

Trojan Horse Highlights Opposition To Fast Track Of TPP Secret Deal

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Global Research, May 01, 2015

[Popular Resistance](#)

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Escalation of Protest Against Fast Track for the TPP Comes at a Time When Congressional Leadership Admits it Does Not Have the Votes to Pass Fast Track

Report: Up to 75 House Republicans Oppose Fast Track, Almost All Democrats Oppose, Fast Track is Dozens of Votes Short of a Majority

Opponents of fast track trade authority from Popular Resistance, Public Citizen, Communication Workers of America and Friends of the Earth rallied on Capitol Hill to welcome Japanese Prime Minister Shinzō Abe as he came to speak to a Joint Session of Congress with a three story tall Trojan Horse. The theme of the protest was ‘No Fast Track for Secret Corporate Trade Deals’. Banners read “No Fast Track for Secret Trojan Treaties” and “Stop the TPP: Transparency Release the Text.” There were also signs in Japanese which said: “U.S. citizens stand in solidarity with Japanese citizens against the TPP” and “TPP = Trojan Horse”

The Trojan Horse protest was part of opposition to fast track which is growing and escalating its actions. Activists also published a letter this week that demonstrated the unprecedented breadth of the movement against corporate trade. [The letter, signed by 2009 organizations showed a united movement](#) of labor, environmental, family farm, consumer, faith, Internet freedom and other organizations that is escalating its campaign to defeat fast track trade authority for the TPP and other corporate rigged agreements.

The protest comes as efforts by President Obama to get Congress to give him fast track trade authority seem to be faltering. There is [broad opposition among Democrats](#) and the debate over fast track has turned into a personal, bitter dispute between Obama and congressional Democrats. President [Obama attacked Senator Elizabeth Warren](#) (MA) describing her as akin to Sarah Palin. [Warren fired back](#) at Obama demanding he release the text. Then Warren was joined by Senator [Sherrod Brown \(OH\) who jointly wrote President Obama](#) telling him to ‘put up or shut up’ and demanding he release the full text before a vote on fast track.

In addition, there are [signs on the Republican side that there are splits](#) between the corporate Republicans and those who do not want to give Obama more power or believe fast track for rigged trade deals undermine the Constitution and weaken US sovereignty. The Hill reports that Sens. Jeff Sessions (Ala.), Lindsey Graham (S.C.), Richard Burr (N.C.) and Shelley Moore Capito (W.Va.) are openly saying they will vote against the bill. If six more Republicans join them there will not be a filibuster proof majority in the senate, long thought of as the more supportive of the two chambers for fast track. The Hill reports that

Republican leadership “have begun to count votes, a sign that they’re not taking passage of the measures for granted.”

An anonymous source told The Hill the polling is not good and that fast track and trade deals are “controversial among the conservative base.” The Hill describes Republicans as economic voters and points to a survey conducted by YouGov.com at the end of March which found that only 10 percent of Republicans think free trade agreements will boost wages while 39 percent of Republicans think free trade agreements have a negative impact on wages and jobs. Eagle Forum president, Ed Martin, asked: “Why would any Republican give President Obama more authority?” Martin, commenting on the economic impact, told The Hill “I don’t think Republicans should make it easier to have more free trade agreements that are bad for this country.” The concerns among base Republican voters can be clearly seen on the website [ObamaTrade](#).

[Market Watch reports](#) that comments by Republican leaders indicate that the Republicans do not have the votes to pass fast track. [Huffington Post also writes](#) that Republicans don’t have the votes and says Republicans are blaming the president, while Democrats are saying Obama is pushing harder on trade than he has pushed on any other issue. [Politico reports](#) that upward of 75 House Republicans could vote against and that fast track is currently dozens of votes short of a majority. A sure sign that they do not have the votes is the failure to schedule a vote on the House Floor for fast track. When asked by the media on April 28th about when a vote would be scheduled, Kevin McCarthy, majority Whip, was noncommittal and said more work needs to be done to generate support. There have been mixed reports in the media about which chamber of Congress will vote first.

For more than two years the US Trade Representative has promised the TPP was near conclusion but in reality there continue to be problems with finalizing the negotiations. Prime Minister Abe’s visit was initially being held out as an opportunity to finalize a deal between the US and Japan, the two largest economies in the TPP, but as the visit developed the White House toned down expectations. At the conclusion of the meetings the [New York Times reports](#) that when Obama and Abe “emerged from an Oval Office meeting similarly empty-handed, with unsettled differences between the United States and Japan over automobiles and agriculture that have hindered negotiations.”

On all fronts — public opposition, lack of political support and inability to conclude negotiations — the Obama agenda on corporate trade is faltering.

Trojan Horse protest on Capitol Hill, April 29, 2015. Photo by Kelsey Erickson.

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