



World Leaders Gather In Beijing While The US Sinks Into Irrelevancy

Remembering that a) the Trilateral Commission set out in 1973 to create a “New International Economic Order” and b) its members essentially adopted and invested in China to become a Technocracy (an economic system), it is not coincidental that the U.S. is finally being taken off the world stage as the primary economic power, and China is taking over. I have said for decades that this is an economic coup and not a political coup. Just about everyone has missed this 800 pound gorilla in the living room. □ TN Editor

While vaudevillian comedy-like shouting matches broke out in the West Wing of the White House between President Donald Trump and his senior advisers and between the White House press secretary and various presidential aides, world leaders gathered in Beijing to discuss the creation of modern-day land and maritime «silk roads» to improve the economic conditions of nations around the world. Nothing more could have illustrated the massive divide between the concerns of many of the nations of the world and those of the United States, which is

rapidly descending into second-rate power status, along with its NATO allies Britain, France, and Germany.

While Mr. Trump was threatening to fire his senior White House staff, reprising his one-time role in his reality television show «The Apprentice», China's President Xi Jinping, Russian President Vladimir Putin, and presidents and prime ministers from around the world sat down to discuss the creation of new international and intercontinental highways, railways, and maritime routes under China's proposed Silk Road Economic Belt and the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road.

Even countries that are cool on the Chinese initiative, including India and Japan, sent representatives to the summit that carried a bit more clout than the pathetic representation of the United States, Matt Pottinger, a little-known special assistant to Trump and the senior director for East Asia of National Security Council. In fact, the only reason Trump sent anyone to represent the United States at the Beijing gathering was because of a special request made by President Xi during his recent meeting with Trump at the president's private Mar-a-Lago Club resort in Palm Beach, Florida.

South Korea, which saw relations with China sour over America's placement of Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) missile system in South Korea, sent a delegation to Beijing after a phone call between South Korea's new liberal president, Moon Jae-in, and President Xi. Moon responded to the phone call by sending a delegation led by his Democratic Party's veteran legislator to Beijing.

Even North Korea, which rankled South Korea, Japan, and the United States by firing a ballistic missile into waters near Russia, sent a delegation to the Beijing meeting headed by Kim Yong Jae, the North's Minister of External Economic Relations. The Trump administration, which sent a virtual unknown to Beijing, complained loudly about North Korea's representation at the Silk Road summit. But Washington's complaint was conveyed by someone as unknown as Mr. Pottinger, Anna Richey-Allen, a low-level spokesperson for the U.S. State Department's East Asia Bureau. The reason why the United States is being spoken for by middle-grade bureaucrats is that the nation that still believes it is the

world's only remaining «superpower» is now governed by an administration rife with top-level vacancies, inter-agency squabbling, and amateur league players.

Even though major European Union member states were not represented in Beijing by their heads of government, Germany sent its Economy Minister, Brigitte Zypries. She warned, however, that the EU would not sign a Silk Road agreement with China unless certain EU demands on free trade and labor conditions were guaranteed. Germany's reticence did not seem to faze other EU nations, which were represented in Beijing by their heads of government and appeared to be more avid in their support of the Chinese initiative. These EU member state leaders included Italian Prime Minister Paolo Gentiloni, Spanish Prime Minister Mariano Rajoy, Polish Prime Minister Beata Szydlo, Greek Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras, Czech President Milos Zeman, and Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban. Moreover, had British Prime Minister Theresa May not been in the middle of a general election campaign, she would have been in Beijing. Nevertheless, she sent British Chancellor of the Exchequer Philip Hammond in her place.

If the Trump administration hoped to convince world leaders to stay away from Beijing, it was sorely disappointed. The United Nations Secretary General, Antonio Guterres, was there, along with the President of the World Bank Jim Yong Kim and International Monetary Fund Managing Director Christine Lagarde. Also present in Beijing were the presidents of Turkey, Philippines, Argentina, Chile, Indonesia, Kyrgyzstan, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Switzerland, Kenya, Uzbekistan, and Laos, as well as the prime ministers of Vietnam, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Serbia, Malaysia, Mongolia, Fiji, Ethiopia, Cambodia, and Myanmar.

