How GATT/WTO MUST BE CHANGED

October 27, 1994 *by: Phyllis Schlafly*

Every House and Senate candidate for office in this year's election has a moral obligation to the voters to declare publicly how he or she will vote on the GATI /WTO legislation, which is scheduled to be voted on in the House on November 29 and in the Senate on December 1. At the very least, they should promise to postpone the vote until the newly elected Congress meets in January.

It is an outrage that the leadership of both parties connived to schedule this landmark legislation, of such enormous impact on the lives of all Americans, to be voted on in a lame duck session. This means that our economic future will be decided by a Congress, up to one-third of whose Members will have already been rejected by their constituents on November 8.

Lame duck sessions are exceedingly rare; they are justified only for national emergencies . There is no national emergency connected with the GATI/WTO legislation; we have until June 1995 to pass it.

The reason the Clinton Administration and the GATI /WTO advocates in the Congress are pushing to pass it in this rare post-election-pre-Christmas session is that they want to pass it under the "fast track" rules, which will expire at the end of the year. "Fast track" is a devious, deceitful, high-handed, unreasonable rule, which prohibits any amendments or changes in the legislation, forbids a Senate filibuster, and limits debate to only 20 hours (and last week the House rule reduced this to only 90 minutes for each side).

GA*TT* /WTO had been scheduled to be enacted on October 5, but the Capitol was flooded with thousands of phone calls from angry citizens urging a NO vote. If GATI/WTO had come to a vote, it would have failed, but President Clinton, Speaker Tom Foley, and Republican House Leader Newt Gingrich made an insider's deal to reschedule the vote in a lame-duck session.

The whole idea of a lame-duck session is repugnant to a democracy, but this particular one is doubly so because of the conflict of interest hanging like a cloud over every Member of Congress. Most of the defeated Members will be seeking jobs as lobbyists, lawyers, consultants, or Administration officials, and their passport to a job will be their vote for GATI /WTO.

The second reason why the vote should be postponed until next year is that GATI/WTO is a Budget Breaker. It will add at least $31 billion to the federal debt as a result of lost revenues from tariff cuts.

Under the Budget Enforcement Act, the Congress is obligated to "find the money" for any new legislation. Therefore, in the Senate, GATI /WTO cannot be passed

unless 60 Senators vote to ""waive the budget rules." Every Senator and Senate candidate should tell his constituents immediately how he will vote on this key issue.

The House Republican ""contract," orchestrated with such fanfare on the Capitol steps on September 26, includes a promise to pass the Balanced Budget Amendment. The whole thing is a fraud if those same Congressmen vote for GATT/WTO, which will sock us with a $31 billion increase in the federal deficit.

The third reason why the vote on GATT/WTO should be postponed until next year is that, if it is voted on this year, the ""fast track" rules prevent the removal of offensive sections that absolutely must be deleted.

1) The World Trade Organization must be removed. This 14-page charter, surreptitiously added to the 22,000-page GATT/WTO agreement, would put the United States in a World Government of Trade in which we would have only one vote out of 123 nations (the same vote as Haiti or Castro's Cuba). The WTO rules would be made by hundreds of unelected foreigners living high on the hog in Geneva, Switzerland, and disputes would be decided by foreign tribunals meeting and deciding our fate in secret.

2) Section 801 must be removed. Secretly added to the legislation by Clinton and Congressman John Dingell, this section gives a subsidy worth over $2 billion to the Washington Post, the Atlanta Constitution, and a consortium of other insiders. This hidden financial interest explains the lavish support given to Bill Clinton and to GATT/WTO by those big newspapers.

3) Section 745, which authorizes the U.S. Treasury to eliminate the guaranteed minimum interest rate on U.S. savings bonds, must be removed. This provision will steal money out of the pockets of millions of Americans who have put their savings in billions of dollars worth of these bonds.

4) The portions of Sections 501-534 that change U.S. patent laws must be removed. The right of inventors to get a patent is a constitutional right that has been a major factor in the innovative ideas that have raised our standard of living to the highest in the world, and it should not be diminished in any way by a ""fast track" trade agreement.

5) Section 742 requiring every newborn baby to get an IRS Taxpayer Identification Number at birth must be removed. This provision is the mark of a totalitarian state. It symbolizes the centralized government control that the Clinton Administration is trying to exert over all Americans.

Before it's too late, call your Senate and House candidates and demand that they promise to postpone the vote on the GATT/WTO legislation until next year.