



Written by [Joe Wolverton, II, J.D.](#) on July 17, 2015

## Canada Claims It Will Back Out of TPP to Protect Its Sovereignty

The Obama administration isn't happy with Canada's reluctance to sacrifice its poultry market on the altar of membership in the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP).

On July 16, the *Globe and Mail* reported:

American officials including chief U.S. negotiator Michael Froman have repeatedly publicly prodded Canada to produce a "meaningful offer" and disclose to the U.S. what kind of agriculture concessions it will make. Trade ministers from 12 countries are preparing to gather in Hawaii shortly for what some describe as a final push for a TPP deal.



Canada's Trade Minister Ed Fast dismisses these challenges from Washington, telling *The Globe and Mail* last week that "the Americans prefer to negotiate this agreement through the media" and he won't.

Sources say as far as the U.S. is concerned, Canada promised that "things that weren't addressed in the North American free-trade agreement — poultry and dairy — were going to be addressed" in the Pacific Rim talks.

"That was very clear; that was agreed upon," a source familiar with the trade talks said.

The participation of the United States in the sovereignty surrender wrapped in a trade blanket is all but guaranteed after Congress gave the president "fast track" trade promotion authority.

All the confusion over the scope of the pact's mandates could be cleared up very easily: Just produce the text of the TPP agreement and we'll be able to sort out who's right and who's wrong.

The fact is that no one in Canada or the United States knows what their respective governments are giving away inside the secret TPP confabs.

We do know that our own elected officials have tried in vain to pierce the veil of secrecy preventing Americans from learning about the frightening compromises being made by our trade representatives at the TPP negotiations.

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,



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though his staff was not permitted to peruse them.

Wyden spokeswoman Jennifer Hoelzer told the *Huffington Post* 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 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.”

It is instructive that a duly elected senator of the United States has to beg and plead and threaten legislation in order to see the TPP trade agreement negotiations, but corporate interests are given a password by the USTR that grants them a priori access to those same documents.

In fairness, a little light has been shed on draft TPP documents, albeit not by the parties to the pact, but by the whistleblowers at WikiLeaks.

In November 2013, portions of the TPP draft agreement published by WikiLeaks contained sketches of [President Obama’s plans to surrender American sovereignty](#) to international tribunals.

[Another WikiLeaks disclosure in January](#) 2014 revealed that the president was attempting to surrender sovereignty over U.S. environmental policy to international bureaucrats interested in lowering those standards to mirror those of our TPP partner nations.

U.S. copyright laws, Internet freedom, and web-based publishing would also be obliterated by the TPP, and, although it hasn’t been widely reported, the TPP would give the global government sweeping surveillance powers, as well.

Although the American people (and the people of all nations involved in the pact) are prevented from seeing or commenting on the treaty being ostensibly negotiated on their behalf, multinational corporations have seats at the trading table.

While the TPP grants corporate giants such as Walmart and Monsanto the power to bypass Congress and the courts, the elected representatives of the American people are kept from even seeing the draft version of the agreement.

As with the multitude of similar trade pacts the United States has formed, the ultimate aim of the TPP is the creation of a regional super government — thus the stonewalling of federal lawmakers who dare seek to assert some sort of oversight.

*The New American* has previously commented on the [real reason for the darkness](#) around the deliberation and the document:

If there is one word that is used more often than “reform” by governments, politicians, and international organizations — and abused even more frequently and egregiously — it is “transparency.” As with the United Nations and the World Trade Organization (WTO), the White House and the U.S. Trade Representative’s (USTR) office regularly proclaim their commitment to transparency while doing everything possible to hide their actions from their constituents. The USTR’s “Fact Sheet: Transparency and the Trans-Pacific Partnership” is intended to give the impression that the Obama administration is forthrightly providing the American people with all the up-to-date information they need to accurately evaluate the agreements that are being made in



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their name, and that would, if accepted by Congress, devastatingly impact their lives, their liberty, and their future.

Ever since Canada formally announced its entry into the TPP, the focus has been on how much our neighbors to the north could hold back from the bargaining table.

As initially reported in 2012, Canadian officials knew that their decision to join the TPP would require them to abandon the controls they had in place on their domestic dairy and livestock markets.

Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper insists that neither Canada's sovereignty nor its support of domestic industry would be offered in order to secure its admission to the TPP.

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

That's not quite the strong line being taken by other Canadian officials, however.

"Canada did not agree to any specific measures in terms of an eventual Trans-Pacific Partnership agreement prior to joining talks," Rick Roth, spokesman for Minister of International Trade Ed Fast, said Wednesday.

Again, whether they did or didn't is anybody's guess.

Tariffs of about 300 percent protect the Canadian poultry industry from competition from the United States or any other foreign competitor. American poultry farmers don't think that's fair and are slaving over the prospect of pushing poultry over the northern border.

As of 2013, the United States exported about \$623 million worth of poultry to Canada, while that same year the United States imported about \$287 million in Canadian chicken.

A greater than 2-1 trade surplus is not quite the terrible trade deficit American negotiators are claiming is hurting American farmers.

The United States will host a meeting of the 12 TPP member trade ministers in Maui, Hawaii, from July 28-31, preceded by a meeting of TPP chief negotiators from July 24-27.

Twelve trade representatives enter the Hawaii negotiations; perhaps only 11 will leave with their membership intact.





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