Ministerial delegations from Afghanistan, Australia, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Brazil, Egypt, Finland, Iran, Kuwait, Lebanon, Maldives, Romania, Nepal, New Zealand, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, South Sudan, Sudan, Syria, Tanzania, Thailand, Tunisia, Uganda, and the United Arab Emirates were at the Beijing summit. Japan was represented by the senior adviser to Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and Secretary General of the Liberal Democratic Party, Toshihiro Nikai. France, which was experiencing a change of presidents, sent former Prime Minister Jean-

Pierre Raffarin.

The Silk Road initiative has projects planned in all the nations whose governments were represented in Beijing, except for the United States and Israel. In addition to the nations represented by their government heads of state and ministers, Silk Road agreements were signed between China and Palestine, Georgia, Armenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Albania, Tajikistan, Brunei, Croatia, and East Timor.

The one clear message the Beijing meeting sent out to the world is that America's «unipolar» vision of the world was dead and buried. Even among Washington's longtime friends and allies, one will not hear Donald Trump referred to as the «leader of the Free World.» That phrase has been discarded into the waste bin of history along with America's insistence that it is the world's only «superpower.» The United States is a power, a second-rate one that happens to possess a first-rate nuclear arsenal. But nuclear weapons were not being discussed in Beijing. Major projects were on the agenda, projects that when completed will leave the United States at sea in the propeller wash.

President Xi, in his keynote address to the conference, said that the «One Belt and One Road» initiative is «a project of the century» and that will benefit everybody across the world. And to put his money where his mouth is, Xi said China will contribute 80 billion yuan (US\$113 billion) as added financial impetus to create a global network of highway, railway, and maritime links in a recreation of the ancient Silk Road that linked China to the West. Meanwhile, in Washington, Trump spoke of having recorded «taped» conversations with his fired director of the FBI James Comey, setting off a political firestorm. A new global infrastructure being spoken about in Beijing and political hijinks the major topic of conversation in Washington. The United States has fallen into second-rate global status and is seriously ill as a cohesive nation-state but does not even realize it.

China and Russia used the Beijing summit to showcase several Eurasian initiatives, including the Russia-inspired Eurasian Economic Union (EEU) and the China-initiated Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB). Both the Chinese and Russian heads of state let it be known that

the BRICS alliance of Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa was still a potent world entity, even though South Africa was not represented in Beijing by its president and India chose not to send any representative to Beijing.

President Putin's words to the conference about the new geopolitical status in the world were noteworthy: «the greater Eurasia is not an abstract geopolitical arrangement but, without exaggeration, a truly civilization-wide project looking toward the future.» In other words, the European Union, which is losing the United Kingdom as a member and will never see membership for Turkey, is a dying international organism. Other international initiatives, like the EEU, BRICS, AIIB, and the One Belt, One Road (OBOR), are leaving the EU and the United States in the dust. That was evident by the fact that the United States was represented in Beijing by an overrated desk clerk and the EU by a Brussels «Eurocrat,» the European Commission vice president Jyrki Katainen.

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Fintech, Smart Cities Central To US-Singapore Bilateral Trade Talks

The undercurrent of this article connects trade to Fintech and Smart Cities, both of which are tightly related to Sustainable Development, which is Technocracy. This further indicates the the Trump Administration has no awareness of Technocracy or the nefarious plans of the United Nations to overthrow Capitalism and Free Enterprise. □ TN Editor

In a bilateral meeting between S. Iswaran, Singapore's Minister for Trade and Industry, and the US Secretary of Commerce Wilbur Ross, the two countries reaffirmed strong bilateral trade ties.

Four specific sectors — three of which would strongly fall under the 'startup economy' — received special attention. The four sectors were fintech, ecommerce, logistics and smart city solutions.

These industries were highlighted because the two politicians discussed how an MOU called the 'US-Singapore Collaboration Platform Memorandum of Understanding' can be used to facilitate trade between the nations. The meeting occurred on the sidelines of the Milken Institute Global Conference in Los Angeles, California.

