



The Phyllis Schlafly Report



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What We Learned From the Debates

Candidates Turn Against Trade Deals

The first question asked of the presidential candidates at the most recent Republican debate, hosted by CNN in Miami on March 10, was “whether trade deals have been good for the American workers.” Moderator Jake Tapper observed that one of Donald Trump’s “signature issues” has been his criticism of “disastrous trade deals” that have destroyed many good middle-class jobs that existed a generation ago.

The other three GOP candidates have supported trade deals in the past and still support them in principle, even while acknowledging the voters’ concerns about the harmful effects of such agreements. Two of the candidates even advocate the 12-nation Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), which President Obama wants Congress to ratify before he leaves office.

Ohio Governor John Kasich likes to remind everyone that he “grew up in a blue collar family,” but votes he cast during his 18 years in Congress helped to decimate the manufacturing base of his home state. Kasich voted for NAFTA in 1993, and in 2000 he voted to grant the “normal” trading privileges which allowed China to enter the World Trade Organization.

Florida Senator Marco Rubio twice voted in favor of giving President Obama the authority to negotiate trade agreements including the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP). He insisted that trade deals provide “access to foreign markets” (even though most of the world’s people can’t afford to buy anything made in America) and he offered sentimental happy-talk that American workers “can compete against anyone in the world” despite 20 years of trade deficits proving otherwise.

Senator Ted Cruz once voted in favor of presidential trade authority before reversing himself on the subsequent vote last year. Cruz now says he opposes the TPP, but Congress has never rejected a trade deal after giving the President the authority to negotiate it.

“I am different in one primary respect, and that’s trade,” Trump insisted in the debate, explaining that “trade deals are absolutely killing our country.” He has proposed tariffs to offset abusive practices such as currency devaluation by “certain countries that are taking advantage of the United States and laughing at our stupidity.”

In response to Trump’s suggestion that we threaten to tax imports from countries that do not trade fairly with us, Ted Cruz warned that Americans would be forced to pay higher prices for Chinese-made goods at Walmart. “Honestly, it’s just the opposite,” Trump retorted, because “we will start building those factories and those plants,” and “people will buy products from here, rather than buying it through China where we’re being ripped off.”

A new study by the non-partisan National Bureau of Economic Research provides support for Trump’s criticism of free trade with China. This new report, entitled “The China Shock,” shows how trade with China has resulted in higher unemployment and lower wages in communities across our country.

Last year imports from China rose to a new record high of \$481.9 billion, while the Chinese purchased less than a quarter of that amount from the United States. The nearly \$500 billion we sent to China last year could have supported millions of good jobs for Americans, but instead some of it ends up financing the Chinese military to point missiles at California.

According to the 200-year-old theory of free trade, workers who lose manufacturing jobs to China should be able to find new jobs in other industries that benefit from a trade surplus, such as the pharmaceutical industry, or in non-tradable industries such as medicine and legal services. But millions of these workers, many of whom are men struggling to support their families, have not found adequate replacement jobs.

Some settle for lower-paying jobs, while others give up entirely, creating a social issue as well as an economic one. The percentage of men between 25 and 54 years old

who are not employed has tripled in the last half century, and many who had been working at \$40 per hour manufacturing jobs are now receiving only \$10 per hour jobs at Walmart or fast-food joints.

Michigan, where the original "Reagan Democrats" were identified as a voter group, shattered its 40-year record for turnout in a presidential primary this year, and some precincts even ran out of ballots. Trump walked away with a double-digit victory over his nearest Republican rival, while Hillary Clinton was humiliated by an upset defeat by Senator Bernie Sanders, a critic of free trade.

In the general election in November, there will be millions of voters ready to cast their ballots for a candidate who stands up for American workers rather than catering to lobbyists who seek free-trade deals. CNN documented 45 times that Hillary pushed for the disastrous Trans-Pacific Partnership, which the leading Republican candidate opposes.

