

NOTE: This information will appear in the Olympia Fellowship of Reconciliation's February-March 2014 newsletter, which we will mail on January 31. If you are not on the Olympia FOR's mailing list, we invite you to add yourself. You can receive our newsletters as paper publications by postal mail and/or as .pdf documents attached to e-mail. Please tell us which you want when you provide name, mailing address, phone number, and e-mail address.

TRANS-PACIFIC PARTNERSHIP (TPP) IS A HORRIBLE RIP-OFF AND A DIRECT THREAT TO DEMOCRACY ITSELF

TPP's "Fast Track" has been introduced in Congress to prevent serious debate and prevent any amendments whatsoever. Now is the time to pressure our US House and Senate members to stop this "free trade" scam. TPP would benefit global corporations, but hurt workers, consumers, human rights, the environment, and democracy itself.

Use your computer to watch Olympia FOR's November 2013 TV program on this topic: Visit www.olympiafor.org, click TV Programs, scroll down to November 2013, and click to watch it. Also, you can read a thorough .pdf description of our TPP program just to the right of the link for watching the program.

The TPP is a backroom deal for the 1%. The 99% need to inform ourselves and protect our rights!

The TPP would hurt all of us: The TPP is much more than a "free trade" deal. In fact, only 5 of the TPP's 29 chapters deal with trade. Everything else gives new powers to giant corporations. The TPP has been described as a coup in which giant corporations overthrow democracy in the US and other countries. The TPP will undermine our democracy and turn our sovereignty over to multinational corporations. It will allow corporations to directly sue a national

government for the amount of claimed lost profits because of regulations that protect labor, the environment, and public health and safety. According to the Alliance for Democracy (www.alliancefordemocracy.org) and other respected non-profit organizations, here are just a few things that the TPP could do:

- Offshore even more millions of American jobs and keep worker wages low
- Free the banksters and Wall Street from needed oversight and regulation
- End "Buy American" and "By Local" policies needed to create jobs and rebuild our economy
- Decrease access to affordable generic medicines
- Ban food labeling and bring more unsafe food and products into the US
- Continue the push for the privatization of needed services, including education, water and wastewater treatment, transportation, and more
- Perpetuate exploitation of "dirty fuels," and make it much harder to develop renewable green energy

Fast Track Facts

Congress is considering legislation right now that would "Fast Track" the Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement.

The Fast Track bill would:

- ✓ Enforce the secrecy of trade negotiations and keep the public, journalists, and even Congress out of the debate.
- ✓ Destroy jobs, the environment, access to medicine, and Internet freedom.
- ✓ Decrease privacy and allow for more corporate and government surveillance.
- ✓ Violate the constitution - Congress is intended to oversee trade decisions that affect all of us.

Share this to spread the word. Call your reps!

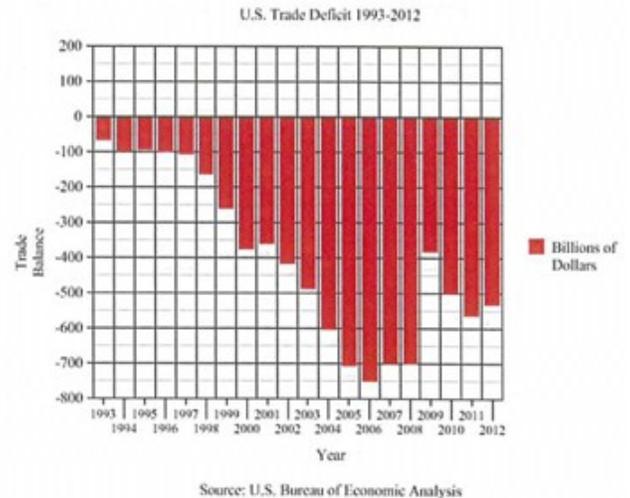
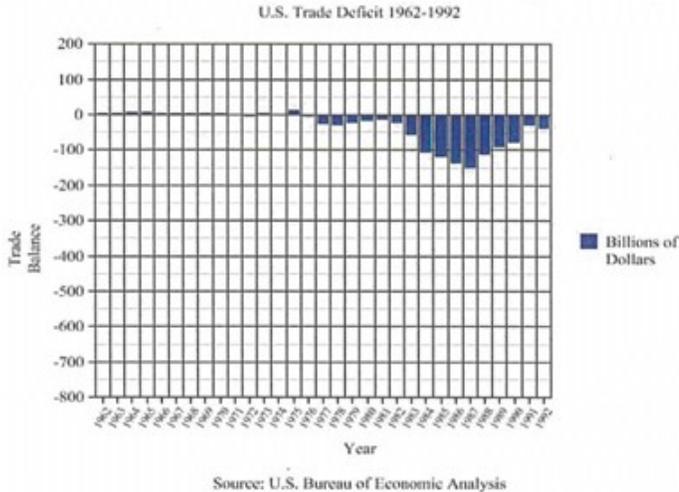
US Representative Keith Ellison has called

TPP "the largest corporate power grab you've never heard of."