The MOU was signed by Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong during his official visit to the US in 2016. During the trip, former US President Barack Obama specifically mentioned Singapore's startup hub Block 71 (a moment that caused much excitement in the community here).

According to the Ministry of Trade and Industry (MTI), Singapore and US bilateral Goods and Services trade totalled US\$68 billion in 2016.

"Singapore and the US share strong and mutually beneficial economic relations, and the US-Singapore Free Trade Agreement (USSFTA) is the cornerstone of our relationship," said Iswaran in a statement.

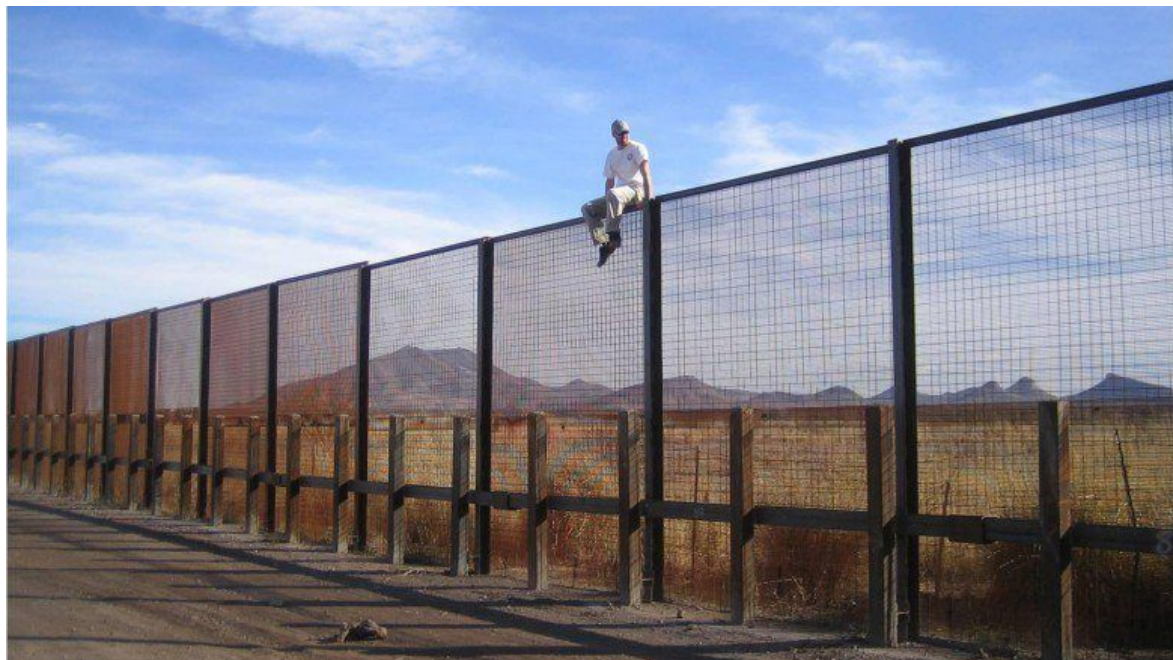
“We look forward to deepening our relations with the US and building on our early successes under the US-Singapore Collaboration Platform MOU.”

During the event, Iswaran spoke at a roundtable discussion about ASEAN. During the talk, he discussed the importance of globalisation and open markets in the modern economy.

In one of his first moves in office, Ross’ boss, US President Donald Trump, nixed the Trans-Pacific Partnership (a global free trade deal heavily involving Asia). He was elected on an ‘America First’ platform that largely rejected globalisation.

Iswaran also met with Singaporean and American business people during the trip.

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Mexico To Use Barage Of Environmental Lawsuits To Stop Border Wall Construction

The U.S. inserted environmental language into NAFTA (North American Free Trade Agreement). Now that President Trump has reneged on terminating NAFTA outright, but rather will 'renegotiate' it, Mexico will turn the tables by filing a number of environmental lawsuits in international court over the border wall. It is a strange twist of irony, because Mexico could mostly care less about environmental issues in the first place. □ TN Editor

Mexico's foreign secretary is planning an all-out legal assault on any future construction of a border wall by the U.S., to include filing suits in U.S. and international courts over possible environmental, human rights and international treaty violations.