No Wonder Obama Wouldn't Let Us Read TPP

The Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) would turn over to globalists the power to issue regulations about U.S. trade, immigration, the environment, labor and commerce. It's called a "living agreement" which means the globalists can amend and change the text of the so-called agreement after it has gone into effect.

That reminds me of our supremacist judges who invented the term of a "living" Constitution, which they can rewrite to comport with their own updated ideology. The globalists claim that this "living" document (TPP), now called Obamatrade, has all the powers of a treaty to commit the U.S. to new foreign obligations, although it certainly did not comply with any U.S. constitutional provisions for treaty ratification.

Senator Jeff Sessions (R-AL) warned about the giveaway of U.S. sovereignty by Fast Track, also known as Trade Promotion Authority (TPA), which Congress passed in June. Congress gave up its powers to negotiate and write the terms of a treaty, its power to debate and amend the deal, to apply a cloture vote in the Senate, and to require a two-thirds vote in the Senate.

The secrecy wrapped around TPP is appallingly un-American. Whatever happened to Obama's promise of "transparency"? TPP was negotiated and agreed to by Obama's trade representative and a bunch of foreigners in a secret room, and the American people were not allowed to know the details until the 5,554-page text was released in November. TPP put us in a new political and economic union before a single private citizen was told about it and with public opinion running five to one against it. Remember when Nancy Pelosi said we had to pass Obama-

care in order to find out what is in it?

Rep. Duncan Hunter (R-CA) warned, "TPP calls for the formation of a permanent political and economic union known as the Trans-Pacific Partnership Commission, which will have power to issue regulations impacting not only trade but immigration, the environment, labor and commerce. He added, Congress "will have surrendered its legislative prerogatives. Before a word, line, paragraph, or page of this plan is made public, Congress will have even agreed to give up its treaty powers."

Senator Sessions made it even more emphatic, saying that Fast Track would "authorize the President to form a new transnational governance structure. . . . it confers the power to both compel and restrict changes to U.S. policy, to commit the U.S. to international obligations, and to cede sovereign authority to a foreign body." This new global body could even add new member countries (such as China).

Senator Sessions continued: "Congress would be pre-clearing a political and economic union before a word of that arrangement has been made available to a single private citizen. This has the earmarks of a nascent European Union," and Americans certainly don't want to belong to a European union (that's why we fought the American Revolution).

Rep. Hunter also warned that the new global governance institution would be "authorized to issue policies and regulations affecting our economy, our manufacturers, our workers, our immigration procedures, as well as current labor and environmental practices."

TPP would separate us from the U.S. Constitution and from national sovereignty, replacing both with a global governance superstructure. TPP wrapped its audacious global governance plan in the mantle called "free trade," which is a misnomer if there ever was one. "Free trade" means Americans must obey a bunch of rules written by foreigners (which we can't veto), but China can ignore those rules. TPP didn't even touch the subject of currency manipulation against us by Asian countries.

While the American people were denied the right to read TPP, thanks to leaks from WikiLeaks we learned that Obamatrade includes ten pages to unilaterally alter our current U.S. immigration law. Under the headings "Trade in Services" and "Movement of Natural Persons," the same lobbyists who are pushing for Obamatrade are demanding open borders.

Republicans need a bold program to bring back jobs that have been lost to Asian countries. Former Rep. Michele Bachmann summed up a pro-American verdict on TPP: "I hate it. It would empower the president, cut out congressional influence, and lead to American jobs leaving the U.S."

Republicans Debate Guest Workers

Why do so many Republicans want to bring foreign guest workers into our country? Even when candidates say they want to “secure the borders” or crack down on illegal immigration, some Republicans just can’t let go of the notion that our economy can’t grow without foreign workers who supposedly do “jobs that Americans won’t do.”

The subject exploded in the recent presidential debates, where all five candidates (Trump, Cruz, Rubio, Kasich, and Carson) made statements or have supported proposals to increase the number of guest workers. Trump and Cruz, at least, are trying to disavow their earlier positions, but Rubio and Kasich have refused to recant their support for guest workers.

