

How the Media Deceive the Public about “Fast Track” and the “Trade Bills” (TTP and TTIP)

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Global Research, May 22, 2015

Region: [USA](#)

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The way that “Fast Track” is described to the American public is as an alternative method for the Senate to handle “Trade Bills” (TPP & TTIP) that the President presents to the Senate for their approval; and this alternative method is said to be one in which “no amendments are permitted, and there will be a straight up-or-down vote on the bill.”

But, in fact, the “Fast Track” method is actually to require only 50 Senators to vote “Yea” in order for the measure to be approved by the Senate, whereas the method that is described and required in (Section 2 of) the U.S. Constitution is that the President [“shall have the Power, by and with the Advice and Consent of the Senate, to make treaties, provided two thirds of the Senators present concur.”](#) That’s not 50 Senators; it’s 67 Senators, that the Constitution requires.

In other words: “Fast Track Trade Promotion Authority” (which was invented by the imperial President Richard Nixon in 1974, in order to advance his goal of a dictatorial Executive, that the Presidency would become a dictatorship) lowers the Constitutionally required approval from 67 Senators down to only 50 Senators.

This two-thirds rule is set forth in the Constitution in order to make especially difficult the passing-into-law of any treaty that the United States will have with any foreign country. The same two-thirds requirement is set forth for amending the Constitution, except that that’s a two-thirds requirement in both the House and the Senate: it can be done [“by either: two-thirds \(supermajority\) of both the Senate and the House of Representatives ...; or by a national convention assembled at the request of the legislatures of at least two-thirds \(at present 34\) of the states.”](#)

Getting two-thirds of either house of Congress to vote for a bill is rare and difficult, but it has happened [27 times](#), because the entire process was public, and because there was widespread support of each Amendment.

By contrast: Obama’s proposed trade treaties are still secret.

The difference between 50 Senators versus 67 Senators is, essentially, the difference between a treaty that is publicly discussed and widely acceptable to the American public (the people, after all, who voted for those members of Congress); versus a secret treaty that will be widely unacceptable to the American public when the America public will become informed of its contents, which won’t be until years after the treaty has already gone into effect.

This is the reason why only a tiny fraction of authentic “trade bills” even need “Fast Track Trade Promotion Authority” in order to pass; most trade bills are passed in the normal way.

A President doesn't ask for "Fast Track Trade Promotion Authority" unless he is going to be presenting to the Congress a treaty that is so horrible for the American people that only few members of either the House or the Senate would vote for it — the bill needs "Fast Track" in order for it to be able to pass.

What types of "Trade Bills" are these?

They are treaties in which only a tiny fraction of the treaty actually has to do with "Trade," or with tariffs and other legal favoritisms toward one nation as opposed to another. In other words: [They're legislation to cede our national sovereignty to international corporations. Issues of tariffs and other "trade" disputes between nations are tacked onto these multinational treaties in order to be able to fool the public into thinking that all that's at issue is "trade."](#)

Now, it's true that "Fast Track" does also eliminate the ability of members of the Senate to propose an amendment to the treaty that the President is presenting for their approval. But that's a relatively minor feature of "Fast Track," which was included in the concept in order for "Fast Track" to be able to be described by politicians and by the 'news' media as being a minor matter — no "big deal," no ceding of sovereignty to international corporations.

It's not a minor matter; it's the biggest matter in President Obama's entire Presidency: [it's about scandalously bad international treaties with many nations at once, in which international corporations \(that is, the hundred or so individuals who own the controlling interests in them\) will be handed our national and democratic sovereignty over](#) labor rights, consumer rights, environmental rights, and investors' rights — it's every way that those billionaires can think of to pass off onto the public the harms that they do while keeping for themselves all the benefits of the heads-I-win-tails-you-lose game they're playing with the U.S. public and that of every other signatory nation. It's international fascism, not merely fascism of the local type.

And that's what we've now got.

Investigative historian Eric Zuesse is the author, most recently, of [They're Not Even Close: The Democratic vs. Republican Economic Records, 1910-2010](#), and of [CHRIST'S VENTRILOQUISTS: The Event that Created Christianity](#), and of [Feudalism, Fascism, Libertarianism and Economics](#).

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