Foreign Secretary Luis Videgaray told congressional leaders here that Mexico will neither pay for nor cooperate with the wall proposed by the Trump administration, under any circumstances.

He called the wall proposal a "profoundly unfriendly" and "hostile" act.

"We won't contribute in any manner, directly or indirectly or financially or in any other form to the continuation of a construction of a wall or any other type of physical barrier between our two countries," Videgaray [told](#) members of the congressional foreign relations committee.

He said his office has assigned "significant human resources" to assemble a plan to fight the wall on every single possible violation of international treaties.

If the U.S., in the process of building a wall, violates any treaties including environmental treaties, Videgaray said Mexico would exercise it's legal rights to the maximum, including filing suits in U.S. and international courts.

He cited specifically treaties pertaining to the Rio Grande and the Colorado River.

Videgaray listed potential rights violations the construction of a wall might entail, including private property, cultural, human, and anti-discrimination rights.

His remarks contained additional warnings about future bilateral relations.

Any attempt by the U.S. to tax remittances sent home by Mexicans in the U.S. would threaten negotiations on any other matters, Videgaray said.

“Remittances are not only a flow of foreign exchange from the macroeconomic point of view, but as we all know it is a fundamental support for many families, particularly low-income families,” he said, adding that a tax on the payments would be a “breaking point in any dialogue on other issues.”

In response to lawmakers’ questions, Videgaray confirmed that the idea of requiring American tourists to obtain a visa to enter Mexico merits consideration. No visa is currently required.

He warned, however, that a visa requirement could harm Mexico’s tourism industry.

Instead, Videgaray promised his office would explore the idea of charging an entry fee instead.

He said Mexico will continue to follow through on bilateral cooperation agreements with the U.S., including security cooperation, but will not enter into any new agreements for the time being.

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China's Vice Premier Hails 'Unstoppable Momentum' Of Globalization

In China's view through the lens of Technocracy, globalization is 'unstoppable' and Technocracy is inevitable. This is typical Technocrat thinking that their own crystal ball is infallible. □ TN Editor

Globalization will continue to move forward, but nations still must respect one another's "core interests," the leader responsible for overseeing China's economic policy said on March 25.

"The river of globalization and free trade will always move forward with unstoppable momentum to the vast ocean of the global economy," Chinese Vice Premier Zhang Gaoli said in a speech at the Boao Forum for Asia, an annual conference on the southern Chinese island of Hainan.

Zhang told the gathering of Asian leaders that the world must commit to multilateral free trade under the World Trade Organization and needs to reform global economic governance.

China has pressed hard for globalization since the election of U.S. President Donald Trump.

In a speech earlier this month, Zhang said China opposes protectionism and is willing to work with the rest of the world on globalization. “The world economy is in a deep adjustment, growth is weak and trade protectionism is rising,” he said.

But, hinting at China’s ongoing buildup in the South China Sea, Zhang also said nations should be mindful of each other’s “core interests” and refrain from undermining regional stability.

Negotiations on the 16-nation Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership, an Asia-wide agreement that’s favored by China, should be concluded soon and regional cooperation such as with the Association of South East Asian Nations should be advanced, Zhang said.

Zhang, who serves on the Chinese Communist Party’s seven-member standing committee, is also head of a small leading group promoting President Xi Jinping’s One Belt-One Road initiative.

Beijing will host a summit called the Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation in May

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Urgent: U.S. Trade Rep Says Congress Has The Votes To Pass TPP

With a lame-duck president and a spineless Senate, if Obama sneaks TPP for a vote, it likely will pass. It is imperative to call your Senators and demand that they NOT vote for passage of TPP. Get your neighbors, friends, family, anyone, to CALL their Senators. Why? Because it will locking in Technocracy on a global scale! □ TN Editor

U.S. Trade Representative Michael Froman says Congress has the votes to pass the Trans Pacific Partnership agreement if it is brought up for a vote.

“If they [House and Senate leaders] bring it forward, I think we can get the votes there,” Froman told NBC on Tuesday.

Hillary Clinton was a vocal proponent of the TPP-having [reportedly](#) praised the deal at least 45 times-and [played](#) a “leading part in drafting” the deal before she was eventually forced to distance herself from her prior support for political reasons.

Republican presidential nominee Donald Trump has previously argued that Clinton only says she's against the TPP because she was "shamed" into doing so, and has warned that, if she is elected President, Clinton "will immediately approve it [TPP] if it is put before her."

"Here's how it would go," Trump has explained, "She would make a small token change, declare the pact fixed, and ram it through. That's why Hillary is now only saying she has problems with the TPP 'in its current form,' - ensuring that she can rush to embrace it again at her earliest opportunity."

Indeed, during a recent CNBC interview, Bill Clinton [said](#) that the case for approving the TPP is "clear." Similarly, just last week, Clinton's running mate, Sen. Tim Kaine, seemed to leave the door open to the possibility that a Hillary Clinton administration would pass an Asian trade deal similar to the TPP, declaring "you never close the door" on passing this type of multi-national trade deal.

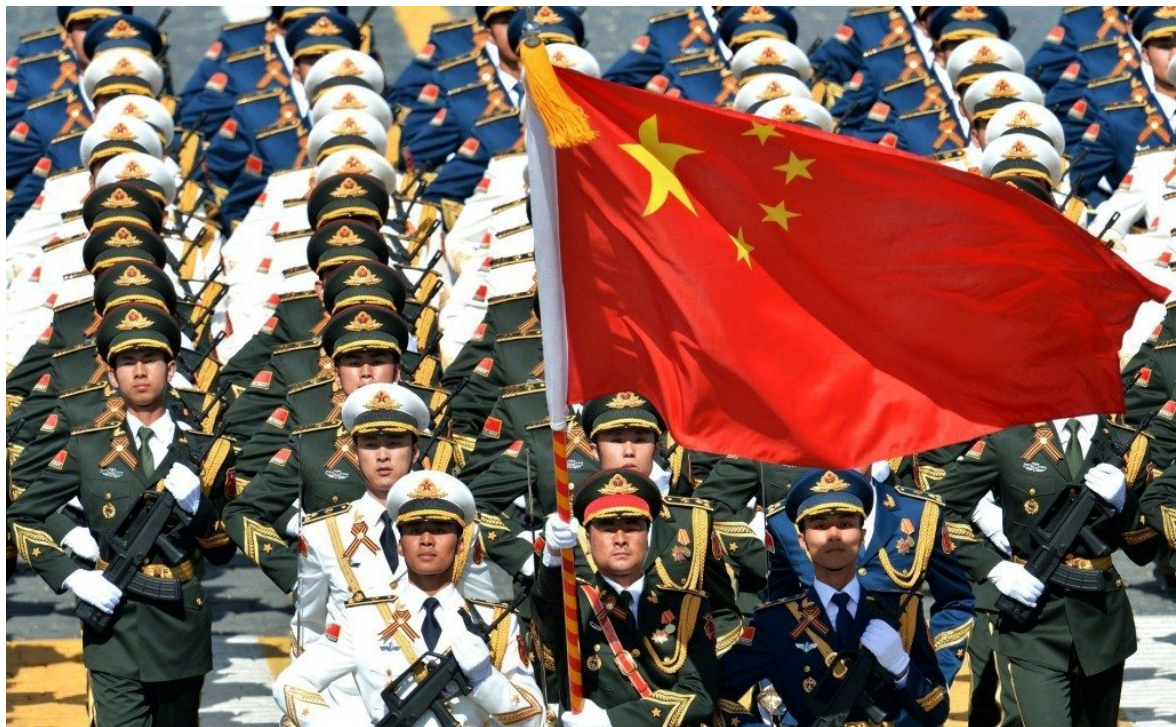
The *Washington Post* has [reported](#) that Clinton's agenda on foreign trade would likely be advanced by Republican House Speaker Paul Ryan. Like Clinton, Ryan has been an enthusiastic advocate for globalist trade policies. In 2015, Ryan was President Obama's "[partner](#)" in their effort to fast-track the Trans-Pacific Partnership. In a 2015 *Wall Street Journal* op-ed, Ryan [described](#) the TPP as an "historic" agreement which "would mean greater access to a billion customers for American manufacturers, farmers and ranchers."

However, like Clinton, Ryan was forced to rhetorically distance himself from his prior support for TPP when faced with a primary challenge this past summer.

"After spending more than a year praising the TPP, and pushing through the Trade Promotion Authority (TPA) package needed to grease the skids for it last year, Ryan" backed away slightly from his former position as a result of his contentious primary battle in Wisconsin's first Congressional district, *Breitbart* reported earlier this year. "I have my own problems with TPP. It is not ready," Ryan [said](#) of the 12-nation trade pact in August- indicating that he'd be open to enacting a tweaked

version of the agreement at a later date. While campaigning, Ryan [told](#) his Wisconsin constituents that he wouldn't bring the deal up for a vote during the lame-duck session of Congress "as long as we don't have the votes."

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China's Technocrat Threat: 'When Trade Stops, War Comes'

Technocrats at the G20 enclave being held in China, are issuing direct threats to anti-globalization citizens of the world: Back off, or else! While they are hiding behind the buzzword 'trade', they are pointedly defending their brand of globalization, which is Technocracy. If citizens saw this in these terms, they would increase their protest by an order of magnitude. □ TN Editor

Jack Ma has a warning for those who see globalization as a problem: When trade stops, wars can follow.

“We should keep on going along the path of globalization,” Ma said Friday in Hangzhou, China. “Globalization is good... when trade stops, war comes.”

The executive chairman of Alibaba (BABA, Tech30) said he hopes the anti-globalization fervor that currently grips much of the world will ease after U.S. elections in November. China, in particular, has been a target of heated rhetoric.

“Every time there’s an election, people start to criticize China. They criticize this, they criticize that,” Ma told CNN’s Andrew Stevens. “[But] how can you stop global trade? How can you build a wall to stop the trade?”

G20 leaders are preparing to meet this weekend in Hangzhou, the city where Ma founded his e-commerce giant in 1999. Trade — and globalization — are likely to be major topics of discussion.

For his part, the 52-year-old Ma believes that globalization hasn’t gone far enough. He said international trade must now be improved so that more people can enjoy its benefits.

Ma is hoping to pitch G20 leaders on an electronic world trade platform, or e-WTP, that would help small businesses expand their customer base globally, the way multinational corporations have been able to. It would also help eliminate tariffs, inspections and other red tape that can trip up mom and pop shops.

“We need solutions for young people to leverage the technology we have, so they can buy anywhere, sell anywhere, trade anywhere,” he said. “If you want to get involved, just join.”

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Obama Still Thinks He Can Get Congressional Approval For TPP Trade Pact

In fact, Obama could be in for another crushing defeat if the Trans Pacific Partnership does not get passed before his term expires. On the other hand, we are dealing with a lame-duck President and Congress, so political manipulation and treachery are to be expected. Europe has already told the U.S. to forget its TTIP Atlantic counterpart. □ TN Editor

The White House said on Monday it could still win congressional approval of the Trans-Pacific Partnership trade pact before President Barack Obama leaves office, and warned that failing to do so would undermine U.S. leadership in the region.

“The president is going to make a strong case that we have made progress and there is a path for us to get this done before the president leaves office,” White House spokesman Josh Earnest told a news briefing ahead of Obama’s trip to Asia this week.

Obama has made the 12-nation free trade deal the centerpiece of a diplomatic “pivot” to Asia, but the prospects for congressional approval

have looked increasingly dim, with both major presidential candidates – Democrat Hillary Clinton and Republican Donald Trump – standing opposed.

U.S. Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell said on Thursday the Senate would not vote on the pact this year, punting it to the next president, who will take office in January.

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German Economy Minister: “TTIP Talks Have Failed”

This definitely proves that bully US Trade Representative Michael Froman, a member of the Trilateral Commission, was the primary architect and hammer-head on TTIP negotiations. Europe has said “enough”. □ TN Editor

In the latest blow for Obama’s global trade agenda, German Vice Chancellor and Economy Minister Sigmar Gabriel said that free trade talks between the European Union and the United States have failed,

citing a lack of progress on any of the major sections of the long-running negotiations.