In the Feb. 25 CNN debate in Houston, John Kasich and Ben Carson both suggested that the 11-plus million illegal aliens could remain in this country as guest workers after they “come out of the shadows.” Donald Trump defended his practice of hiring foreign workers to staff his Palm Beach club during the peak season, which is perfectly legal under the H-2B visa program. (Each year, Donald’s club uses about 70 of the 66,000 available visas.)

In the March 3 Fox News debate in Detroit, Trump defended the hiring of foreign workers by the technology industry in Silicon Valley, saying “we have to have talented people in this country.” Trump seemed to be buying the industry’s propaganda that American college graduates aren’t smart enough to work in the computer industry.

Ted Cruz saw an opportunity to criticize Trump’s support for foreign workers, but moderator Megyn Kelly quickly reminded Cruz that “not long ago you proposed quintupling the number of these foreign worker visas.” Indeed, Cruz’s amendment to increase the number of H-1B visas to 325,000 per year was rejected by the Senate Gang of Eight in 2013.

Shortly after the debate, Trump issued a statement clarifying that when he said that America needs “talented people” with “brain power,” he wasn’t referring to foreign workers on temporary H-1B work visas. Although H-1B visa candidates are supposed to be “high-skilled,” most have only mediocre talents and are used primarily to fill entry-level positions at large corporations.

The misuse and abuse of H-1B visas was exposed in a hearing held on Feb. 25 before a Senate subcommittee chaired by Senator Jeff Sessions (R-AL). The subcommittee heard from one of the 250 skilled technical employees of the Walt Disney Company in Florida who were laid off after being forced to train their foreign replacements recruited under the H-1B program.

As Sen. Sessions pointed out in his opening statement, “technology companies will cut at least 330,000 jobs this year. There is no shortage of highly qualified working American professionals, nor is there a shortage of American STEM college graduates each year.” Only about half of our science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) graduates find STEM jobs.

In his post-debate statement, Donald Trump said “I remain totally committed to eliminating rampant, widespread H-1B abuse and ending outrageous practices such as those that occurred at Disney. I will end forever the use of H-1B as a cheap labor program, and institute an absolute requirement to hire American workers first.”

Ted Cruz recently called for suspending all H-1B visas for 180 days, and he co-sponsored a bill with Sen. Sessions that would impose stiff new requirements on companies that use them. Cruz’s bill, the American Jobs First Act, would open job opportunities for American college graduates by eliminating visas for foreigners who don’t have a Ph.D. degree or at least 10 years of “relevant experience.”

Marco Rubio, on the other hand, remains a co-sponsor of the industry-supported I-Squared bill (S. 153), which would relax requirements and triple the number of H-1B visas to 195,000 a year. It would eliminate the current per-country cap, which means that workers from India would get many more of the visas than they already do.

The wages of working Americans have been stagnant for many years, and part of the reason is our high levels of immigration (both legal and illegal) and the many different guest worker programs.

Without approval from Congress, the Obama administration is allowing foreign students to remain in the United States and work for 36 months after obtaining their STEM degrees. More than 100,000 foreign graduates per year have benefited from this unilateral executive action, called Optional Practical Training (OPT), which undermines the job market for American college graduates in STEM subjects. Obama also unilaterally decided to issue guest worker permits for the spouses of H-1B visa holders, which dumps another 100,000 foreign workers per year onto the U.S. job market.

Tell your member of Congress to tighten up or eliminate those programs, and support presidential candidates who put American workers first.

Don’t let anyone tell you that we can’t deport the people who came illegally or stayed in our country after their temporary visas expired. It’s well documented that President Dwight Eisenhower peacefully removed at least 1 million illegal aliens in June 1954 and sent them back to Mexico, including many who got the message and left on their own. (See the picture reproduced in last month’s *P.S. Report*.)