Just because it is "bi-partisan" does not make it good: For decades now, presidents and Congresses of both big political parties have been pushing for "free trade" schemes that promise jobs and prosperity, but have produced the opposite. For example, Democrat Bill Clinton pushed NAFTA and the expansion of the WTO. George W. Bush negotiated "free trade" deals with South Korea, Panama and Colombia, and in 2009 Barack Obama picked up right where Bush left off and pushed Bush's deals ahead to completion. Bush also had started pushing for a "free trade" scheme that would include many Pacific Rim nations (the Trans-Pacific Partnership, TPP), and Obama is

pushing vigorously for that. **The U.S.'s "two-party" system and the businesses that fund their campaigns allow both of the big political parties to promote virtually identical economic policies at the macro level.** However, a growing number of US House members from both parties have sent letters to President Obama telling him they will not give him "Fast-Track" authority to pass TPP without a proper debate.

"Free Trade" makes US trade deficits much worse: Congressman Alan Grayson from Florida provided two graphs. The graph on the left shows the US trade balance between 1962 and 1992, before NAFTA and other so-called "free trade agreements." The graph on the right shows our trade balance since then.



Representative Grayson wrote, "We have run a trade deficit of at least \$350,000,000,000.00 every single year since 2000, with no end in sight. The result is that we have gutted the U.S. manufacturing base, and run up enormous debt to foreigners - almost \$6 trillion (\$6,000,000,000,000.00) in U.S. Treasury debt alone. We buy their goods, putting their workers to work. They buy our assets, driving us deeper and deeper into debt." Representative Grayson strongly opposes the TPP.

Obama administration wants to weaken environmental protections in order to pass the TPP: On January 15, 2014, Democracy Now! (www.democracynow.org) reported this headline: "U.S. Prepared to Scrap Environmental Rules to Win TPP Deal." The headline stated: "The Obama administration is reportedly preparing to undermine strong environmental safeguards in trade talks with 11 other Pacific Rim countries. New documents released by WikiLeaks show the White House is ready to backtrack on a series of critical regulations in order to secure a deal on the Trans-Pacific Partnership. These include legally binding requirements for pollution limits, logging standards, and a ban on the harvesting of shark fins."

WikiLeaks reports the TPP's environmental chapter is worse than we had thought: See this article: www.commondreams.org/headline/2014/01/15 Professor Jane Kelsey of the University of Auckland stated, "the leaked text shows that the obligations are weak and compliance with them is unenforceable... The corporate agenda wins both ways." A great many non-profit organizations representing the environment, labor, human rights, and democracy are urging people to pressure their US House and Senate members to stop the TPP and stop the "Fast Track" procedure that would prevent Congress from any serious debate and any amendments whatsoever. Also, Ilana Solomon, the director of the Sierra Club's Responsible Trade Program, said the draft omits crucial language ensuring that increased trade will not lead to further environmental destruction. "It rolls back key standards set by Congress to ensure that the environment chapters are legally enforceable, in the same way the commercial parts of free-trade agreements are," Ms. Solomon said. Also on January 15, Coral Davenport cited WikiLeaks documents when she reported in the *New York Times*, "The Obama administration is retreating from previous demands of strong international environmental protections in order to reach agreement on a sweeping Pacific trade deal that is a pillar of President Obama's strategic shift to Asia." She wrote, "The negotiations over the Trans-Pacific Partnership, which would be one of the world's biggest trade agreements, have exposed deep rifts over environmental policy between the United States and 11 other Pacific Rim nations."

Madison, Wisconsin's City Council unanimously passed a resolution declaring the city a "TPP-Free Zone," and promising that if Congress passes the Trans Pacific Partnership, "We will not obey" it. This happened in October 2013. The resolution's text is at this link: www.thealliancefordemocracy.org/pdf/TPPFreeZoneResolutionSubstitute.pdf

Jim Hightower explains the TPP clearly: He calls it a "corporate coup d'état against us. See his article at www.hightowerlowdown.org/node/3402#.Uq8hAcu9KSN

People-power is vigorously pressuring Congress to oppose "Fast Track." A January 21, 2014, article by Kevin Zeese and Margaret Flowers (www.truth-out.org/news/item/21354) reports that the "Fast Track" bill had only one sponsor in the House (Republican David Camp) and only one in the Senate (Democrat Max Baucus, who gave us Bush's tax cuts for the rich and allowed health insurance companies to write Obama's health care legislation, and whom Obama nominated to be the next ambassador to our major trading partner China). Former US Trade Representative Ron Kirk has admitted that the Obama Administration is keeping the TPP's text secret because if people knew what it would do, the TPP would become so unpopular it could never become law. The article by Zeese and Flowers also reported that members of Congress have seen research showing that if the TPP were passed, 90% of Americans' incomes would decrease, while rich Americans would get even richer. Congress knows this would be a very hard sell, especially in an election year.

US Senator Elizabeth Warren said this about the TPP: "I have heard the argument that transparency would undermine the Trade Representative's policy to complete the trade agreement because public opposition would be significant. In other words, if people knew what was going on, they would stop it. This argument is exactly backwards. If transparency would lead to widespread public opposition to a trade agreement, then that trade agreement should not be the policy of the United States."

Our urgent task is to make "Fast Track" and the TPP so politically toxic for politicians that they will prevent them from passing. Washington State's senators Patty Murray and Maria Cantwell, and practically all of our state's House delegation (except for Jim McDermott) seem mesmerized by the mantra of "trade" that they are going along with the scam. We need to e-mail them, phone them, write postcards (letters take too long to scan for malicious contaminants), and visit their offices. We need to urge non-profit organizations and politicians' own political parties to stand up for us.

Backbone Campaign sheds light on the TPP on the Capitol Center Building between 4th and 5th Avenues SW in downtown Olympia. Thanks to Rod Tharp for the technical work and Ryan Harris for taking this photo:

