelzer told HuffPost that such accommodations were "better than nothing" but not ideal in light of the well-known fact that on Capitol Hill the real work of drafting and



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evaluating legislation is performed by the representatives' staff members who are often experts in particular areas of domestic and foreign policy.

"I would point out how insulting it is for them to argue that members of Congress are to personally go over to USTR to view the trade documents," Hoelzer said. "An advisor at Halliburton or the MPAA is given a password that allows him or her to go on the USTR website and view the TPP agreement anytime he or she wants."

That's right. A duly elected senator of the United States has to beg and plead and threaten legislation in order to be able to gain access to the TPP trade agreement, but corporate interests are given by a password by the USTR that grants them a priori access to those same documents.

U.S. Senator Sherrod Brown (D-Ohio) [issued a statement criticizing the Obama administration](#) for the lack of oversight into an agreement with devastating potential.

"After more than a decade of broken promises from NAFTA, CAFTA, and normalized trade relations with China, we can now add a credibility deficit to the trade deficits we've seen," Brown said. "The leaked documents surfacing today only underscore the secrecy surrounding TPP negotiations and confirm worst suspicions about the direction trade negotiations are heading. It's telling that it is easier for the CEO of a major corporation to access information about the negotiations than the American people's elected representatives. The negotiations must involve more transparency and bring more voices to the table."

Some of those actively battling against the formation of the TPP and the "integration" sought by its proponents recognize the hand of large corporate interests at the helm of the ship that is sailing toward the eradication of American sovereignty.

One such opponent, [Americans for Limited Government](#) (ALG), is taking the lead in warning the people of the United States about the confluence of corporate and governmental interests and their goal of destroying the independence of our country.

ALG's President Bill Wilson perceives real harm in the USTR's grant of such a powerful corporate prerogative.

"We are elevating private businesses up to the level of sovereign governments," Wilson told *The New American*. "Under NAFTA we gave companies the power to sue governments and the TPP does this as well. In this trade pact, we agree that our government can be sued by these foreign corporations who will be treated as sovereign nations. This is submerging the idea of sovereignty into a sea of regulatory bodies and international agencies and our freedom is drowning it it."

"It is self-evident that the erosion of the right of citizens to control their own lives is progressing at a rate that we are little more than wage slaves to an oppressive government and its cadre of corporate backers that consider our lives and our liberties of little or no consequence," Wilson warned.

The decision to permit Canada to join in the TPP talks will place additional pressure on our northern neighbor (and NAFTA partner) to abandon the controls it has currently in place on its domestic dairy and livestock markets, as well as concerns over that nation's copyright laws.

[Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper insists](#) that neither Canada's sovereignty nor its support of domestic industry has been sacrificed in order to secure its admission to the TPP. Harper said:

Canada aims, whenever it gets into a trade negotiations, to promote and to protect all of its interests across all the range of industries ... and Canada's record in terms of dealing with those



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particular issues in trade negotiations under our government has been very strong and that will continue to be our position.

Mexico's entrée to the Pacific pact was announced after President Obama and Mexican President Felipe Calderón met at the G20 Leading Economies Summit being held in Los Cabos, Mexico.

Again using the keyword that is the bane of constitutionalists and those who would see America retain her right to govern herself, [President Calderón told reporters](#) at the G20 Summit that "This is one of the free trade initiatives that's most ambitious in the world and would foster integration of the Asia Pacific region, one of the regions with the greatest dynamism in the world."

As with all such attempts to integrate the economies of the United States and other "partners," the right of settling disputes will be granted to an extra-constitutional international tribunal with members being nominated by the United Nations Secretary General. All "partners" to the pact including foreign corporations will be exempted from abiding by American laws and the sovereignty of the United States and the Constitution's enumeration of powers will once again be placed on the altar of global government.

[According to the USTR](#), the nine TPP countries have completed 12 rounds of negotiations. The next round of talks is scheduled July 2-10 in San Diego, California.

Photo: President Barack Obama with U.S. Trade Representative Ron Kirk after he signed the Manufacturing Enhancement Act of 2010 in the White House, Aug. 11, 2010: AP Images



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