“In my opinion the negotiations with the United States have de facto failed, even though nobody is really admitting it” [ZDF quoted the minister](#), according to a written transcript of the interview to be aired on Sunday. “[They] have failed because we Europeans did not want to subject ourselves to American demands.”

He added that in 14 rounds of talks, the two sides **haven’t agreed on a single common item** out of 27 chapters being discussed. Among the stumbling blocks is a US objection to opening public tenders to European companies. “For me, that goes against free trade,” Gabriel previously commented regarding the issue.

But more than just disagreement on general principles, Gabriel singled out the US as the party making strong demands with no concessions: “We mustn’t submit to the American proposals,” said Gabriel, who is also the head of Germany’s center-left Social Democratic Party.

Gabriel accused Washington of being “angry” about the deal that the EU struck with Canada, known as CETA, because it contains elements the U.S. doesn’t want to see in the TTIP.

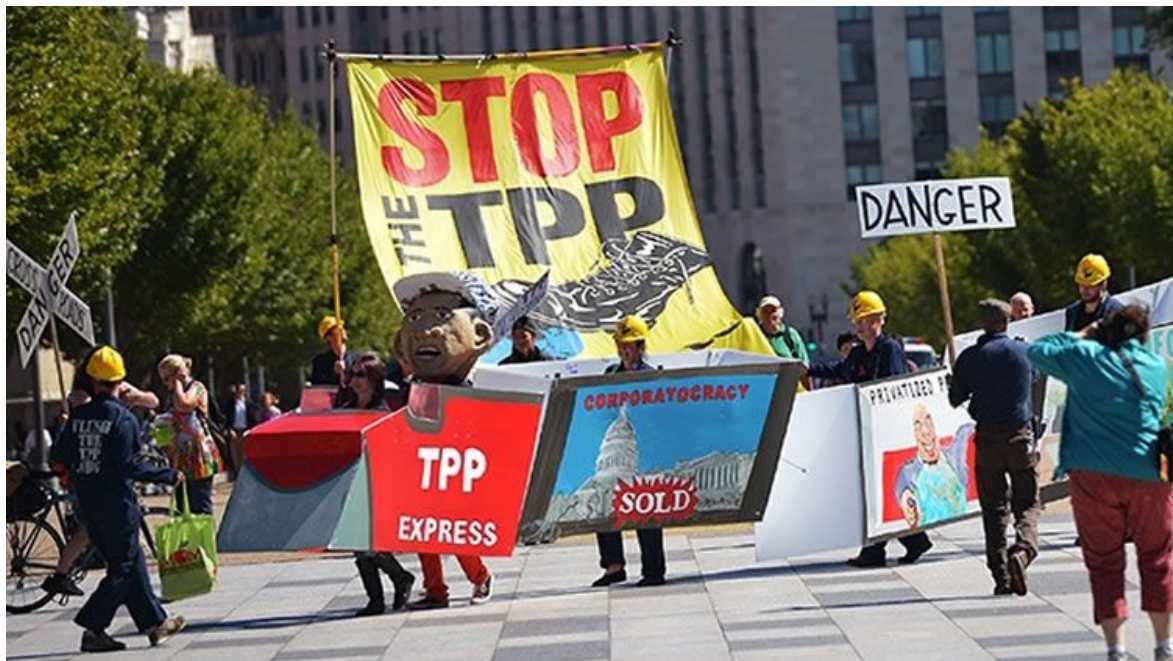
Despite strong misgivings among many EU member states over the Trans-Atlantic Trade and Investment Partnership, or TTIP, especially by farmers in the European block, both Washington and Brussels had pushed for a deal by the end of the year. As [AP reports](#), Sigmar Gabriel compared the TTIP negotiations unfavorably with a free trade deal forged between the 28-nation EU and Canada, which he said was fairer for both sides.

