

is going to join all Irishmen, Congressmen of Irish descent in the Rayburn Room for a March 17th dinner. So I thank the gentleman for that too, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the resolution.

The previous question was ordered.

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on the resolution just adopted.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GILLMOR). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO UNITED STATES HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL COUNCIL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, and pursuant to the provisions of Public Law 96-388, as amended by Public Law 97-84 (36 U.S.C. 1402(a)), the Chair announces the Speaker's appointment of the following Members of the House to the United States Holocaust Memorial Council:

Mr. GILMAN of New York;
Mr. LATOURETTE of Ohio; and
Mr. CANNON of Utah.

There was no objection.

REDUCING VOLUME OF STEEL IMPORTS AND ESTABLISHING STEEL IMPORT NOTIFICATION AND MONITORING PROGRAM

Mr. ARCHER. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to House Resolution 114, I call up the bill (H.R. 975) to provide for a reduction in the volume of steel imports, and to establish a steel import notification and monitoring program, and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of H.R. 975 is as follows:

H.R. 975

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. REDUCTION IN VOLUME OF STEEL IMPORTS.

(a) REDUCTION.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, within 60 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the President shall take the necessary steps, by imposing quotas, tariff surcharges, negotiated enforceable voluntary export restraint agreements, or otherwise, to ensure that the volume of steel products imported into the United States during any month does not exceed the average volume of steel products that was imported monthly into the United States during the 36-month period preceding July 1997.

(b) ENFORCEMENT AUTHORITY.—Within 60 days after the date of the enactment of this

Act, the Secretary of the Treasury, through the United States Customs Service, and the Secretary of Commerce shall implement a program for administering and enforcing the restraints on imports under subsection (a). The Customs Service is authorized to refuse entry into the customs territory of the United States of any steel products that exceed the allowable levels of imports of such products.

(c) APPLICABILITY.—

(1) CATEGORIES.—This section shall apply to the following categories of steel products: semifinished, plates, sheets and strips, wire rods, wire and wire products, rail type products, bars, structural shapes and units, pipes and tubes, iron ore, and coke products.

(2) VOLUME.—Volume of steel products for purposes of this section shall be determined on the basis of tonnage of such products.

(d) EXPIRATION.—This section shall expire at the end of the 3-year period beginning 60 days after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 2. STEEL IMPORT NOTIFICATION AND MONITORING PROGRAM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 30 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Commerce, in consultation with the Secretary of the Treasury, shall establish and implement a steel import notification and monitoring program. The program shall include a requirement that any person importing a product classified under chapter 72 or 73 of the Harmonized Tariff Schedule of the United States obtain an import notification certificate before such products are entered into the United States.

(b) STEEL IMPORT NOTIFICATION CERTIFICATES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—In order to obtain a steel import notification certificate, an importer shall submit to the Secretary of Commerce an application containing—

(A) the importer's name and address;

(B) the name and address of the supplier of the goods to be imported;

(C) the name and address of the producer of the goods to be imported;

(D) the country of origin of the goods;

(E) the country from which the goods are to be imported;

(F) the United States Customs port of entry where the goods will be entered;

(G) the expected date of entry of the goods into the United States;

(H) a description of the goods, including the classification of such goods under the Harmonized Tariff Schedule of the United States;

(I) the quantity (in kilograms and net tons) of the goods to be imported;

(J) the cost insurance freight (CIF) and free alongside ship (FAS) values of the goods to be entered;

(K) whether the goods are being entered for consumption or for entry into a bonded warehouse or foreign trade zone;

(L) a certification that the information furnished in the certificate application is correct; and

(M) any other information the Secretary of Commerce determines to be necessary and appropriate.

(2) ENTRY INTO CUSTOMS TERRITORY.—In the case of merchandise classified under chapter 72 or 73 of the Harmonized Tariff Schedule of the United States that is initially entered into a bonded warehouse or foreign trade zone, a steel import notification certificate shall be required before the merchandise is entered into the customs territory of the United States.

(3) ISSUANCE OF STEEL IMPORT NOTIFICATION CERTIFICATE.—The Secretary of Commerce shall issue a steel import notification certificate to any person who files an application that meets the requirements of this section.

Such certificate shall be valid for a period of 30 days from the date of issuance.

(c) STATISTICAL INFORMATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Commerce shall compile and publish on a weekly basis information described in paragraph (2).

(2) INFORMATION DESCRIBED.—Information described in this paragraph means information obtained from steel import notification certificate applications concerning steel imported into the United States and includes with respect to such imports the Harmonized Tariff Schedule of the United States classification (to the tenth digit), the country of origin, the port of entry, quantity, value of steel imported, and whether the imports are entered for consumption or are entered into a bonded warehouse or foreign trade zone. Such information shall also be compiled in aggregate form and made publicly available by the Secretary of Commerce on a weekly basis by public posting through an Internet website. The information provided under this section shall be in addition to any information otherwise required by law.

(d) FEES.—The Secretary of Commerce may prescribe reasonable fees and charges to defray the costs of carrying out the provisions of this section, including a fee for issuing a certificate under this section.

(e) SINGLE PRODUCER AND EXPORTER COUNTRIES.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Secretary of Commerce shall make publicly available all information required to be released pursuant to subsection (c), including information obtained regarding imports from a foreign producer or exporter that is the only producer or exporter of goods subject to this section from a foreign country.

(f) REGULATIONS.—The Secretary of Commerce may prescribe such rules and regulations relating to the steel import notification and monitoring program as may be necessary to carry the provisions of this section.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 114, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. ARCHER) and the gentleman from New York (Mr. RANGEL) each will control 45 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. ARCHER).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ARCHER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 975.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

Mr. ARCHER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

(Mr. ARCHER asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks, and include extraneous material.)

Mr. ARCHER. Mr. Speaker, H.R. 975 directs the President, in effect mandates the President, to establish quotas to limit steel imports into the U.S., and I urge its defeat. This is more than rhetoric, this is a serious matter, and what we do today will have considerable impact not only on our own economy and our leadership in the world, but on the rest of the world.

□ 1145

A Wall Street Journal editorial yesterday called the bill, and I quote, "the

most radical American protectionist act since Smoot-Hawley." Need I remind the Members that Smoot-Hawley passed in the late 1920s, contributed mightily if did not cause the great worldwide depression. That is why I strongly oppose this legislation.

I am pleased that the Clinton administration also opposes this bill. Mr. Podesta, White House Chief of Staff, wrote to me last week saying he would recommend that President Clinton veto this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I include for the RECORD Mr. Podesta's letter, as follows:

THE WHITE HOUSE,
Washington, DC, Mar. 10, 1999.

Hon. BILL ARCHER,
Chairman, Ways and Means Committee,
U.S. House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN ARCHER: I want to convey to you the Administration's opposition to H.R. 975 and, in particular, its mandate that the President take action to roll back steel imports to the average monthly import levels preceding the current import surge.

The President is determined to maintain the U.S.' strong manufacturing base and the good jobs it provides. The President shares the co-sponsors' deep concern about the impact on our steelworkers, communities and companies of the surge in steel imports. He believes that the best way to address the current steel crisis is by insisting that other countries play by the international trade rules, just as the United States will continue to abide by those rules. The President's commitment to effective, vigorous and timely enforcement of our trade laws is producing results. Imports of carbon hot-rolled steel have fallen 70% between November and January. Imports of these products also have virtually ceased from Russia and Japan (down 98% and 96% respectively) and declined 76% from Brazil. We are committed to sustained implementation of this plan and the expeditious resolution of pending cases.

Quotas imposed outside of the World Trade Organization (WTO) consistent processes contained in our trade laws (section 201 safeguards law or the quota suspension agreement provisions in our antidumping and countervailing duty laws) violate our international trade obligations. These quotas would not be based on a determination of whether the imports are causing or threatening serious injury, or whether unfair trade or subsidization is involved as required by WTO. Moreover, our current trade laws already provide the means for U.S. industry and workers to request an investigation and, if a threat of injury is demonstrated, quotas or other trade remedies can be imposed in a WTO consistent manner. In addition, when the orderly and thorough procedures mandated by our trade laws are followed, we can take into account the full range of U.S. industry and worker concerns and fashion remedies that do not result in additional market distortions, import shortages, excessive price hikes or retaliation that could harm U.S. export industries and customers.

We believe that implementing H.R. 975 constitutes violation of our international obligations under the WTO and is not be in our nation's economic interest. Because of these concerns, the President's senior advisors would recommend that the President veto the bill.

Nonetheless, the steel crisis has demonstrated that there is room for improvements to our trade laws to ensure they deliver strong, effective relief in an expeditious manner, while maintaining their consistency

with our international WTO obligations. We believe the legislation proposed by Congressman Levin constitutes a constructive approach, and we stand ready to work with him and other members of Congress to develop a bill that we could recommend the President sign.

Sincerely,

JOHN PODESTA.

Mr. Speaker, likewise, a majority of Members on the Committee on Ways and Means recommended that the House defeat this bill and the committee reported it on a voice vote adversely, unfavorably.

As we will hear today, our steel industry is going through some tough times, and I am sympathetic to that. But the steel industry is not alone. I am from Texas. I know full well of the problems plaguing our oil industry, which has lost many, many more jobs than the steel industry. Likewise, our farmers and ranchers are still recovering from one of the worst periods in a long, long time. So we must be very sensitive to the steel industry's situation also. But there is a right way and a wrong way to address this problem. This bill is the wrong way.

As usual, there is more to the story. There is a matter of steel users and manufacturers, both large and small. American workers in these steel-using industries, transportation equipment, industrial machinery, metal products, and construction, outnumber employment in steel producer companies by 40 to 1. In fact, I am deeply concerned, and I do not say this lightly, that this bill might threaten national security, because quotas will reduce steel products needed for military supply.

While the policy behind this bill is fatally flawed, the specifics break down as well. There are absolutely no exceptions to the quotas in this bill, even if emergencies arise or if a product is simply not made in the United States. This will cripple many American companies and their workers, including, for example, one in my district, Quality Tubing Incorporated.

Quality Tubing Incorporated is the first American company to manufacture steel coil tubing for the oil and gas industry. It buys roughly 70 percent of its hot-rolled steel from Japan. Why? Because U.S. industry simply does not manufacture the very specialized product that QTI needs. QTI pays a premium for the Japanese product because of its specialty nature.

This bill would be a double whammy for QTI. First it tells QTI it cannot go expand its business because it cannot get more of this specialty product than it did in 1997. Second, it would raise operating costs because prices for this steel product will undoubtedly soar.

Why should this company and its workers have to pay this heavy price? It should make absolutely no difference to the domestic producers whether or not QTI can get its product from overseas because U.S. producers do not make the product. This bill works like a sledgehammer, providing no exception for companies like QTI.

We will hear more about many, many, many other companies if this legislation becomes law.

Mr. Speaker, at the direction of Congress, President Clinton, Vice-President GORE and their top economic and foreign policy advisors studied the steel situation very closely. After that thorough examination, the President chose not to set unilateral quotas which are in violation of the WTO rules. Yet, this bill mandates that the President do exactly that.

The President's logic is clear. If the U.S. sets up trade barriers in violation of WTO rules to which we agreed to at a time of fragility in the world economy, we could have a much, much bigger problem on our hands that would affect thousands and thousands of American jobs and threaten our economy.

In addition, we would set a terrible example for countries in real economic trouble, countries whose leaders are under tremendous pressure to retaliate against American made products. Brazil is a good example of this. Federal Reserve Chairman Alan Greenspan shared these concerns when he testified before the Committee on Ways and Means in January.

My colleagues, the danger of drifting or, in this case, racing towards protectionist policies are very real. As I mentioned, the Committee on Ways and Means on a voice vote reported this bill unfavorably, adversely. I urge Members to oppose this steel quota bill. There are better ways to address the problem within the WTO rules. This bill will not make anything better. In fact, it will make things much, much worse.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 975. I agree with the gentleman from Texas (Chairman ARCHER) that there are problems with this bill. The administration has pointed that out.

I myself would prefer that we be considering legislation today that is consistent with our international trade agreements and that would have more of a chance of being enacted into law. This is especially so if we expect other nations to live up to our obligations.

However, it is abundantly clear that our steelworkers and companies have suffered immense harm, including as many as 10,000 jobs lost, severe production cutbacks, and several companies have gone into bankruptcy as a result of the import surge over the last year.

We as a country should have responded more quickly and more effectively. The administration's response over the last few months has been commendable, applying our trade laws aggressively and effectively within the bounds of the international trade rules. But that response is really too late in coming, and so we have the enormous concern and the frustration that led to the introduction of this legislation that we are considering here today.

We need to find a solution to the steel problem, and I hope we all agree on at least that much. However we vote on this bill today, let us try to work together in the coming weeks also to address in a systematic, sustainable fashion the underlying problems our steel firms and workers and other industries face.

Where our trade provisions like section 201 need to be strengthened and fine-tuned so that we can respond more effectively going forward in this problem and the next time around, let us fix them quickly.

Where our ability to protect and predict this kind of import surge can be improved, we should do that, too.

In short, we should look beyond the vote today to a long-term sustainable effective solution.

Mr. Speaker, I yield the balance of my time to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN), the ranking member of the Subcommittee on Trade, and I ask unanimous consent that he be permitted to yield time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GILLMOR). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, how much time do I have remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Michigan has 41½ minutes remaining.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 22½ minutes of my time to the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. VISCOSKY), and I ask unanimous consent that he be permitted to allocate time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Michigan?

There was no objection.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, we are here under somewhat unusual procedure, but it is important that we talk about the substance. First of all, I want to emphasize the facts are clear that there was a surge of steel imports. This first chart shows the imports of hot-rolled steel from all countries. If my colleagues look at 1996 and 1997 and 1998, it becomes clear there was this surge, this is of hot-rolled steel a dramatic increase in imports.

Secondly, this chart shows the import of all steel products. Once again, I think it is very clear from this chart there was a very substantial overall increase; indeed, a surge. It was most dramatic with hot-rolled steel, but overall, the same was true.

Also it should be clear that there was a serious impact from this surge. Ten thousand workers lost their jobs. Three companies went into bankruptcy. So we are talking about American businesses, American workers who suffer because of this surge after the steel industry and its workers together had taken unusual steps to improve the industry, to downsize it, to make it more effective, indeed to make it the most productive in the world.

It is also clear that the government reacted slowly. One reason it did is because our antisurge laws are weak, and I will come back to that.

In September of last year, petitions, antidumping petitions were filed. The administration at that point whipped into quick action, and they invoked a provision of the law, a critical circumstances provision, that has rarely been used. As a result, the whole effort to determine whether or not there was dumping of steel, that whole effort was very much accelerated. The result was, in a short order of time, preliminary antidumping margins were announced.

I want to show everybody what happened. I will turn it this way so we see it on all sides of the aisle. This is when the surge hit its peak right here, November. We can see the spike up. Red is Russia, Green is Japan, and blue is Brazil. We can see this spike upward.

When the antidumping margins became evident, we see the tremendous downturn in imports from those three countries. So our antidumping laws began to work.

I want to emphasize to my colleagues that what happened with the surge was not globalization. That is here to stay. But it was manipulation of the market by those countries selling below their cost. It was not competition. It was distortion.

The gentleman from Indiana (Mr. VISCOSKY) and the industry and the steelworkers and others here have done a real service to spotlight what the problem is. But here is the problem, and that is what is proposed by the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. VISCOSKY) in this bill is not a viable solution.

□ 1200

Under WTO, the executive cannot, and we as the Congress cannot, invoke a quota by fiat. We simply cannot do that. Under WTO rules, safeguard measures can be put in place and, as a result of those safeguard procedures, if they are followed, action can be taken, including, in some circumstances, quotas. But it is very clear under our WTO obligations that this cannot be done simply by a bill of this nature or by the executive acting on his own.

Now, the bill of the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. VISCOSKY) does focus on the problem that the dumping laws can be circumvented. Countries that are subject to them can substitute other products, or other countries can come into the gap. And so what we need, and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. ARCHER) said it, we need to do something better, and the gentleman from New York (Mr. RANGEL) said the same thing.

There is something we can do that is better within the WTO. We need to reform our anti-surge provisions so that they are faster and they are more effective. That option is available to us, and I hope very much, as a result of this debate today, that we will take everybody at their word and move on to see

if we can find and implement a solution that is within our WTO obligations. I am convinced that there is.

Indeed, the gentleman from New York (Mr. HOUGHTON) and I have been in dialogue with the administration for over a week now. And yesterday, the gentleman from New York, a Republican, and I introduced legislation that would reform our anti-surge laws so that if there is a major circumvention, a major circumvention, of our dumping laws by other countries, or the countries that are subject to them, there will be something that we can utilize and implement quickly. And it will also take care of the issue of other products in addition to steel if a surge occurs.

Look, the steel surge shows that there is a serious problem, and there remains that. A serious problem needs a viable answer, one within the rule of law governing the trade between nations.

I want to close with a personal comment. I have been working with others in this body over these years to try to craft trade laws that are responsive to international rules and responsive to American needs. It goes back many years, in fact more than a decade, when we were able to pass the 1988 trade bill that strengthened our laws.

I think that the international rules have to be opened up so that they take into account new problems, problems that are happening because of our evolving trade with these evolving economies. The laws have to and the rules of competition have to take into account the competition from countries with very different capital and labor and environmental structures. I am dedicated to continuing that effort.

We need to carry on that battle, and we need to have within our laws a response available to surges like we have seen in steel for the good of this country, its workers and its businesses. But if we move in a way that clearly violates our obligations under WTO, and that is the basis of the administration letter indicating that a veto would be coming, we are going to, I think, undermine these efforts to improve our laws.

In a word, because of the way this has evolved, because of the spotlight that has been turned on our anti-surge laws, we now have an ability in this next few weeks, I hope, if not a few weeks no more than a month or two, to put together a bill that will respond to this problem.

So I echo what the gentleman from New York (Mr. RANGEL) said; and I echo in a sense what the gentleman from Texas (Mr. ARCHER) said at the Ways and Means markup: Let us take this moment, and whatever happens today, and dedicate ourselves in the days ahead to making sure that we have the laws, within the international rules that respond to this kind of a surge problem. I am going to dedicate every moment I have to helping that come about.

Mr. CRANE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that I be allowed to control the time of the gentleman from Texas (Mr. ARCHER).

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GILLMOR). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Illinois?

There was no objection.

Mr. CRANE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 5 minutes.

(Mr. CRANE asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CRANE. Mr. Speaker, I want to start out by saying that we all, I think, share the feelings of those who have lost jobs in the steel industry and those businesses that have suffered setbacks.

I cannot personally, though my grandfather grew up near the district of the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. VISCOSKY) and worked for the steel mills on the south side of Chicago, but my wife's grandfather worked in Gary, Indiana Mills in the gentleman's district. So we in the Chicago area, especially on the south side where I grew up, have a special feeling about the steel industry.

For all of that, though, I think this effort that we are undertaking or considering today is misguided. And I say it is misguided because we have the laws on the books and we have exercised them in a way that has had a very positive effect. Some of that our colleague from Michigan already showed in graphic form.

The fact is, if we take hot rolled steel imports from the three largest exporters that were guilty of dumping in this country, namely Russia, Japan and Brazil, those are now down, from their peak level at the tail end of last year, 96 percent. Ninety-six percent. And if we take the reduction of the hot rolled imports from all countries, and this includes even those that are not subject to investigation, those have dropped since last November by 70 percent. Seventy percent. And that includes countries, as I say, that have never been charged or accused of any irregularity here.

I think that we have the capability of dealing with this sort of a problem, and it is one that we have to recognize. There was a surge, and that surge was in violation of our guidelines and our regulations, but we did address it in a positive way. And so that concern of what happened in the steel industry is basically history at this moment.

The fact is we are on a road to recovery already. If we look frankly at our steel production, the industry recorded last year its second highest level of production in the past 20 years. Second highest in the last 20 years was our steel production. Eleven of the thirteen biggest companies showed profits last year, notwithstanding that surge that occurred at the end of the year.

We must show a concern, an appropriate concern, and I think we all do, for the loss of 10,000 jobs. But we have to recognize how that contrasts with,

say, the oil and gas industry and the projected losses that have amounted this past year to almost 50,000. But keep in mind that we are at full employment, and we have now increased the number of jobs nationwide last year by 2.5 million, 2.5 million new jobs, and we are at full employment.

I think it is important to recognize, too, that this can have an impact on those people who are consumers of steel products. I am thinking especially of the people who purchase steel; defense contracts and machinery, cars, construction equipment. They employ 40 times as many U.S. workers as the integrated steel mills do. We will be potentially putting their jobs at risk.

I think also it is important for all of us to recognize the cost. The Congressional Budget Office, as this chart indicates, estimates that this bill will result in higher steel prices that will cost the private sector nearly \$1 billion, \$1 billion, over the next 3 years.

I have a letter that I will refer to later in closing, but it is from Caterpillar, one of our largest manufacturers and consumers in the State of Illinois, and exporters. It is an insightful letter talking about what the damage, the overwhelming damage, could be to Caterpillar's ability to produce and to export in the world markets if we, sad to say, went along with this well-intentioned but misguided legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. VISCOSKY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. DINGELL), who has been at the forefront of this effort.

(Mr. DINGELL asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, we would not be here debating this bill if we would just enforce our trade laws according to the law. The European Union does, Japan does, why cannot the United States?

Foreign mills are dumping steel on the American market for \$200 to \$400 a ton less than it costs to produce. Dumping. That is what it is. It is illegal. And if the administration will not stop it, then the Congress must.

America's steel producers and steelworkers played by the rules. They made hard sacrifices in the 1980s to make this the most competitive, efficient and unsubsidized steel industry in the world. It is only because of illegal and unfair trading practices that our industry is being undercut here at home.

The need for action is clear, compelling and convincing. The bill before us, H.R. 975, is common sense and bipartisan. It will reduce steel imports to 25 percent of the U.S. market. That is the level that played in 1997, before the dumping began. It authorizes the U.S. Customs Service to refuse entry to any steel product that exceeds allowable levels.

It also includes Mr. REGULA'S language to establish a steel monitoring

system, so that we can avert this situation in the future. This is good legislation and an appropriate response to this crisis.

Finally, I would note that because of the import flux produced by dumping and other illegal trade practices, 11,000 American steel workers have lost their jobs. I would also note that several steel companies have filed for bankruptcy, and more are teetering on the brink.

We must not stand by the wayside and watch the American steel industry exported out of business. This country was built with American steel and this country needs American steel.

We need a global solution to this crisis. H.R. 975 provides that global remedy. I urge all of my colleagues to vote in favor of the Bipartisan Steel Recovery Act.

Mr. VISCOSKY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. MOLLOHAN), who, again, has been vigorous in this effort from day one.

(Mr. MOLLOHAN asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MOLLOHAN. Mr. Speaker, first let me compliment the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. VISCOSKY), the distinguished member of the Committee on Appropriations, for his real leadership in fighting for America's steelworkers and for our American steel industry. What a commendable job he has done.

Mr. Speaker, the steelworkers of the Ohio valley are frustrated. They are fed up and they are just about to lose faith in their government's promise to uphold its basic trade laws. Our trading partners have shown a shocking disregard of those laws, and that has created a genuine crisis in this country.

Those of us from steel districts have been working for months to put this issue on the agenda of the administration and the Congress of the United States. We have done so because this is not just a local issue, this is not just a regional issue, this is, in every sense, a national issue.

The distinguished chairman of the Committee on Ways and Means alluded to this legislation as presenting trade barriers. I have high esteem for him, however, I disagree. This legislation is not about setting up trade barriers, it is about fighting unfair trade practices. It is about trying to prevent our trading partners from cheating; about preventing our trading partners from dumping, dumping thousands of tons of steel on our domestic market.

□ 1215

Preventing dumping, Mr. Speaker, the selling of foreign steel in this country at a cost below the cost of producing that steel in the foreign country.

This legislation is about creating a level playing field. We recognize that we are operating in an international economy. We welcome it. We also recognize that, for that international

economy to work for us, our foreign partners must play fair. They are not. We have lost, by conservative estimates, 8,000 steelworker jobs last year and that trend continues because of dumping.

If we do not act, Mr. Speaker, we risk losing our domestic steel industry. And so, I respectfully ask my colleagues to support this legislation.

First, let me compliment Mr. VISCOSKY, a distinguished member of the Appropriations Committee, for his real leadership in fighting for America's steel workers and for America's steel industry.

Mr. Speaker, the steelworkers of the Ohio Valley are frustrated. They're fed up. And they've just about lost faith in their Government's promise to uphold its basic trade laws.

Our trading partners have shown a shocking disregard for those laws. And that has created a genuine crisis.

Those of us from steel districts have been working for months to put this issue on the agenda of the administration and the Congress.

We've done so because this is not just a local issue. This is not just a regional issue. This is, in every sense, a national issue.

This is not about setting up "trade barriers", it's about fighting unfair "trade practices."

It's about trying to prevent our trading partners from cheating—about preventing our trading partners from dumping, dumping thousands of tons of steel in our domestic market.

It's about preventing dumping—the selling of foreign steel in this country, at a cost below the cost of producing that steel in that foreign country.

This legislation is about creating a level playing field.

We recognize that we are operating in an international economy. We also recognize that for that international economy to work for us, our foreign partners must play fair. They are not. We have lost, by conservative estimates, 8,000 steel worker jobs last year, and the trend continues because of dumping.

If we don't act, we risk letting foreign nations run American steel out of business. And that would put our Nation in an extremely vulnerable position—economically vulnerable—with massive loss of jobs and widespread bankruptcies—undermining an industry—the steel industry, the health of which is essential to our national security.

So I would say to my colleagues that even if you don't have a single steelworker in your district, it's vitally important that you support this bill.

I would like to compliment Mr. REGULA and Mr. VISCOSKY for sponsoring this legislation. And I urge my colleagues to do what's fair, to do what's right, and vote for this bill.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, how much time is remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GILLMOR). The gentleman from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN) has 10 minutes remaining, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. VISCOSKY) has 19½ minutes remaining, and the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. CRANE) has 33 minutes remaining.

Mr. CRANE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to our distinguished colleague, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. ENGLISH) who is a member of our Committee on Ways and Means, who on this

special day just reminded me that he is Irish notwithstanding his surname, which is "English."

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Today we are all Irish.

Mr. ENGLISH. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman for yielding the time.

I rise today to applaud the House leadership's decision to bring this bill to the full House of Representatives. I believe that the crisis facing the U.S. steel industry and the lack of an effective response by the Clinton-Gore administration has forced Congress today to take action.

I very much regret that circumstances have brought us to the point that Congressional action was necessary. I believe, and I think that many of the parties agree, that it would not be necessary for us to even consider this legislation today if the administration had used all of the tools available to it under current law and consistent with all of our international obligations.

I support this legislation. I urge its passage by the full House of Representatives, and I call on my colleagues to stand up for steel.

I have come to the conclusion that we need firm legislative action. Passage of H.R. 975 meets the test of addressing the current crisis in the short term and the import monitoring language that would help the U.S. steel industry and its workers discern future import surges while there is still time to prevent unnecessary damage to our economy. I believe that there is additional room for further legislative action in the future. This is a good starting point.

Let us be clear on something, Mr. Speaker. This legislation is not protectionism and its opponents are not here truly advocating free trade. The steel market is the most distorted on earth, with our competitors using a welter of preferences and subsidies to wall out their domestic steel producers from competition.

America has the most efficient steel sector on earth. But in the current trade climate, our steel producers are at risk because of the predatory trade practices of our competitors. In the face of naked mercantilism, American steel needs help.

I find it interesting, Mr. Speaker, that at this late date the administration and its representatives are actually threatening a veto of this bill and arguing that we should consider other legislative approaches to deal with this pressing issue.

I was a primary cosponsor of the Trade Fairness Act, which was recently introduced, and we would have been more than pleased to have had the administration's support while we were advocating this legislation and recruiting cosponsors. This approach is entirely WTO compliant and could not be colored as sending any sort of protectionist signal to our trading partners. Yet the administration was silent on our proposal and declined numerous op-

portunities to support it or work with Members from both the Republican and Democratic sides of the aisle to offer constructive criticism to strengthen and advance the legislation.

What has happened to cause this renewed focus by the administration on the steel crisis? We have put together a bipartisan coalition of over 200 members who are forcing this issue and that is why we are seeing action today.

Mr. VISCOSKY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE).

(Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, let me say first of all happy St. Patrick's Day to all of us. And let me thank the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. VISCOSKY) for his leadership on this very important issue.

We would not have been as strong as we were in World War II had it not been for strength of this nation in oil and steel. And so, I truly sympathize with the plight of the steel industry because we are currently seeing similar layoffs in the oil patch. I know how painful it can be, not only for the people who work in plants and mills but also for small businesses.

I am for trade. I am for fair trade. I am for American workers. We have been between 8,000 and 11,000 layoffs. And I would simply say that this is an anti-dumping piece of legislation. H.R. 975 does not violate the WTO because it specifically allows us to prevent any contracting party from taking any action which it considers necessary for the protection of essential security interests.

Let us work together in a bipartisan manner to make our nation strong in oil, in steel, in other industries so that we can face the world fairly, not to eliminate opportunities for trade but to ensure that this nation engages in fair trade and that we protect American workers and American industries.

Today I rise to speak on behalf of this bill, which would enact various measures to support our steel industry—an industry that has been hard-hit in the wake of the global financial crisis.

My decision to support this bill was an incredibly difficult one. I fully understand why some of my esteemed colleagues, and the Administration, are opposed to this bill. Their arguments are reasoned, and take into account many important issues that I feel should always be a part of the calculus used to determine our policy on trade issues. Those issues include compliance with international law, and potential trade backlash by our neighbors.

However, there is one number that persuaded me to vote in favor of this bill. Since the beginning of this crisis, over 11,000 jobs have been lost in the steel industry. That number of lost jobs can decimate a community, and turn a local economy into an economic wasteland. I can truly sympathize with the plight of the steel industry, because we are currently seeing similar layoffs in the "Oil Patch"—of which Houston is a part.

I have seen firsthand, because of my experiences with the struggling energy industry

where we have had thousands upon thousands of layoffs, how mass layoffs can affect the psyche of a community. I know how painful it can be, not only for the people who work in the plants and mills, but also for the small business owners around them who depend on these workers for their livelihood.

For those of my colleagues that still doubt the seriousness of this issue, let me bring to light some more, cold, hard numbers. The steel industry lost \$23 million last year in the fourth quarter alone. As a result, they had to lay off workers in order to keep a semblance of an industry. The 11,000 layoffs have resulted in over a \$16 million loss to steel towns across America. And that number does not include the cost to our Federal Government that will be spent on worker retraining programs and unemployment benefits. We must support this resolution, we simply cannot afford not to.

Furthermore, I believe that H.R. 975 is, contrary to the arguments by the opponents of the bill, not a violation of our World Trade Organization (WTO) agreements. Article 21 of GATT specifically states that "Nothing in this agreement shall be construed . . . to prevent any contracting party from taking any action which it considers necessary for the protection of its essential security interests . . . and to such traffic in goods and materials as is carried on directly or indirectly for the purpose of supplying a military establishment." That means that any industry, which is strongly relied upon by the military establishment, can be protected by trade regulations in the interest of national security! I believe that is the case here today.

For those of you that do not realize how much the steel industry is relied upon by our military, here are some figures. During the War in the Persian Gulf, we deployed 95,000 tons of American steel in the form of battleships, aircraft carriers, tanks, aircraft, and artillery. We could not have been as successful as we were without the benefit of a robust steel industry here in the United States. We could not apply further pressure against Iraq, without the constant and ready supply of steel here in the United States. If we are to lose more mills, we run the risk of losing our ability to replenish our military resources, and therefore, diminish our level of national security.

I hope that all of you will agree with me that something must be done, and urge all of you to vote yes on H.R. 975.

Mr. VISCOSKY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. MASCARA) who has been a leader in enabling us to get H.R. 975 on the floor.

(Mr. MASCARA asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MASCARA. Mr. Speaker, it takes longer than a few minutes to express my outrage for the loss of steelworker jobs in southwestern Pennsylvania, West Virginia, Ohio, and around the country. We have lost, as many have said, over 10,000 jobs. I was there in the 1970s and 1980s when over 250,000 manufacturing jobs were lost in southwestern Pennsylvania.

I come from an area that produced the world in coal and steel that helped win two world wars. But this steel dumping problem is just the tip of the iceberg. Wait until other industries, including farming, feel the wrath

of the unbridled world economy, an economy led by the World Trade Organization.

The WTO either cannot or will not intervene in cases of subsidized industries and the dumping of products of steel. The WTO is a poor excuse for an international arbiter. Let us face it, we have the most efficient steel industry in the world. Our steelworkers are the most productive in the world. All that needs to be done is to enforce our trade laws.

We do not need protection. We need fairness. Our foreign trading partners cannot compete with American workers so they resort to illegal means like subsidizing and dumping.

Stand up, America. Are you not tired of being dumped on? Vote for H.R. 975.

Mr. CRANE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2½ minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DELAY) our distinguished majority whip.

Mr. DELAY. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentleman yielding to me.

I understand why some Members are in support of this bill. But, Mr. Speaker, I respectfully rise today to voice my opposition to this steel quota bill. The choice facing us is clear. Either we want protectionism or we want free markets. Protectionism not only stunts this country's growth but also hurts the very industries it tries to protect. Steel is no exception to that rule.

America's steel industry leads the world in productivity and quality today because of competition, not protection. Since 1982, the amount of man-hours it takes to produce a ton of steel in America has dropped from over 10 hours to less than 4 hours. America's steel companies still supply nearly three-quarters of the steel consumed in America. Even if they produce steel at full capacity, we would still have to import steel in order to meet America's needs.

Will America really be better off by meddling with this market? The United States is the world's largest exporter. We are inescapably linked to markets all around this globe, and most American industries depend on some imported materials.

It is doubtful that the capacity of some American industries could be sustained by American suppliers alone. Setting tariffs on steel only comes at the cost of other sectors of the U.S. economy. There is also a great danger to slapping tariffs on goods when the world economy is already unstable. All nations and all consumers are losers in trade wars.

If we close our markets, the markets of the world are then closed to us. No doubt such anti-trade developments are the real threat to our economy and to thousands of American jobs. Protectionism hurts American workers.

When we limit the ability of our trade partners to access our market, we destroy the very framework that is the foundation of vibrant, dynamic trade and cooperation. Tariffs and

quotas only tie the hands of American businesses by limiting our business partners and destroying markets for American products.

Mr. Speaker, we should have no barriers to American ingenuity and no obstacles to American prosperity. Simply put, protectionism is an obstacle to our freedom. We cannot close ourselves off from the world. Trade is not a four-letter word. It is a fact of life.

Mr. Speaker, no nation was ever ruined by free trade, but many nations have collapsed because of failing trade. I urge my colleagues to vote against this anti-trade bill.

Mr. CRANE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Connecticut (Mrs. JOHNSON) another distinguished colleague from the Committee on Ways and Means.

Mrs. JOHNSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, while one could say that the administration did not respond promptly enough nor aggressively enough, the administration has taken some tough actions with some impressive results, as my colleague, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. CRANE) clearly outlined.

It is also true that the industry could have been more aggressive. They could have brought a 201 safeguard action. They are spending a million dollars a month on legal fees and they could have done more to help themselves. But this, my colleagues, what we consider here today, is truly madness.

I fought hard for voluntary restraint agreements for machine tools. I have worked hard on anti-dumping law. I was there when we passed the 301 capability. But this is madness. We pass this and the very next day a steel company in my district closes. Two hundred sixty high-paying UAW jobs will be gone in spite of the fact that this company invested \$50 million in the recent past to modernize their equipment because they are dependent on a single source of raw carbon and alloy steel in Europe.

They had even given money to American steel companies to try to get the same quality steel produced in America. They have not succeeded. They have one source. It is foreign.

This bill makes no allowance for the importation of steel for which there is no source in America. How am I to explain to those employees that they are losing their jobs because they need steel from abroad that is not made in America? We are going to close them down, and we have no understanding, and the proponents of this bill cannot tell us, how many other companies there are in America like mine that are significantly dependent on foreign imports because the steel is not made in America.

And furthermore, they cannot tell me how many jobs will go under within 2 weeks after my shop closes because they cannot get the product my shop makes.

□ 1230

This is irrational. Furthermore, this is not about a bill that does not allow

any exception for no American supply and no exception for short supply, that is, American capacity that maybe is 20 percent of what our demand is. This bill makes no exception for those companies and those jobs will go out in a quick nanominate. Not only that but it will, over time, very rapidly reduce the amount of imports allowed, because it does not allow the same imports that were allowed in those years, part of 1994, 1995, 1996 and part of 1997. It cuts those imports. It says no more than the average. Well, that average, Mr. Speaker, was the average between low imports and high imports. If your new "high imports" is now the average, your new average import is going to be somewhere between low and average. That is going to cut the supply of steel to American companies so rapidly, you will not know what hit you, and you have no estimates of the job impact of that cut in imports.

This is irresponsible. We are going to undermine American manufacturing with this bill more aggressively than we have with any other action this floor has ever taken.

Mr. CRANE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from New York (Mr. HOUGHTON), our colleague on the Committee on Ways and Means.

(Mr. HOUGHTON asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.) Coast Guard

Mr. HOUGHTON. Mr. Speaker, I applaud the gentleman from Indiana for bringing up this issue. It is an important one, we have to get at it, we have got to do something about it.

The issue is not over the hurt. The issue is how to cure the hurt. It seems to me from my experience that this bill has a heart but it does not have a head. What do I mean by that? First of all, it is not going to go anywhere. Even if it did, it is WTO illegal. Furthermore, the most important thing is we have sort of a reverse golden rule. We are doing unto others what we do not want others to do unto us. An example of that, of course, is the banana issue.

I have been in this situation personally. I have been in a company which almost went on its knees because of unfair trading practices, and I relate to that. There are two issues here, though. There is the antidumping issue, and there is the threatening of an industry issue. It is not just antidumping. This is an industry, the steel industry, which is threatened by its very existence, and this is a different part of the trade law and we have got to get at this. But this is not the way to do it, because it is not going to go anywhere. It is not going to be legal. It is going to hurt us long-term.

There is another alternative, and I really point to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN) who has been extraordinarily helpful in this. There is a bill coming up within the next couple of weeks called H.R. 1120. It gets at the issue, it is legal, it is bipartisan, and I think it has the support of the admin-

istration. I think the important thing to know is that there is a mine field out there in international trade. It is not exactly clear, and you have to sort of muddle your way through it but you have to do it in consideration of the rest of the world and also our trading partners.

The bill that will be coming up that the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN) and I are sponsoring does several things. First of all it shortens the time. If you have a 201 case, many times you will say, "Why should I apply this, why should I file, because I can't afford it. It takes too long. It's very, very expensive." We are going to fix that.

Also, it creates an early warning system which is very, very important and anticipates these surges. The most important thing it does, and I think the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. DINGELL) indicated this earlier, if people work the laws on the books as they are now, then we would not have this problem. The administration for years and years and years has not done that. The last person out of the oval office is usually one of the top secretaries, the Secretary of the Treasury, the Secretary of State and they are talking about the macro issues. In the meantime, the individual industries go under. This tends to put the onus on the President, on the administration to abide by and enact and do the things which are necessary under the laws.

I would encourage people not to vote for H.R. 975 but to wait for a couple of weeks because we have a good bill coming up.

Mr. VISCOSKY. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from California (Mr. GEORGE MILLER).

(Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise in very strong support of this bipartisan resolution.

Mr. VISCOSKY. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. BROWN).

(Mr. BROWN of Ohio asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 975 and for America's steelworkers.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 975 and in support of the thousands of American workers who have lost their jobs because of our obsession with free trade.

Since the United States joined NAFTA and the WTO, over 200,000 Americans have seen their jobs exported abroad. These jobs have not become obsolete because of some advance in technology, but because we have deliberately pursued a trade policy that sacrifices productive American jobs for cheap foreign imports.

Last year the U.S. trade deficit was a whopping \$168 billion, the highest in our history. Nineteen ninety-nine promises us an even larger trade imbalance, especially if we are foolish enough to give China membership in

the World Trade Organization or inflict NAFTA-like trade provisions on Sub-Saharan Africa.

Yet the opponents of H.R. 975 are telling us the trade deficit doesn't matter. Just look around, we're told. Our economy is the envy of the world. Wall Street is booming. The stock market topped the 10,000 mark yesterday. And those cheap foreign imports, including hot rolled steel, are sending American shoppers into a buying frenzy.

Well, an unemployed steel or textile worker will tell you the trade deficit does matter. The booming economy is bypassing the American worker. These Americans don't have enough money to put food on the table, much less enough to invest in stocks and bonds.

While H.R. 975 is a good bill and should provide import relief to the steel industry, it does nothing to address the glaring need to regulate the global economy before the next major American industry has to close its doors to unfair competition.

We need trade agreements that act as if people mattered, and have an obligation to put the needs of American workers before corporate profit. We can start today by passing H.R. 975. Then we must reject every trade initiative unless it includes meaningful labor and environmental protection standards. This is the only way we can prevent higher trade deficits and protect American workers from the corporate trade agenda. Support H.R. 975, support a trade bill for Africa that benefits American and African workers, and reject Chinese membership in the WTO.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Washington (Mr. McDERMOTT).

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, this is a very curious bill brought out by the Committee on Ways and Means with a recommendation that it do not pass. Now, very seldom does that happen, unless it is a very political bill. And this is nothing but politics. The President has already said he is going to repeal it, and he really does it for several very good reasons.

H.R. 975 would impose quotas on steel imports outside our U.S. trade remedy laws and our U.S. obligations in the World Trade Organization. We would simply be running straight into the world trading rules headfirst, knowing it, and knowing that we are out of bounds. Now, that does not make any sense.

We heard from Members on the other side, the gentlewoman from Connecticut (Mrs. JOHNSON) and others, about the problems created by an absolute quota without knowing anything about what the impacts of that are on those people who use the raw product for finished products.

When we built the trade center in Seattle, we needed a piece of steel to span the freeway to rest the building on. There was no place to buy that steel except Korea. That is where we bought it. Now, if you want to say whatever construction project or whatever is going on in this country, if they do not make it in the United States, you cannot do it, this is the bill to support. Because you are not taking into account,

and one of the real problems with this debate is, there are lots of questions, none of which are being answered, but what do you do with the supplier or the producer who needs the raw material that is only obtained in another country?

Now, there is an additional problem and that one is a much more philosophic problem. We live in a world trading market. If we start this business of trade wars and we put up our barrier against somebody else and they put theirs up against us, we will soon see what Smoot-Hawley did back in the 1920s. We do not want to go back to that. Vote against this bill.

Mr. VISCOSKY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. KLINK). He has been very, very active on this issue.

(Mr. KLINK asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. KLINK. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time. The gentleman from Indiana (Mr. VISCOSKY) has been a pleasure to work with on this issue as we have people in our district that are really suffering.

I just want to point out something. I saw this chart which I found quite curious. It is the fact that we now have seen a dramatic drop in the amount of imports that we are receiving from Russia, Japan and Brazil. This is all correct. But at the same time, imports from China have increased 552 percent, and imports from Indonesia have increased by 1310 percent.

Mr. Speaker, this is a shell game. We are kidding ourselves. I come from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. We used to be the steel city. We are still bleeding from the loss of jobs in the 1970s and the 1980s. It is now an insult that we are not going to stand up against trade that is in fact illegal.

If I can go to the next chart, what I want to show my colleagues is that the trade we are talking about right now, the steel dumping that is occurring here is illegal trade. They are bringing steel over here, hot-rolled steel, cold-rolled steel, they are bringing over specialty steel and they are selling it below cost. They are putting thousands of workers out of jobs. I know some of the hundreds of thousands of workers who were displaced in the late 1970s and 1980s. It has caused a displacement in the communities, in the families, an increase in the level of violence. We are talking about a life-and-death situation. If we had a situation where these were our constituents and someone was breaking in their house and raping and robbing and pillaging them, we would want to send in a policeman to do something. In this instance, they are just coming in and taking their future, they are taking their jobs, they are taking all of their dreams away. There are people standing up saying, "We're not going to stand up for these workers."

We must pass H.R. 975. It is not only the 170,000 people who work in steel but

the people who mine iron ore, who mine coal, who make coke, who work in transportation of steel products. We must stand up for the people of this Nation. We must stand up with a force of steel and with a backbone of steel.

Mr. CRANE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. REGULA).

(Mr. REGULA asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. REGULA. Mr. Speaker, first of all I want to say thanks to the Committee on Ways and Means and to the leadership for giving us this opportunity to debate this issue. I know that it was not something that the Committee on Ways and Means was supportive as evident by their recommendation, even our leadership, but they said in fairness—in fairness—people should have an opportunity to debate this issue and vote on it. For that, I express my appreciation.

We are here because we have a crisis in this Nation. We have a crisis of unfair trading practices. The issue is not protectionism. That word gets bandied around so easily. The real issue is fairness. We want our steelworkers and our steel industry and all the ancillary jobs and suppliers to be treated fairly. It is difficult to compete when the steel products coming into the United States are being sold at less than cost. Our steelworkers are the most efficient, the most competitive, the best quality in the world today. But all of those things do not mean a lot if the competition from overseas is saying, we will sell it for almost any price we can get, simply to earn hard currency.

We have heard speeches that say the sky is falling. The sky is not going to fall if we adopt this bill. It is going to give the President discretion to ensure that there will be fairness in the marketplace, that our steelworkers and the suppliers and the literally tens of thousands of jobs that are dependent on this industry will have an opportunity to compete on a level playing field. I think this bill just simply represents an opportunity for our industry to compete. It does have a 3-year time frame.

Let me just say, lastly, I think we need to take a look at our whole trading policy. We are in a different world when many of these laws were put on the books and we need to say prospectively we want fairness for American products.

Mr. VISCOSKY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from California (Mr. FILNER).

Mr. FILNER. I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time. Mr. Speaker, I rise today as the son of a Pittsburgh steelworker and in strong support of American steelworkers, the American steel industry and the Bipartisan Steel Recovery Act. The case is clear. The American steel industry and our steelworkers are in crisis and Congress must act.

Already, 10,000 steelworkers and iron ore miners have been laid off or have

lost their jobs. Thousands more have had their workdays and paychecks cut. Several steel companies have been forced into bankruptcy. Our failure to approve this legislation and to end this crisis now risks the disappearance of the American steel industry altogether. We allow this to happen at tremendous cost to our economy and our national security.

□ 1245

Mr. Speaker, our obligation ultimately is to the thousands and thousands of hard-working American families who have served their country mining and producing this critical product, put bread on the table by the sweat of their brow, raised families, contributed to their communities and who now risk losing everything because of the current steel dumping crisis.

I urge my colleagues to support this important legislation, and I urge President Clinton to be loyal to the hard-working American men and women who have been loyal to him and sign this legislation.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the distinguished gentleman from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN), a member of the Committee on Ways and Means.

(Mr. CARDIN asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CARDIN. First, Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. VISCOSKY) for really making this possible for us to have a vote today on this very important bill. I would also like to congratulate the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. REGULA) for his work on this area. I say to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN) I like this bill, but it deals with a prospective problem. We need to deal with the current situation. We need to pass this bill and the bill that he mentioned.

Mr. Speaker, I also wanted to express my appreciation to the steelworkers at Sparrows Point in Maryland for their persistence in being here to demonstrate exactly what effect this illegal surge of imported steel has had on our work force. There is no question that this activity has been illegal. The imports are wrong, and there is no question of the harm that it has caused. Ten thousand jobs have been lost.

Mr. Speaker, Bethlehem Steel's fourth quarter financial reports show that this is certainly a very serious situation. It is not Bethlehem Steel's fault. They made the investments in the 1980's and early 1990's. They can compete with steel produced anywhere in the world as long as it is on a fair and level playing field. That is not the case.

The bill before us is an appropriate remedy, so for the sake of our U.S. steelworkers, for the sake of basic fairness, let us pass this legislation.

I will vote in favor of this anti-steel dumping bill. But before I do, I want to personally thank

Representative VISCOSKY for his leadership on this issue. And I want to recognize the hard work of the steel industry in the last year. I want to congratulate union and management for their tenacity. They refused to let us forget what this dumping was doing to their lives.

If you looked up the definition of the word persistence in Webster's Dictionary you ought to find a picture of some of the steelworkers and managers from Bethlehem Steel's Sparrows Point division in Baltimore. Sometimes it felt like they were living in my front office during the last few months.

But they have made it clear to all of us that this problem is real. That they are frightened for themselves and their families. 10,000 jobs have been lost due to unfair dumping. We're told more will come if something isn't done soon. There are already slowdowns at Bethlehem Steel. The company's fourth quarter financial reports were anything but rosy.

These workers were not only frightened, they were furious. Furious at our inaction. Furious at our handwringing. Well, today we have the opportunity to act and get their industry back to producing quality steel on a level playing field.

It is hard to argue with their fury. Consider the numbers and the facts. U.S. imports of steel from Japan jumped nearly 162-percent from 1997 to 1998. 162-percent! I had a Beth Steel manager in my office last week who said that just as the levels for Russian steel imports began to decrease, the levels of Chinese dumped steel took its place. It's like that boardwalk game "Whack-A-Mole": you hit one, and another pops up.

The U.S. steel industry is an industry that has already taken its whacks—whacks it well deserved—and managed to reemerge stronger and more profitable because of it. I began my career here in Congress just as this revitalized industry returned to the fore in 1987.

But I also remember the darkness before the dawn. As Speaker of the House in the Maryland General Assembly at the time, I remember that painful process for Beth Steel and the steel industry as a whole. Between 1977 and 1987, 45 million tons of steelmaking capacity was lost due to bankruptcies, plant closures, and partial closures. Employment dropped 57 percent. Almost 300,000 steelworkers lost their jobs. The wages and benefits of those workers who survived were substantially cut as well.

I cite these figures to stress that these were fair blows the industry had to withstand. The industry had let itself lag behind other countries. It had failed to adopt new techniques and practices until these practices themselves were out of date. The industry needed to be shaken awake. A reinvigorated international steel industry did just that.

But, Mr. Speaker, the U.S. steel industry can't blame itself for the problems it faces today. And one month declines in the levels of steel imports are nice but I fear them to be a false dawn.

The blows this industry is being asked to absorb here are not fair ones. The United States has the only true open market in the world. But it is being forced to compete against countries whose steel producers are heavily subsidized or which work in cartels.

I support the Visclosky bill because it returns the field to the even level that the whole industry played on before July 1998. I appreciate the complexity of the global financial cri-

sis which prompted this glut of imports. I appreciate the distress of steel workers all over Asia, South America, and Russia. But quite frankly it's my job to look after the distressed steelworkers at Beth Steel. They are my primary responsibility. They are our primary responsibility. We have to do more for them.

The steel industry has been sending SOS signals to the U.S. Congress for months now. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote for H.R. 975 and show these workers we hear their call and help is on the way.

Mr. CRANE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to my distinguished colleague and neighbor, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. MANZULLO).

Mr. MANZULLO. Mr. Speaker, this bill, if it is passed, could have the law of unintended consequences. Let me explain. Kelly Springfield has a radial tire manufacturing facility in my district, and I would really appreciate if the House could listen very closely to this:

Mr. Speaker, steel wire rod for tire cord which goes into radial tires is not manufactured in the United States. It has to be outsourced from foreign countries. Kelly Springfield has a radial tire manufacturing facility in the district that I represent. Because this bill is so broad, it would slap import quotas on steel wire rod for tire cords and there have the possibility of laying off workers at American plants that make tires, that make radial tires. This is not the type of bill that we need.

In a neighboring county, McHenry County, Brake Parts was having rotors from China dumped in the United States. We encouraged Brake Parts to file a complaint with the International Trade Commission, got a retroactive order and stopped that practice. But we have to do something else. We have to pass the Regula bill so that any tariffs that are collected as a result of illegal dumping in this country not go to the coffers or to the Treasury of the United States, but go to the companies hurt and to the workers hurt thereby.

So the bill is imperfect in its form. It would actually hurt manufacturers, it would hurt employees in this country. Second of all, we need to work towards enactment of the Regula bill so that any benefit that comes as a result of sanctions against people who are dumping here go directly to the employees.

Mr. VISCOSKY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. RAHALL) who has been a leader on steel issues throughout his career here.

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Indiana for yielding this time to me, and I want to commend the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. VISCOSKY) for the very strong leadership, determined effort and excellent grasp of the ramifications of steel dumping in this country has meant for our American worker and our American economy. Obviously I rise in support, Mr. Speaker, of this resolution and feel very strongly that it is vital in order to protect our American workers.

Steel producers, as we all know and has been said, in other countries such as Japan, Brazil and Russia are heavily subsidized by their government and thus are able to take advantage of America's open markets by dumping excess steel here resulting in closed bankrupt steel plants and throwing thousands of our steelworkers out of their jobs, unable to sustain their families and their quality of life. But aside from the closure of our steel mills and unemployed workers is the impact that this could have on the future stability of the U.S. and how it could inhibit our national security.

As has been said by others, we cannot sustain our Nation's armed forces, their equipment and weapons using Styrofoam and plastic. We have to have steel, particularly and preferably steel that comes from our own industry and our own workers, a known product, not from steel produced in foreign lands and dumped on our shores.

The bill before us today directs the President to take the necessary steps including imposing quotas, tariff surcharges or negotiated enforceable voluntary export restraints that cap steel imports. The bill also requires the administration to establish a steel import notification and a monitoring program.

Mr. Speaker, I am neither a protectionist nor a free trader. I believe in protecting our own labor force and our own industry, and H.R. 975 will do that.

I urge my colleagues to stand up for steel, vote for this bill and create a level playing field for Americans for a change instead of our foreign trading partners whose governments subsidize them while breaking our laws. I thank the gentleman again for yielding time to me and commend him for his excellent leadership.

Mr. VISCOSKY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. ROEMER).

Mr. ROEMER. Mr. Speaker, I want to begin by commending my good friend next door to me in Indiana (Mr. VISCOSKY) for his hard work and leadership on this very important issue.

First of all, what this issue is not about: It is not about American protectionism, it is about American principle. This is not about unfettered free trade, it is about enforcing our fair trade agreements. And this is not about corporate downsizing, it is about illegal dumping.

When the Clinton administration finally agreed and the Commerce Department to look into this matter, they found, and I quote from their news release in the Commerce Department, that the Commerce Department will instruct Customs to require importers of these products to post a bond or cash deposit of all imports entered during the 90 days preliminary to the determination. Unprecedented 25 days ahead of time the Commerce Department found that Japan and Brazil were engaged in this illegal dumping.

So I encourage in a bipartisan way our colleagues to stand up for this

American principle of enforcing our trade agreements.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GILLMOR). The Chair would remind Members of both sides of the aisle to try to adhere to the time limits. We are extending the debate by not doing so.

Mr. ARCHER. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. CRANE).

(Mr. CRANE asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CRANE. Mr. Speaker, I have here a letter from the CEO and Chairman of Caterpillar that I referred to earlier. I also have letters from other manufacturing companies in my general area around Chicago that I will include as a part of the RECORD.

CATERPILLAR INC.,
Peoria, IL, March 10, 1999.

Hon. PHILIP M. CRANE,
U.S. House of Representatives,
Cannon House Office Building,
Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE CRANE: As one of America's largest exporters and biggest consumers of US-made steel, Caterpillar urges you to vote against the Visclosky-Quinn Quota Bill (H.R. 975). The company strongly opposes the legislation because it not only would hurt our competitiveness in overseas markets, but would lead to direct retaliation against Cat exports. It also would establish a system that rewards countries that engage in unfair trade practices, undermines the international trading system and jeopardizes the global economic recovery.

By imposing mandatory controls on steel imports from all countries—including fairly traded imports—the Visclosky-Quinn Quota Bill would severely restrict the availability of steel to U.S. manufacturers. When this type of protectionist scheme was attempted during the 1980s, it created an artificially restrictive steel market resulting in steel shortages and higher prices. At times Caterpillar had to fly-in steel from overseas just to keep our production lines running. On one occasion, we come perilously close to shutting down our largest plant while we waited for permission to import a type of steel that wasn't even made in the United States.

What's equally troubling is the impact the Quota Bill could have on Caterpillar exports. Because this legislation blatantly violates U.S. international obligations, our trading partners would feel justified in retaliating against American exports. Likely targets would be U.S. manufacturers—like Caterpillar—that export steel-intensive products. Since Caterpillar buys more than 90 percent of its steel from U.S. steel producers, such retaliation would further harm the American steel industry while severely damaging Cat's export markets.

Regrettably, the Quota Bill is structured in a way that could actually reward countries that engage in unfair trade practices. Unlike trade remedy laws that attempt to neutralize the effects of dumping or subsidies, this legislation would reward countries with a guaranteed share of a restricted U.S. market. As a result, much of the quota "rent" generated by higher prices would go to foreign steel producers.

Finally, this legislation could have a catastrophic impact on the international economy. Today the U.S. economy is at full employment. Inflation is nonexistent. The Dow Jones average is near 10,000. Enactment of the Quota Bill would mandate the United

States radically change the direction of its trade and economic policies. At a time when the U.S. is pressuring countries that are in far worse shape to keep markets open and free, the Visclosky-Quinn Bill would likely trigger a retreat into protectionism.

Representative Crane, we know the lure of quick-fix solutions can be appealing. But protectionism isn't the answer. By now, it's clear that U.S. unfair trade laws are working. By almost all measures the crisis in the steel industry has passed. Rather than focusing on protectionist measures like the Visclosky-Quinn Bill, we urge you to support initiatives aimed at improving the competitiveness of the U.S. steel industry. That way, the steel industry, American manufacturers, and U.S. workers and consumers all win.

Sincerely,

GLEN BARTON,
Chairman and CEO.

COMPLEX TOOLING & MOLDING, INC.,
KRASBERG METALS DIVISION,
Des Plaines, IL, November 30, 1998.

PHILIP M. CRANE,
Palatine, IL.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE PHILIP M. CRANE: In the interest of Complex Tooling & Molding, Inc.-Krasberg Metals Division a producer of metal stampings and assemblies for over 50 years, and over 50 employees in the suburban Chicago area. We are also a member of the Precision Metalforming Association (PMA), the trade association that represents many users and consumers of steel and steel products.

The protectionist pressures currently being exerted by the "Stand Up for Steel" coalition give us great concern because they are aimed at restricting our ability to get the best steel available for a competitive price. We know that trade restrictions such as those advocated by protectionist interests will result in a net loss of U.S. jobs. We support you in your efforts to improve, not undermine the U.S. economy.

We need adequate and dependable sources of steel to maintain and expand our operations in the United States—sometimes that means that we must rely on foreign steel. At best, the U.S. steel producers are capable of meeting only 70-75 percent of U.S. demand. Actions that curtail imports of steel will seriously injure our industry and the economy as a whole through higher prices, fewer choices and job migration offshore.

We all agree that it is important to maintain U.S. jobs and job growth. Steel is no less important than other sectors. However, you should remember that the major U.S. steel using industries (stamped or fabricated metal products and others) employ some 8.3 million production workers, nearly fifty times the number employed by U.S. steel producers. These jobs depend on maintaining competitive market conditions in this country. If steel imports are restricted, imports of steel products will certainly increase, and more jobs will be destroyed in this country.

In determining what is fair for steel producers, we ask you to remember that short-term benefits for the steel industry may have a long-term negative effect on U.S. jobs and the economy as a whole.

Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,

DAN BERG.

—
TRU-DIE INC.,
Franklin Park, IL, December 21st, 1998.
Philip Crane,
Palatine, IL.

DEAR CONGRESSMAN CRANE: Our company Tru-Die Inc., is a metal stamping facility, that was started in 1964. We have approximately 75 employees that are concerned about their job security. We are also a mem-

ber of the Precision Metalforming Association (PMA), the trade association that represents many users and consumers of steel and steel products.

The protectionist pressures currently being exerted by the "Stand Up for Steel" coalition give us great concern, because they are aimed at restricting our ability to get the best steel available for a competitive price. We know that trade restrictions such as those advocated by protectionist interests will result in a net loss of U.S. jobs. We support you in your efforts to improve, not undermine the U.S. economy.

We need adequate and dependable sources of steel to maintain and expand our operations in the United States—sometimes that means that we must rely on foreign steel. At best, the U.S. steel producers are capable of meeting only 70-75 percent of U.S. demand. Actions that curtail imports of steel will seriously injure our industry and the economy as a whole through higher prices, fewer choices and job migration offshore.

We all agree that it is important to maintain U.S. jobs and job growth. Steel is no less important than other sectors. However, you should remember that the major U.S. steel using industries (stamped or fabricated metal products and others) employ some 8.3 million production workers, nearly fifty times the number employed by U.S. steel producers. These jobs depend on maintaining competitive market conditions in this country. If steel imports are restricted, imports of steel products will certainly increase, and more jobs will be destroyed in this country.

In determining what is fair for steel producers, we ask you to remember that short-term benefits for the steel industry may have a long-term negative effect on U.S. jobs and the economy as a whole.

Thank you for your support.

DON BROWN.

—
OLSON INTERNATIONAL, LTD.,
Lombard, IL, December 1, 1998.

Congressman PHILIP CRANE,
Illinois 8th District, Cannon House Office
Building, Washington, DC.

DEAR CONGRESSMAN CRANE, our company, Olson International Ltd., is a precision metal stamping company that employs approximately two hundred twenty people in our Lombard, IL, facility. We have been in business for over sixty years and we are a QS9000 registered company.

We supply high quality metal parts to the automotive, appliance and electronics industry.

This letter is written to inform you that we are not in favor of protectionist measures that would attempt to restrict the import of flat roll steel products.

We are also a member of the Precision Metal Forming Association (PMA), the trade association that represents many users and consumers of steel and steel products. In addition, I am a Certified Purchasing Manager and a director of the National Association of Purchasing Management, Chicago chapter (NAPM-Chicago). Also, I chair our local metal buyer's committee and can loudly state that a curb in imports of flat roll steel products would negatively impact fabricators in the Midwest.

The protectionist pressures currently being exerted by the "Stand Up for Steel" coalition gives us great concern, because they are aimed at restricting our ability to get the best steel available for a competitive price. We know that trade restrictions such as those advocated by protectionist interests will result in a net loss of U.S. jobs. We support you in your efforts to improve, not undermine the U.S. economy.

We need adequate and dependable sources of steel to maintain and expand our operations in the United States—sometimes that

means that we must rely on foreign steel. At best, U.S. steel producers are capable of meeting only 70-75 percent of U.S. demand. Actions that curtail imports of steel will seriously injure our industry and the economy as a whole through higher prices, fewer choices and job migration offshore.

We all agree that it is important to maintain U.S. jobs and job growth. Steel is no less important than other sectors. However, you should remember that the major U.S. steel using industries (stamped or fabricated metal products and others) employ some 8.3 million production workers, nearly fifty times the number employed by U.S. steel producers. These jobs depend on maintaining competitive market conditions in this country. If steel imports are restricted, imports of steel products will certainly increase, and more jobs will be destroyed in this country.

In determining what is fair for steel producers, we ask you to remember that short-term benefits for the steel industry may have a long-term negative effect on U.S. jobs and the economy as a whole.

Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,

EDWARD C. FARRER C.P.M.
Manager of Purchasing.

Mr. ARCHER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BUYER).

(Mr. BUYER asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BUYER. Mr. Speaker, on February 25 I testified before the Subcommittee on Trade panel of the Committee on Ways and Means regarding the crisis of the United States steel industry caused by the flood of illegal imports. At the hearing I stated that imposing quotas legislatively was a measure of last resort utilized when it is clear that other options will not suffice to enforce our trade laws. Unfortunately it has become all too clear that the Clinton administration has no intention of aggressively enforcing our trade laws. I would far prefer that the administration use the tools that Congress has given to enforce our laws. The administration could take unilateral action to address the illegally dumped steel coming into the United States, but they have not done so. Although I have misgivings about the potential for retaliation that the legislation may engender, Congress simply cannot tolerate the dithering by the administration while the United States steel industry continues to bleed.

American steelworkers are the most productive in the world. Investments in new technology in the 1980s and the training to reduced the hours of labor to make one ton of steel from 9.3 hours in 1980 to just 2 hours in 1999. The industry and its workers are the most efficient and productive in the world, and I ask my colleagues to support the Visclosky-Regula bill.

ISPAT INLAND, INC,

East Chicago IN, March 12, 1999.

Hon. STEPHEN BUYER,
Members of Congress,
Washington DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE BUYER, I wish to thank you again for inviting us and other steel manufacturing companies to meet with you last Friday, March 5, 1999. It was a welcome opportunity to be able to personally

share with you our views on the current steel import crisis and its impact on steel industry jobs and markets in the United States. Thank you also for inviting me to again share those views with you in this letter.

There is an important historical perspective to the current issue. In the early and mid-1980's, the domestic steel industry was similarly faced with the spectre of massive imports of dumped and unfairly subsidized foreign steel products. At that time the industry was generally ill prepared to effectively respond to that challenge. As a result, the Congress and the Administration granted temporary relief in the form of stringent quotas placed on imported steel products. In effect, the domestic steel industry was granted sufficient time to re-make itself into a competitive player in the world market.

Years of painful, but necessary, restructuring ensued and today the steel industry has emerged as a highly competitive producer of world class products. For example, labor productivity has increased 5.5% annually since 1980, energy consumption has decreased by 45% in roughly the same time period, and environmental and safety performance far exceeds that of the steel industry elsewhere in the world. We can compete with anyone so long as the playing field is level. However, the dynamics of world economics are such that the playing field has been rendered unlevel today.

There has been a massive new wave of unfairly traded imports and a quick and decisive governmental response has not been forthcoming. In recent months, the industry has asked the Administration to help us prosecute a Section 201 case and to assure us that the President will impose a global remedy if we are successful. The Administration has refused this request.

In fact, in the case of the proposed Russian Suspension Agreement, the Administration has taken steps, over our objections, to limit our rights under existing trade laws. While we were successful in obtaining effective dumping margins against Russian steel imports, the Administration proposes suspension of that case while permitting Russia significant access to our markets. The resultant product flow into this country will be illegal under current trade law. I recognize that foreign policy issues are at stake, but the damage to our industry will be egregious.

The domestic industry's position is that we will continue to litigate against dumped and subsidized foreign steel, that we are in immediate need of a global solution, and that we would prefer a solution consistent with our international obligations with the World Trade Organization. We fully support free trade. If, however, the Administration continues to refuse to offer adequate solutions and to deny us the ability to enforce existing trade laws, we will have to reconsider our position and seek the most viable alternative solution to remedy this crisis.

Than you again for your continued interest on this issue.

Sincerely

DALE E. WIERSBE,
President and Chief Operating Officer.

The steel industry is crucial for our national security. Our planes, our tanks, our ships, our weapons, utilize steel. We have a responsibility to the protection of our citizens to ensure a viable steel manufacturing industry in the United States. It is impossible for the United States to retain its status as the world's sole superpower without steel.

I urge the House to adopt H.R. 975.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the distinguished gentleman from California (Mr. DOOLEY).

(Mr. DOOLEY of California asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DOOLEY of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to this measure, and I also take some exception to the criticism of the administration and their lack of action against the issue of the increased imports of steel.

As my colleagues know, if we really look at the facts, we have seen since the administration has taken action that hot rolled steel has fallen almost 70 percent between November of last year to January of this year. When we look at two of the countries that have been identified as problems, Russia and Japan, we see that their imports have dropped 98 and 96 percent, and in fact when we look at the U.S. imports of hot rolled steel from all countries, we find that our January 1999 imports are at the same level, in fact lower than July of 1997.

The real concern though of this legislation is the precedent that it would set. We are endorsing the establishment, the legislative establishment of quotas that go beyond the agreements that we have negotiated that come under the authority of the WTO. Passing this legislation sends a green light to countries throughout the world that they can put in place quotas that can work to the detriment of U.S. economic interests.

Mr. Speaker, we need to oppose this legislation.

Mr. VISCOSKY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. CUMMINGS).

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to urge my colleagues to protect American workers. Opponents of this bill focus on protectionism for the steel industry. Let us remember our duties to the American people. So protectionism is key. We must protect our home, American jobs and families from the irreparable harm caused by unprecedented and unfair levels of steel imports.

The American steel industry is a \$70 billion industry that employs 170,000 people nationwide. Moreover, the industry is critically interwoven into the fabric of our society. Steel is utilized in automobiles, medical equipment, homes and military systems. We must act now to provide the appropriate safeguards to prevent risk to these industries. Let us protect American families. Let us stop illegal dumping by voting in favor of this measure.

Mr. ARCHER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. KOLBE).

(Mr. KOLBE asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. KOLBE. Mr. Speaker, this is one heck of a corrosive proposal, and I rise in steely opposition to it. The notion that we are victims of predatory and illegal dumping is a corrosive idea. We are told that the only way that this practice is going to cease is if we limit

or ban imports to some kind of an arbitrary level set in 1994, and that is very rusty logic for a number of reasons. So let me focus on a couple of facts.

Fact one: U.S. law provides clear trade remedies for industries that are harmed by dumping. In fact, the steel industry has already filed and won anti-dumping cases against Japan and Brazil, and it has negotiated a voluntary restraint agreement with Russia. The results of that are dramatically shown in this chart which shows imports from those three countries subject to investigations have dropped for hot rolled steel products. This drop over the last three months has been 98 percent, 97 percent in the case of Brazil and about 60 percent in the case of Japan, or more than that. So it has been almost cut to nothing.

□ 1300

Even as we debate, there are anti-dumping cases proceeding against France, India, Indonesia, Italy, Korea, Macedonia. More than a third of the 300 antidumping and countervailing duty orders address steel.

So here we can see in three months' time the reduction of hot-rolled steel products from all countries, from a total of 1.4 million tons per month in November of 1998 to 437,000 tons today.

Fact two, the remedies designed to deal with the sudden import surge, Section 201, wasn't even utilized by the industry. They did not even bother to file a case. Instead, the big steel bosses spent an unknown amount of money lobbying Congress for special protection.

Fact three, dumping is not inherently wrong. A product that is dumped is sold in the United States for less than it is sold in the home market or less than the cost of production. This means that foreign producers are selling steel to the United States at a great price, and that helps users of steel in this country. That is not inherently evil, but in order to protect certain industries dumping is not allowed under our trade laws.

Our solution is not a punitive one. The foreign producer is not thrown in jail, prohibited from selling in the market. Instead, the company is required to pay a duty equal to the amount of the discount. In effect, they are forced to raise the price of their product to more closely approximate the cost of our domestic producers.

By the way, U.S. steel companies dump steel abroad all the time. In fact, there are duties in place against 10 U.S. steel companies for dumping overseas. Believe me, foreign steel companies are watching this vote today. If this bill passes, if it became law, they are really going to ask their governments very quickly for Visclosky-type bans on U.S. steel.

Which brings me to fact four. This is not a free vote! A 1995 study found that U.S. antidumping and countervailing duties affected only 1.8 percent of U.S. merchandise imports. Yet, the cost to

our economy? \$1.59 billion dollars! The Congressional Budget Office estimates the Visclosky ban will cost one billion dollars over the next three years!

An aye vote today is a vote for a billion dollar tax on the American consumer. Every member that votes for this bill will have to explain to steel-users why they have to pay a billion dollar "steel tax" before they can buy the product.

And every member that votes for this bill will have to explain to farmers and exporters why they voted for a bill which puts their livelihood at risk by subjecting them to retaliation against U.S. products.

This is one of the most misguided and dangerous pieces of legislation I have ever seen.

The Visclosky quota sought today goes beyond "fair" trade. It applies to all steel imports, even those that are not dumped. And it creates billion dollar casualties along the way.

Where the damage stops, nobody knows. I urge my colleagues to vote no on this bill.

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. DOYLE), who has been a leader on H.R. 975.

Mr. DOYLE. Mr. Speaker, we have heard a lot of facts today about the steel import crisis, but there is one fact that I would like to stress above all: 12,000 Americans have lost their jobs to foreign competitors who have cheated.

This is not the first steel crisis. I remember the real suffering in the 1970s and the 1980s, in towns like McKeesport, Duquesne, Braddock, Clairton and many other communities in the Mon-Valley section of Pittsburgh. Those were desperate times.

I know hard working men and women, who never took a dime from the government, that were forced to go on welfare. I saw good families break up from the stress of not being able to support themselves.

Since that time, steel and our steel towns have recovered somewhat. We have done everything we have been asked. Labor productivity has improved tremendously, for one thing. Steel plants in my area have come back with probably one-fourth the number of workers they had, and the large percent of people that were let go many had to find work in the service sector or whatever other under employment jobs they could do, and no one shed a tear for them.

Steelworkers did everything they were asked to do because we were told we had to make U.S. steel competitive again. They had to work harder for longer hours, for less pay, and no one came to their aid, but steel came back. They got lean and mean and American steelworkers are now the most efficient producers of steel in the world.

We have played by the rules, only to have our jobs stolen by foreign companies who are breaking our laws and that is an incontrovertible fact proven

by our Commerce Department's own findings.

Today we draw a line in the sand. We will not tolerate a steel policy that lets us 12,000 Americans lose their jobs to competitors that are cheating, and if this administration is not going to take decisive action then we will.

As I stand in the well of this House on Saint Patrick's Day, I think about my grandfather, Mike Doyle, who came to this country from Ireland in the early 1900s and found work in Pittsburgh in the steel mills. He worked 43 years at the Carrie Furnace and along with his wife Beatrice raised three sons. His middle son, Mike Doyle, my father, followed him into the steel mills and worked almost 30 years at the Edgar Thompson Steel Works.

Aside from two summers when I was in college, I am the first Mike Doyle in my family not to work in a steel mill, but I remember vividly the sacrifices made by thousands of families who worked in the mills to build this country and keep it strong.

My father and grandfather are not here anymore. They are up there celebrating with Saint Patrick today, but I know they are watching and I know their Irish is up.

In their memory, and on behalf of thousands of American steelworkers and their families, I dedicate every ounce of strength I have to the passage of H.R. 975.

Mr. Speaker, it is up to us. We need to send a message. Stop this cheating. Stand up for steel. Support H.R. 975.

Mr. ARCHER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. NEY).

Mr. NEY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman for this debate today. Although we are disagreeing on the issue he is letting the debate occur, and I appreciate that and thank him for it.

Mr. Speaker, earlier today I mentioned union officials and some steelworkers that have fought for this issue. I also want to mention Dick Redier, Greg Warren and Paul Bucha, who are just three of the many individuals from the company's end of it that have fought to get this bill to the floor today.

I think today is about Main Street America. The steelworkers got trampled on. We tried to respond in October. They got trampled on by foreign countries and, by the way, when the illegal dumping came in, Europe responded to support its mayors and its communities to protect them, but our steelworkers got trampled on and they fought back.

There are laws on the books. They talk about the laws on the books. The President of the United States ignored them. We would not be here today if he had followed those laws, but the steelworkers in our communities fought back.

We would like to talk about our children's future. We are responsible for our children's future and today is about our children's future and our communities back home.

We can be responsible to help our communities to stand up against illegal, again, illegal dumping. We can be responsible by standing up for steel, which is standing up for our communities. It is restoring faith. It is restoring America's path. By voting yes today, we are going to say to every worker in the United States that when foreign countries try to take an illegal path, we are going to stop it.

We are going to say, they do not have to beg their government anymore for help. We are going to prove it today on the floor of the House.

So this is an issue not about free trade. It is not about protectionism. This is truly an issue about illegal dumping. I am just sorry we have to be here today because the President should have enforced the laws in October, just like Ronald Reagan did when he was President of the United States. It is okay to have a give and take on the debate of trade.

If we stand by and let this continue, believe me these countries would have continued to dump, illegally dump, and we would lose thousands and thousands more of workers' jobs.

Our heroes today are those 11,000 people who have struggled through unemployment trying to feed their families, and our heroes today are the steelworkers and the companies and the people back home that forced this debate to the floor. I urge a yes vote.

Mr. ARCHER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. ADERHOLT).

Mr. ADERHOLT. Mr. Speaker, I also want to thank the chairman of the committee, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. ARCHER), for bringing forth this piece of legislation and for allowing us this debate today.

Mr. Speaker, from looking over the different letters from different and various Members of Congress, I am not surprised to see claims that imports have dropped, claims that have been offered in an effort to convince all of us that the crisis in this country with steel dumping is over.

Let me be very clear on three points. First, when finally faced with a trade petition like the one filed in September of 1998, foreign countries which dump steel on the U.S. market simply switch from one category to another. All the while they are laughing at the slowness and the expense of our trade enforcement process.

Second, I appreciate the hard work of the Commerce Department but when we hear about an expedited trade process we must realize that this is merely shaving off 20 to 30 days off a 9- to 12-month process.

Third, by allowing dumping we are deliberately sacrificing productive, nonobsolete but productive United States jobs.

I would just ask my colleagues today, as they are looking over this piece of legislation, to look at it very closely before voting. Get a complete look at the issue of steel and the steel imports

that have come into this country, and I think when my colleagues see an accurate picture of this they will be led to support this bill. I just ask for support today on H.R. 975.

Mr. ARCHER. Mr. Speaker, may I inquire how much time is remaining on both sides?

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GILLMOR). The gentleman from Texas (Mr. ARCHER) has 9½ minutes, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN) 6 minutes, and the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. VISCOSKY) 7 minutes.

Mr. ARCHER. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. VISCOSKY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. TRAFICANT).

(Mr. TRAFICANT asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. TRAFICANT. Mr. Speaker, I say to the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. VISCOSKY), good job. We passed an unbinding ban resolution in October and the imports dropped, but not enough.

Mr. Speaker, this is not a debate today about protectionism; it is about illegal trade. These countries have ripped us off. I do not understand the philosophical differences here, unless the Republicans are trying to set us up, get the President to veto this after he promised every worker in America he would put his foot down on illegal trade.

He also promised every worker in America he would pass a scab labor bill. He did not, either.

I want to give credit today to Ronald Reagan. I can remember him coming to my district telling our steelworkers that he would, in fact, reinvest in industry, and he passed the investment tax credit program, and he would provide money for training. He did that, and they did not support him.

As a Democrat, the White House, they are not called slick over there for nothing, Mr. Speaker. They may just go ahead and sign this because if they do not, unless they are trying to veto AL GORE's presidency, I do not know what is going on here today.

I want to make this point. I did not make a pledge in the World Trade Organization. I pledged an oath to the Constitution of the United States.

What bothers me the most is our unemployed workers, their taxes coming from their unemployment check are being used to bail out Russia, South Korea, Asia, Japan, and recently Brazil.

What is it with us? Are we nuts? This is illegal trade.

Quite frankly, I wanted to add a little amendment that would have banned it for 24 hours, just to let the world know that the Congress of the United States knows they are ripping us off and we are not going to take it any longer.

We cannot get anybody to take a look at the trade issue. Our companies are going overseas. Our jobs are going to Mexico, and I hear everybody talk-

ing about new jobs. Brassiere cup molders, gizzard skin removers, pantyhose crotch closers, corn cob pipe assemblers, cowboys, ashtray cleaners, yes, we have a lot of jobs. They are in that service industry and our good jobs are leaving hand over fist.

This is the right thing to do. I am going to make a statement on behalf of the steelworkers and all working people in America. This president made promises. Hold his feet to the fire, and if he vetoes this bill, by God, take it right out on AL GORE.

It is time they get a message from the Democrats in Congress. At least Ronald Reagan kept his promise. He never promised this type of legislation but he gave us the investment tax credit program and he retrained some of our workers and he reinvested in steel and made it profitable. We are allowing it to be decimated.

Mr. Speaker, I would say to the chairman, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. ARCHER), that he should rethink the whole trade problem. I understand the gentleman is leaving. He has been a great Member. Before he leaves, this negative balance of payments is the greatest national security threat we have.

Mr. ARCHER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. BACHUS).

Mr. BACHUS. Mr. Speaker, I include for the record an op-ed piece which I published in the Birmingham News and the Tuscaloosa paper.

Mr. Speaker, in this article the first thing I said is that this crisis is not a crisis brought on by our steelworkers or our steel communities. This is a crisis brought on by their government. It is not of their own doing.

Tragically, their government has failed to do two things. First of all, it has subsidized and spent billions of their money and our taxpayer dollars, much of that paid in by steelworkers, into the IMF. The IMF has sent billions of those dollars to prop up the foreign competition, which is now dumping steel on our steel industry.

Secondly, our government has contributed to this crisis and caused it, by not taking action under our own trade laws to stop these illegal, unlawful dumping of foreign steel.

□ 1315

It is against the law. Can that not sink in? It is against the law. How do we ask our steelworkers, our law-abiding steelworkers in steel communities who are law-abiding, how do we ask them to follow the law when we turned a blind eye to that law and allowed their jobs to be taken from them?

Second of all, it is a matter of sovereignty. We must send a message to the world, and that message is, we will not allow our trade laws to be broken, to be trampled. What is happening is illegal. It cannot be tolerated.

Mr. Speaker, this is not about fair trade; many people have said that. It is not about fair trade; it is about fairness. Our steelworkers are the latest victims, but they will not be our last.

Finally, it is a matter of national security. We cannot rely on foreign countries for the materials to build our ships, our aircrafts and our tanks. If the President will not take action, we must.

President Clinton's State of the Union address focused heavily on ways to spend every penny of the current budget surplus and all anticipated surpluses for the next 15 years. In 77 minutes, he proposed 79 spending programs totaling hundreds and hundreds of billions of dollars. But he said only three sentences about one account where we have a deficit—the U.S. trade account—and the threat it poses to all of us, and specifically our steelworkers.

Last year, the U.S. trade deficit reached \$300 billion. A large portion of the trade deficit results from the flood of illegally dumped foreign steel into our country. Steel imports have reached record levels, surging by 480 percent in the last year. The President's own economic advisors say this deluge of artificially-priced imports is responsible for 10,000 layoffs and bankruptcies at some domestic steel companies. Thousands of our steelworkers have seen their work hours and their paychecks cut—including those in Alabama. With the steel crisis deepening every day, it is only a matter of time before steel mills across the nation begin closing their doors, perhaps forever.

This crisis did not come about because American steelworkers are not productive. American steelworkers produce the highest quality steel in the world at the lowest cost per ton. This crisis did not come about because the U.S. steel industry has failed to seek foreign market opportunities. Our steel companies work hard to penetrate foreign markets. What success they have achieved has come despite the best efforts of some countries to erect unfair trade barriers to American-made steel.

Clearly, the crisis facing our steelworkers, our domestic steel industry and our steel communities is not of their doing. Tragically, much of this crisis is their own government's doing—the same government they support with their tax dollars.

How? First, by providing the International Monetary Fund billions of new dollars to bail out foreign nations and second, by not taking decisive action available under our trade laws to stop the dumping of foreign steel.

First, a little history. In 1984, foreign steel producers began dumping heavily into the U.S. and grabbed more than 26 percent of the U.S. steel market. President Reagan was not willing to see the U.S. steel industry die. He immediately imposed restraints that rolled steel imports back to 18 percent. This gave the U.S. steel industry the opportunity and the time to upgrade its operations. U.S. steel producers invested \$50 billion to modernize their plants to make them more competitive. Steel management and steel union members worked together, and the U.S. steel industry came roaring back to recapture more than 80 percent of the U.S. market.

Then, the Asian financial crisis came, a crisis perpetuated by misguided IMF policies supported by the present administration. To bail out Japanese, Korean and Indonesian investors, the IMF sent billions of U.S. tax dollars into Asia and imposed austerity measures. Nations in austerity cannot buy their own steel, and countries in debt to the IMF need

money to pay that debt off. The IMF solution? These nations must "export their way out" of debt by dumping products—at prices lower than it costs to make them—into the huge U.S. market. That way, these nations can quickly raise the money needed to pay back the IMF. The IMF also urged these nations to devalue their currencies. By devaluing a currency, a nation actually cuts the price of its products in American dollars. For example, if a nation devalues its currency by 40 percent, the price of its products sold here will be reduced 40 percent. While such a price war is welcome news to consumers, it is devastating to domestic producers and can literally drive them out of business overnight.

Congress recently approved the Clinton administration's request for \$18 billion for the IMF. I was one of only about a dozen Republican and Democratic members who voiced strong opposition. We sincerely believe it is a horrible injustice to send the tax dollars from these steelworkers to the IMF, which in turn prompts nations to break both U.S. and international trade laws and dump their steel here. In his State of the Union address, President Clinton proclaimed he had "informed the government of Japan that if that nation's sudden surge of steel imports into our country is not reversed, America will respond."

Japan has not been impressed by this threat, and even if carried out it will likely bring little relief to our steelworkers, and the President knows it. That's because most of the steel imports are coming from South Korea, Russia, Brazil and Indonesia, all of which are the beneficiaries of an IMF bailout provided by U.S. taxpayers. The Clinton administration's strategy of bailouts via the IMF has failed on a massive scale, and the biggest losers of this strategy are American steelworkers.

To bipartisan applause, the President also said in the State of the Union, "We must enforce our trade laws when imports unlawfully flood our nation." Yet, the White House has decided against taking firm and immediate action to do so despite pleas from the steel industry and Congress. Last year, the House and Senate passed resolutions calling on the President to enforce our existing laws against illegal imports and to take "all necessary measures" to respond to the increase in foreign steel. The House asked for a one-year ban on the import of all steel products from any country that violates international trade agreements with the U.S. Still, the White House refuses to enforce our trade laws and continues to stand by and do nothing.

If the President won't act, Congress must. Those of us in the Congressional Steel Caucus have proposed legislation that will freeze steel imports at the level they were in July 1997, before the flood of illegal imports began. By taking dramatic action as President Reagan did 15 years ago, we can roll back imports to pre-crisis levels and restore fair competition between American and foreign steel producers. The United States, as a matter of sovereignty, must send a message to the world that we will not allow our trade laws to be broken. What is happening is illegal and cannot be tolerated.

This is not about "free trade." It is about fairness. If American steelworkers are allowed to compete on a level playing field, they will win. If we do not restore fair play and stop the flood of illegal steel imports, our steelworkers will be the latest innocent victims of misguided

government policies. But they will by no means be the last victims. The security of the United States will be at risk. At its most basic level, this debate is a matter of national security, for if we allow the steel industry in this country to disappear we will be forced to rely on foreign countries for the material we use to build our ships, aircraft and tanks.

President Reagan showed the world that America would take strong action to protect its own in tough times. It's time to do so again and put an end to the steel crisis.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Michigan (Mr. BONIOR), our minority whip.

Mr. BONIOR. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend and colleague, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN) for yielding me this time. I also want to congratulate the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. VISCOSKY).

Let me just start by saying that the stock market hit 10,000 yesterday, and many people in America think that everything is okay, everything is well. Well, it is not. From the foundries of the Monongahela Valley to the mills in Gary, Indiana to the mills in downriver Detroit, River Rouge and other communities that we represent, thousands of steelworkers are losing their jobs and they are the victims of illegal dumping.

Three U.S. steel companies filed for bankruptcy last year. Six of 10 flat-roll producers posted losses during the fourth quarter of 1998, and more than 11,000 American steelworkers have lost their jobs in the past year. These are not just figures. These are human beings with families, with real needs, with real hopes, with real dreams.

They are people like Andrew Kamarec. He is 42 years old; he has a child with a brain tumor. He works at Weirton Steel in West Virginia, not far from here, and subsidized foreign steel has cost him his job. He has a friend who works there named Keven Tasey, 39, a coworker of Andrew's. He was laid off just before Thanksgiving. His wife is pregnant. Rob and Tammy Elliott, husband and wife, also worked at Weirton. Foreign dumping forced them out of work as well. They have two school-aged children.

The story goes on and on and on. There are 11,000 of these stories out there, and there is a lot in the making, and there is a lot of potential devastation for families across America if we do nothing. This steel crisis has devastated families all across this country, eliminating good-paying jobs in our communities.

So, we have to stand up to this issue. It is not too late to stand up.

Some might argue, well, the crisis has passed. They will say that the import numbers are dropping, the worst is over. Well, that is not entirely true. There is cheap imported steel piled up on our docks ensuring that this glut will continue for months, and while imports from Japan and Russia may be down, other countries are dumping more and more. When contracts that

prohibit lay-off expire this summer, and that will happen, we will have nearly 100,000 jobs at risk.

Now, we have been calling for action since last year. I joined the Stand Up for Steel march in Detroit and downriver Detroit last October. We had thousands of steelworkers and community members who marched for justice with us. We rallied at the Rouge plant, and management and labor stood side-by-side, and we called for an end to dumping, but it has not stopped. The steel industry is too important to America to let illegal dumping continue.

Steel has a direct \$70 billion impact on this economy in this country. A strong steel industry is critical to a strong manufacturing base, and that means cars and trucks and machinery and construction and all of the things that make America work and tick in all parts of this country. It is essential to our national defense as well.

Mr. Speaker, let me just say in conclusion that steel employs nearly 163,000 Americans. Again, I say these are good jobs with good benefits, benefits like health insurance that are so critical to people like Andrew Kamarec whose child has brain cancer.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to remember him and to remember his colleagues and to remember all of the people who are out there looking to us today for hope in order for us to stop what has gone on for far too long. We are too strong of a country; we have too many good jobs in this country to throw it away.

The time for talk is over. I urge my colleagues to vote for this very good legislation by the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. VISCOSKY).

Mr. ARCHER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. SHAYS).

Mr. SHAYS. Mr. Speaker, we do not fight illegal trade by passing illegal penalties.

I rise in strong opposition to this illegal steel quota bill. Free trade is vitally important to the health of our economy, and we are in a position to lead and define a policy of free trade on a global level. We should not backtrack by erecting harmful barriers which will only increase the cost of goods and block economic development and growth.

I understand the concerns of my colleagues who have witnessed the tremendous influx of steel imports during the last three years, but our trade laws are working, and this legislation is not necessary. According to the Census Bureau, from November of 1998 to January of 1999, steel imports have declined 93 percent in Russia, 49 percent in Japan, and 8 percent in Korea. In fact, not only is this legislation not necessary, but incredibly harmful to our consumers and our workers. CBO estimates this bill will increase prices to steel purchasers by nearly \$1 billion.

The bottom line is, the American steel industry leads the world in pro-

ductivity because of competition, not protection. In my judgment, this bill will raise prices on consumers, adversely affect our businesses, harm our workers that use steel, and threaten the growth of our economy.

I might end, Mr. Speaker, by saying this fabulous growth that our Nation has experienced over the last 10 years is due, in large measure, to one man, Ronald Reagan, and his economic policies. He welcomed free trade. He welcomed trade without any artificial barriers, because he knew the United States could compete and compete effectively with anyone, and that ultimately, all Americans benefit from competition.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, could I inquire as to the time remaining.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GILLMOR). The gentleman from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN) has 2 minutes; the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. VISCOSKY) has 4 minutes; and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. ARCHER) has 5½ minutes remaining.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. ARCHER) has the right to close?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Texas (Mr. ARCHER) has the right to close.

Mr. VISCOSKY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the remainder of my time.

Mr. Speaker, at the outset, I want to thank the Steelworkers of America; I want to thank Jack Parten and every last member of District 7 Steelworkers of America for their invaluable help on this issue.

A number of people during the debate today tried to define or mentioned what they thought the issue of the day is. I would like to do so also.

The issue is people. Whether we use the most conservative estimates established by the Congressional Research Service, which would tell us 13 people a day have lost their jobs since July 1, 1997; or some of the more larger numbers that we have heard on this floor, where up to 1 steel worker every hour, about 3 steelworkers today since this debate started have lost and continue to lose their jobs. That is the issue. Those people, their jobs, their families.

We have heard a lot today about the global economy, world trade, globalization of the Nation. I am worried about the globe too. I am worried about a place on the globe called Alabama. I am worried about a place on the globe called Arkansas. I am worried about a river valley on that globe, the Mon-Valley in the State of Pennsylvania, and I am worried about a place on that globe, Gary, Indiana, because they have all suffered, not through any fault of their own, but the failure of this government to enforce the law of the land against illegally-traded steel.

The gentleman from Michigan (Mr. BONIOR) mentioned names, and I think it is important that we not use statistics, but real people. Because Sherry Ferguson from the State of Illinois is

unemployed today because of illegally-traded steel. She has six children in her household. Tell her the crisis is over.

Joey Bishop from Alabama has a 7-year-old daughter at home. Let us tell Joey Bishop's daughter that the crisis is over. We are here today because the President has not acted in a sufficient fashion. He has arrived at the game late, and he has certainly not carried the day.

Others suggest that the crisis is now resolved. One speaker indicated that steel traded from Japan is down 96 percent in the last 3 months, and I would not argue that point. Here is how bad the problem was and still is. From July 1997 to January 1999, six weeks ago, Japanese steel imports are still up 74 percent. Someone indicated that steel exports from Korea are down. I would point out that from July 1997 until January 1999, six weeks ago, Korean imports are still up 77 percent, and for the same period of time, imports from Indonesia are up 890 percent.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues, is that because they are playing by every last rule of international law and not violating our trade laws? I would suggest that is not true. Why are we here to take a global approach to put all of the countries and all of the products on the table? Because while some steel exports to the United States from some countries and for some product lines have declined, interestingly enough, just from December of last year to January of this year, suddenly, Chinese exports to the United States increased 24.2 percent, and exports from India increased by 70.8 percent in a 30-day period of time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I yield the balance of my time to the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. VISCOSKY).

Mr. VISCOSKY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me the time.

The issue are the people we are sworn to represent. We cannot move them somewhere else on the globe. They are in places like Ohio and Pennsylvania and Arkansas. That is the President's responsibility, that is our responsibility. He has not met it. We today, in a broad-based bipartisan fashion, want to make him recognize his obligation so that when Keven Tasey's daughter or son is born, the gentleman mentioned by the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. BONIOR), her or his father will have their job back.

I ask all of my colleagues to please support this legislation, the bipartisan Steel Recovery Act.

Mr. ARCHER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. QUINN).

Mr. QUINN. Mr. Speaker, I want to begin by thanking the chairman of the Committee on Ways and Means for yielding time to all of us, particularly since we are not on the same side of this issue. It has been a great debate and one that is necessary.

Mr. Speaker, this has been a thoughtful discussion, and one of the things I would point out as I have watched speakers today is that we are not dealing with Members of the House that one might consider reactionary or folks that we look at as sometimes being troublemakers here in the well in the House.

□ 1330

These are thoughtful legislators who have been attending the rallies that most of us have been at these last 6 or 8 months. We have been involved in petition drives, we have been involved in hearings and town meetings, meetings on the Hill, and working with the United Steelworkers.

We find ourselves in a position that, of all the other solutions that might be out there, none are taking place. There are other solutions besides this bill today, H.R. 975. We have asked for some of those other solutions to be done. Each time we ask in a thoughtful way to have them done, we get no reaction. In the meantime, good paying jobs are lost day in and day out.

So I want to point out, Mr. Speaker, that as we see Members come to the well, when we look at some of those 200-plus Members who are on this bi-partisan bill, I have to point out to my colleagues that they are thoughtful Members who are trying to make a difference, not reactionaries, not the troublemakers that are finding an opportunity now to get a bill on the floor, one that comes here under very unique circumstances, we would agree. But, Mr. Speaker, we have not been given any other choice.

The gentleman from Indiana (Mr. VISCOSKY) has taken the lead. Both of us in the Steel Caucus have had talks back and forth. We have changed. We have compromised. The gentleman from Indiana has bended when he had to. But we cannot wait any longer, Mr. Speaker. We have thoughtful Members here who want to make a difference. This is not about us saying there is something we have to have on this floor voted today. We tried to get the changes done month after month after month.

I urge all my colleagues on both sides of the aisle, more than the 200-plus that have cosponsored the bill, to vote this afternoon to save jobs in a country, our country. It is not about doing the right thing or the wrong thing necessarily, Mr. Speaker. I think it is about us finally wanting to help ourselves.

