



Written by [Steve Byas](#) on March 1, 2018

## Mnuchin Says Trump Might Do TPP After All

“A rape of our country,” President Donald Trump once called the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), arguing that it was a bad deal for the United States. Trump pulled out of the deal negotiated by his predecessor, Barack Obama, but now Trump’s Secretary of the Treasury Steven Mnuchin (shown) said Tuesday that the United States might just join TPP after all.



Mnuchin’s remarks echoed comments made by Trump himself at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, in late January. At the time, Trump surprised some of his supporters, as well as the “free traders,” by saying that he would be willing to reopen negotiations with TPP members “individually, or perhaps as a group, if it is in the interests of all.”

With Mnuchin’s comments at an investment summit meeting hosted by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, in which he said the renegotiation of the trade deal to include America is “on the table,” it appears that Trump may be abandoning a position that won him support among those who are skeptical of multilateral trade deals such as the TPP.

“I’ve met with several of my counterparts and other people, and we’ve begun to have very high-level conversations about TPP,” Mnuchin told the Chamber. Mnuchin did note that Trump preferred to do one-on-one trade deals. “It’s not a priority at the moment, but it is something the President will consider.”

“If we did a substantially better deal, I would be open to TPP,” Trump told CNBC. But getting a “substantially better deal” doesn’t seem to be a possibility. Eleven countries are involved in TPP. They are Australia, Brunei, Canada, Chile, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Peru, Singapore, and Vietnam. They will be signing the pact on March 8, in Chile. The president of Chile, Michelle Bachelet, told the Nikkei newspaper that she would welcome the return of the United States to the TPP deal, but the United States would have to accept the terms of the agreement as written — the terms that Trump called a “rape” of the United States.

So it would appear that either Trump accepts a deal that — in his words — is a “rape” of the United States, or the United States will be forced to remain outside of the agreement.

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At Davos, Trump boasted of the economic resurgence of the United States. “After years of stagnation the United States is once again experiencing strong economic growth. Consumer confidence, business confidence and manufacturing confidence are the highest they have been in many decades.”

So why the need for a multilateral trade deal?



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The Davos crowd clearly favors international trade deals, as they are clearly globalists. They see multilateral trade deals as leading to closer economic integration among nations, with a corresponding reduction in the sovereignty of separate nations. Trump, on the other hand, casts the free-trade argument in terms of the economic well-being of average Americans. While this is clearly an important consideration, he says little to address the critical issue concerning “free trade”: sovereignty.

A multilateral trade deal requires some governing body to interpret the agreement, and to *enforce* it. Of necessity, this reduces the sovereignty of the member nations of any multilateral trade agreement.

Free trade should not be confused with “managed trade,” which is what trade deals such as TPP really are. While there are many conservatives who have been taken in by the rhetoric of “free trade,” no doubt thinking it is the same as “free enterprise,” it is really not. It is more government regulation that, in the end, leads to a reduction in the national sovereignty of the countries involved. Globalists have long favored these multilateral managed-trade deals for that very reason.

Opponents of multilateral trade deals are often cast as somehow not believing in free markets. But the reality is that so-called free trade deals, of necessity, lead to a reduction in national sovereignty, and a corresponding loss of liberty for each nation’s citizens. They are an assault upon the very concept of separate nations.

This is why it is not surprising that even Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels were “free traders.” This was not because Marx and Engels favored free enterprise, but because they saw “free trade” as a way to advance their socialist cause. They said, “The Free Trade system works destructively. It breaks up old nationalities and carries antagonism of proletariat and bourgeoisie to the uttermost point. In a word, the Free Trade system hastens the Social Revolution.”

Like unrestricted immigration, free trade through multilateral trade deals, such as TPP, are destructive to the concept of nationhood. Or, as Trump put it so colorfully, a “rape” of our country. Trump and Mnuchin should remember to “put America first.”

*Photo: AP Images*





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