Omnibus Attack on American Jobs

When I heard that the Omnibus spending bill that President Obama signed a week before Christmas includes a provision allowing more foreign guest workers, my first reaction was disbelief. We were repeatedly told by Republican leaders that the must-pass spending bill contained only what was absolutely necessary to pay our troops, bondholders, and Social Security recipients, and we couldn't risk shutting down the government with provisions to defund Planned Parenthood or prohibit Obama's executive actions.

Guest-worker visas became a national scandal last year when the Walt Disney Company and Southern California Edison fired 250 and 400 employees respectively, and both companies required their laid-off workers to train replacements brought in from India to do the same job. The 2016 presidential campaign has been fired up by candidates who promise not only to crack down on illegal immigration, but also to reduce legal immigration which most Americans think is too high.

Speaker Paul Ryan gave written assurances to his conservative colleagues, such as Rep. Steve King and Rep. Mo Brooks, that he would not "bring up any immigration legislation so long as Barack Obama is president." Yet there it was, on page 701 of the 2,009-page bill that members of Congress had only one full day to read and study before voting:

Section 214(g)(9)(A) of the Immigration and Nationality Act is amended by striking "2004, 2005, or 2006 shall not again be counted toward such limitation during fiscal year 2007" and inserting "2013, 2014, or 2015 shall not again be counted toward such limitation during fiscal year 2016".

What that convoluted language means, in other words, is that employers can import up to 264,000 new H-2B workers this year because the 198,000 people allowed to come in the last three years would "not again be counted" toward the annual cap of 66,000.

Like the better-known H-1B visas for college-educated technical workers, H-2B visas for temporary blue-collar jobs are supposed to be issued only if and when "unemployed workers capable of performing the relevant service or labor cannot be found" anywhere in the United States. That limitation is easily circumvented by employers, whose task is made easier by another provision on page 888 of the Omnibus: "In the determination of prevailing wage for the purposes of the H-2B program, the Secretary shall accept private wage surveys" in lieu of official ones.

H-2B visas allow foreign workers to do jobs that are temporary or seasonal but not agricultural — categories that would make a great summer job for any high-school or college student. Prime examples include canning or packing seafood during the surge when the catch comes

in, all sorts of jobs at summer resorts and amusement parks, and outdoor jobs in construction, landscaping and groundskeeping in places where that type of work can't be done all year round.

The H-2B language looks like a special-interest provision that must have been written and inserted by high-priced lobbyists, so you'd think members of Congress would have enough shame to deny knowledge and disclaim responsibility for how it got into the bill. On the contrary, House leaders and their minions have issued statements, written letters and given interviews trying to defend the indefensible.

House Majority Whip Steve Scalise claimed "there are not sufficient American workers to fill job vacancies for temporary and seasonal positions." While the labor participation rate keeps falling to new lows every month, Scalise thinks America has a "worker shortage" forcing "many small and seasonal businesses . . . to shut their doors."

House Speaker Paul Ryan lashed back at critics for "making a mountain out of a molehill" over a provision that he says would bring "only about 8,000 additional workers." However, a 410-page report issued in April 2015 by USCIS, the agency in charge of H-2B visas, predicted that 115,500 additional visas would be issued under the revised language.

Speaking on Bill Bennett's radio program, Ryan complained that summer resorts in Wisconsin "can't find local workers" to staff tourist attractions because "kids are already in college." A letter to his constituents on Ryan's behalf claimed that "Wisconsin industries such as dairy, nurseries, agriculture and tourism" need more foreign workers to "perform work that employers cannot find American workers to perform," although dairy and agriculture workers are not eligible for H-2B visas.

Paul Ryan is a true believer in the idea that, as he wrote in 2013, "immigration helps us get the labor force that we need so that we can have the kind of growth we want." But economists have shown that virtually all of the economic "growth" from immigration is captured by the immigrants themselves, leaving no net benefit to American citizens already here.

Beyond the question of what to do with illegal immigrants, it's important to reduce the flow of replacement workers into the U.S. Guest worker programs have become a racket that should be suspended or terminated.

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