As AP adds, Gabriel’s ministry isn’t directly involved in the negotiations with Washington because trade agreements are negotiated at the EU level. But such a damning verdict from a leading official in Europe’s biggest economy is likely to make further talks between the EU executive and the Obama administration harder. Surprisingly, Gabriel’s comments contrast with those of Chancellor Angela Merkel, who said last month that TTIP was “absolutely in Europe’s interest.”

European critics of the TTIP have claimed that the treaty is dangerous as it could place the interest of international corporations above those of the nations they operate in, and undermine European standards for labor and environmental protections. Germany, where support for the TTIP has plunged over the past year, has seen a number of popular protests demanding that the TTIP never be implemented.

A recent survey, [conducted by YouGov for the Bertelsmann Foundation](#), showed that only 17 percent of Germans believe the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership is a good thing, down from 55 percent two years ago.

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**Technocrats Must Have TPP
To Tighten Global Economic**

Regulations

The U.S. Trade Representative, Michael Froman, is the chief architect of the Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP). He is also a member of the elitist Trilateral Commission that has promoted Technocracy and all it entails, since 1973. He is now threatening that if the U.S. doesn't pass TPP, that China will take over. This is total nonsense, but it shows that Technocrats are starting to sweat over anti-TPP forces. □ TN Editor

Failure to ratify the U.S.-led sweeping trade pact TPP would hand China “the keys to the castle” on globalization and do nothing to solve the real problems underlying American anxiety over jobs, the top U.S. trade official said Thursday.

The tariff-slashing Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) has turned into a hot-button topic in the run-up to the Nov. 8 U.S. election, threatening to dampen support from lawmakers needed to pass a deal critics condemn as a job-killer.

U.S. Trade Representative Michael Froman said he was still optimistic Congress would pass the 12-member TPP, in part because China has been moving ahead with a trade deal of its own, the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP), that would boost its exports and let it set labor and environmental standards in the fast-growing Asia Pacific region.

“We’re one vote away from either cementing our leadership in this region and in the global trading system or ceding it to China,” Froman told reporters in Lima after attending the inauguration of Peruvian President Pedro Pablo Kuczynski.

“At the end of the day I don’t think Congress wants to be responsible for handing the keys to the castle to China.”

Froman’s defense of the TPP follows weeks of heated attacks on the deal as anti-TPP chants and signs have peppered the Republican and Democratic conventions.

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USTR Michael Froman Insists That TPP Trade Deal Is Not Dead

The U.S. Trade Representative who is negotiating the Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP) and TransAtlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP), is a core member of the **Trilateral Commission**. Froman's interview reveals at least a dozen material misstatements and an arrogance that defies explanation. He is also in complete denial that the American public rejects TTP and TTIP in their entirety; but, that never stopped them before and it won't stop them this time, either. □
Technocracy News Editor

The country's top trade official is confident the controversial Trans-Pacific Partnership could pass this year, despite increasingly critical rhetoric about the deal from both parties' presumptive presidential nominees.

U.S. Trade Ambassador Michael Froman said Thursday that though Democrat Hillary Clinton and Republican Donald Trump have been

[outspoken in their opposition](#) to the expansive trade agreement, he and his colleagues recently enjoyed positive receptions from U.S. lawmakers; a sign, he said, that the deal may soon move forward.

“They’ve always been politically difficult,” Froman said of trade agreements during a Christian Science Monitor breakfast Thursday.

“We think this is the window of opportunity to get it done.”

The Trans-Pacific Partnership, or TPP, which the Obama administration completed in October, forges economic ties with 11 Pacific Rim countries, including Japan, Australia and Vietnam.

Since then, Republican support for the deal - critical for it to reach, and pass, a vote in Congress - has waned significantly.

In drafting a party platform Monday, the GOP [left the deal out altogether](#), an act many see as signaling a backing-away. Democrats, meanwhile, did not oppose the deal [in their platform](#) either, saying Clinton’s voiced opposition to it is enough.

However, it’s critical that the agreement makes progress [before Obama leaves office](#), Froman said.

“If it’s not done this year, it’s quite unclear when it would get done, given the broader political developments,” Froman said.

Froman maintained that lawmakers understand the serious economic and political costs of letting the agreement die.

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