Mr. ARCHER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time for the purpose of closing.

Mr. Speaker, all of us have sympathy for companies that have been hurt through illegal trade practices and for employees who have lost their jobs. As I mentioned earlier, I have great sympathy, because I have seen the thousands of workers in the oil industry who have been displaced within the last 6 months.

But we must live by the rules that we agree to or others will also distort those rules against us, and the tidal wave of damage will sweep across this country in ways that will make us regret that we have violated the rules. This bill violates the rules.

Dumping that is wrong should be interdicted, but it must be interdicted within the rules and by the penalties that are authorized. It has been said that nothing has happened. Yet, the Commerce Department has already provisionally put in place tariffs which are the important, legitimate way to get at dumping. They have had an impact in reducing the amount of imports. That is in place today.

But quotas are limited to use under 201. No one has filed a claim under 201. The steel industry has not pursued 201, which addresses immediate surges that are injurious to this country.

Yes, it is about people, Mr. Speaker. It is about all of the workers in the United States and what can happen to them when we violate the rules. Because we cannot expect the WTO to enforce the rules on others if we are violators.

I would not be here today to defend this bill if the penalty was appropriate under the rules for dumping. Quotas could have been put in place when the surge occurred by simply invoking 201. The steel industry decided not to do that.

Now, after the appropriate penalties of tariffs have been put in place, at least provisionally, until there is a complete determination, we are asked to endorse and put in place on a mandatory basis quotas which will limit the importation of steel into this country for 3 years without any waiver or chance of change regardless of the circumstances that are based on what happened 2 and 3 years ago.

We risked triggering again justification on the part of others in the world to violate the rules against us. This is not the right way to go, Mr. Speaker. There is a right way to address illegal trade activities, and I stand prepared to do it. But I will not violate the rules that we agreed to by establishing illegal penalties.

Mr. Speaker, I urge the Members of the House to vote against this resolution.

Mr. BENTSEN. Mr. Speaker, as a cosponsor of H.R. 975, I rise in support of this legislation and urge its adoption.

Today, there will be a great deal of debate regarding the question of free trade versus fair trade. As someone who concerned about how to promote international trade and at the same time make sure that trade is fair, I want to register my opinions on this important issue.

I have long been a supporter of free and open trade. However, my support of free trade is based on the understanding that our trading partners will not engage in unfair and illegal trading practices such as dumping. When our nation is confronted by unfair trading practices, I believe it is entirely appropriate to seek remedies that protect American companies and workers, whether by invoking provisions in

our own trade laws or by other means of redress. While I am hesitant to take action that may further weaken already fragile foreign economies, I believe this legislation provides an appropriate response to reduce the flood of foreign steel imports, much of which has been illegally dumped into the U.S. market at prices below domestic costs, and in clear violation of antidumping trade laws.

Since July 1997 we have seen the collapse of numerous economies around the world. Foreign corporations from Japan, Korea, Russia, and other countries have been selling steel at as much as \$100 a ton less than it costs to produce it. In one example, steel producers from Russia were allowed to dump 47 percent more steel on our market than was shipped in 1997. Due to massive steel imports from Japan, our trade deficit has climbed 33.4 percent to nearly \$55.8 billion, while imports of all Japanese steel products in 1998 jumped almost 170 percent, accounting for 41 percent of the total increase in steel imports to the United States.

U.S. steel manufacturers are faced with a real crisis, one that threatens to undermine a key sector of our economy. This crisis has claimed more than 10,000 jobs in basic steel, iron ore mining coke production, and thousands have seen their work hours and paychecks cut. Several thousand more workers and their communities are jeopardized as steel companies are forced to either reduce operations or resort to bankruptcy. If the dumping practices of these foreign companies remains unchecked, this crisis will continue to claim the jobs of thousands of men and women employed in the U.S. steel industry. We simply cannot allow this to continue.

In the last 25 years, the U.S. steel industry has become among the most productive, most efficient, most innovative and cleanest in the world. America's steel companies and steel workers are the best in the world. Unfortunately, world trade in steel is more distorted by government intervention than in any other manufacturing sector. Foreign steel is being subsidized by foreign governments. Closed foreign markets mean that foreign overproduction surges into the U.S. market—the only truly open market in the world. Congress and the Administration must take action on this issue.

It is imperative for the United States to adhere to its trade laws and to implement them where and when the circumstances require it. To fail to do so will have consequences, both for American workers, industry and for the principle of free trade. If our domestic steel industry continues to suffer, we will see a political backlash against free trade, just at the time when we should be entering into free trade agreements with some of these very regions—Asia, Pacific Rim, and South America. This will only serve to set us back further from being the dominant player on the global marketplace in the next century.

For over a century, the steel industry has stood tall and served as a foundation of the American economy. The U.S. steel industry and the 226,000 Americans employed by it deserve nothing less than the full support of their country. I urge my colleagues to support passage of this important legislation.

Mr. KLECZKA. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 975, legislation to limit and monitor foreign steel imports. H.R. 975 would impose quotas on foreign steel imports equal to

their July 1997 import levels. Imposing quotas is a dramatic step. However, it is a step that must be taken.

Over the past 2 years, our Nation's steel industry has been decimated by the flood of cheap foreign imports. Between 1996 and 1998, steel imports increased from 26.4 million tons to more than 37 million tons—an increase of 42 percent. As a result of the surge, steel prices plummeted from \$512 per ton to \$40 per ton.

As a result of the price drop the domestic steel industry has been put into a state of crisis. Since the surge of foreign steel imports began 2 years ago, more than 10,000 steelworkers have been laid off from their jobs and more than 20,000 steelworkers have worked shorter hours.

Even more disturbing, three steel mills have been forced into bankruptcy. Even if steel prices return to their previous levels, those mills may never open again. The jobs in the steel industry are high-skill, high-paying jobs. When a steel plant closes down, a community struggles for years, even decades. Congress cannot idly stand by and watch thousand of quality jobs and our nation's communities vanish.

The crisis in the steel industry was caused by the global economic slowdown. In an effort to prop up their flagging economies, steel-producing nations such as Japan, Korea, and Russia exported an unprecedented amount of steel to the United States. Unfortunately, our Nation's trade laws did nothing to stem the tide of steel imports until it was too late. Mr. Speaker, I have opposed many of our nation's recent trade agreements because of the potential for problems just like the one we now have in the steel industry. Congress cannot stand by and watch foreign nations take advantage of our weak and often ineffective trade laws.

Despite the pleas for action by the steel industry, its workers, and many in Congress since the summer of 1998, it was not until February 1999 that the administration announced it would begin imposing duties on steel imports in order to address the matter. Those months of delay and inaction cost thousands of steelworkers their jobs.

This bill takes the decisive steps to save our domestic steel industry from extinction. However, one point needs to be made clear. H.R. 975 is not designed to protect an outdated and inefficient industry. Over the past twenty years, the domestic steel industry has invested over \$50 billion in modern plants and equipment. The American steel industry and its workers have produced the highest quality, lowest cost per ton steel in the world.

H.R. 975 simply levels the playing field. It does not ban all steel imports into the United States. Quite the contrary. H.R. 975 simply limits foreign steel imports to their July 1997 levels. In the years leading up to the crisis, the volume of steel imported into the U.S. averaged slightly more than 25 million tons per year. However, in 1998 more than 37 million tons of foreign steel entered the United States.

It is clear that the surge in imports had a dramatic effect on the production of the American steel industry. For example, the production capacity of the American mills was 90 percent—nearly full capacity—before the surge of imports. By November 1998, the production capacity of the mills had dropped to 74 percent. No wonder that three mills filed for

bankruptcy, 10,000 workers were laid off, and thousands more were idled or had to take a pay cut.

H.R. 975 realizes that imported steel is good for the American economy. Many American businesses import steel products because similar products are not made domestically. Furthermore, the competition makes the American industry more productive and efficient. However, a flood of imports at prices below which the market demands is not healthy for anyone, and it must be stopped.

H.R. 975 also establishes an import monitoring program to ensure the government and the domestic steel industry are better able to track the volume and price of steel imports. Furthermore, the information gained through this program will be made available in a timely manner so all parties will be better able to respond to future problems in the steel industry.

Mr. Speaker, I urge the passage of H.R. 975 and call upon the Senate to pass companion legislation so all steel products will be given fair treatment.

Mr. VENTO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the Steel Recovery Act, H.R. 975, which I've cosponsored. This legislation, I believe, takes the necessary steps to prevent unfair foreign trade from continuing to undermine our steel industry and displace American steel workers.

Two decades ago, the steel industry faced a crisis. Thousands of workers lost their jobs and hundreds of companies went bankrupt. Out of this crisis came a major transformation within American steel mills. Capital investments were made, innovative products were created, facilities were modernized and methods were streamlined. American steel mills and American steel workers became among the most efficient in the world. This new and improved American steel workforce and industry is ready to effectively compete against its foreign counterparts. And America should have to compete in the market, just as everyone else does. Unfortunately, unfair dumping of steel in the past 18 months, subsidized by foreign countries, is creating an uneven global playing field; these sales are being made at below the cost of steel production.

The Clinton administration has attempted to stem the tide of foreign steel flooding the American market without causing disruption and dislocation in the global trading regime. However, while import figures may be improving for some nations and products, they are not improving across the board. Although imports from Russia, Japan, and Brazil decreased in January 1999, other markets shifted and acted to fill the void—imported steel products from South Korea, China, India, and Indonesia increased during this period. Stop-gap policy agreement is simply not enough to resolve this trade phenomena. The U.S. government must do more to prevent the loss of yet more steel jobs and lessen the threat of bankruptcy for our steel mills. America can not afford to allow this important modern and efficient industry and work force to collapse completely, forcing us to become reliant upon foreign countries for all of our steel needs in spite of the painful restructuring and competitive status that the American economy has successfully achieved in regards to steel workers and the industry.

The Steel Recovery Act, H.R. 975, includes two important components to address the steel crisis. First, it would alleviate the current

crisis by creating a quantitative standard for all nations who import steel into the United States. Second, it establishes a monitoring system which would allow a timely response to the fluctuation of imports in the future. By creating a trading system which is predictable and consistent, we are leveling the playing field so that all nations can compete on a fair basis. With the overcapacity in steel production globally, the extraordinary currency fluctuations in value and economic boom and bust cycles that have been spilling over the borders of the Pacific rim nations, the United States has an obligation to respond. Other steel consuming nations within the European Union have held their steel imports level. Beyond that, they continue to invest in their own capacity, often with outmoded technology and environmental standards, seemingly oblivious to the economic consequence. The United States of America can not be the dumping ground for careless decision making and volatile economic swings. Our economic and trade policy must not follow the lowest denominator. Good economics and common sense dictate that we act, not sacrifice our efficient business or good American workers on the altar to a false demigod of unrestrained and unthinking trade.

American workers and industry deserve a sound, fair and comprehensive plan to ensure that their jobs are no longer at the mercy of creative circumvention of trade laws, merely transparent schemes by foreign steel companies and countries. I encourage my colleagues to join me in supporting this important legislation. Let's set a new policy, a fair path for steel and trade.

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 975 to protect American jobs from unfair trade and ensure that the U.S. steel industry remains strong.

I would like to thank the Congressional Steel Caucus, the Steelworkers union, and leaders of the steel industry for the hard work they have done to bring this bill to the House floor for a vote.

The U.S. steel industry, which underwent a painful restructuring and reinvestment process in the 1980s to reemerge as a world leader, has been severely harmed by unfairly dumped steel. During the first 10 months of 1998, United States imports of steel grew to record levels as the global financial crisis led Japan, Russia, Brazil and other countries to dump their steel on the United States market.

As a result of the flood of imports, three U.S. steel companies filed for bankruptcy, and nearly 10,000 steelworkers lost their jobs. In my district, USS POSCO has lost millions of dollars in revenue and has imposed a hiring freeze. In December, USS POSCO was forced to furlough its employees for one week because of the import surge. Steelworkers and steel companies are suffering not because they can't compete, but because of unfair foreign trade tactics.

H.R. 975, the Steel Import Reduction Act, is an important step to ensure that American workers and companies do not continue to bear the brunt of unfair trade practices. The bill directs the president to take the necessary steps, including imposing quotas, to cap steel imports at precrisis levels. The bill also requires the administration to establish a steel import notification and monitoring program, so that we can quickly respond to any dumping in the future.

The administration has begun to take some small steps in the right direction, but more needs to be done. The Commerce Department recently issued trade case rulings against Japan, Brazil, and Russia and found that all three had dumped steel. Steel imports have now slowed, but not nearly enough. We need a global, comprehensive approach to end the crisis, one that addresses all nations and all steel product lines. The administration's piece-meal, one-nation-at-a-time approach forces us to spend our time putting out one fire after another and simply will not work.

For these reasons I urge my colleagues in the House to join me in voting for this bill and challenge the administration to protect U.S. steelworkers and support H.R. 975.

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, the American steel industry is on the ropes, and the flood of steel imports from Brazil, Japan, Korea, Russia, and other countries has gone unchecked in recent months.

Last year, steel producers from Russia were allowed to dump 47 percent more steel on our markets than in 1997. Foreign corporations are selling steel at \$100 per ton below their production costs.

While U.S. and international trade laws are being grossly violated by these foreign corporations, the President and his administration stand idly by, allowing thousands upon thousands of hardworking steelworkers to lose their jobs and their livelihood.

Last month, after watching the families of steel workers in my district suffer as a result of job losses, reduced hours and reduced production at the plant, I decided that I could no longer be a bystander to foreign steel dumping. Steel workers in Illinois work hard every day, every week, every year, and earn their living. They don't deserve to lose their jobs as a result of illegal trade practices.

Typically, I am hesitant to support trade and import restrictions which could disrupt the flow of commerce in our global economy.

However, because of the administration's inaction, and the gravity of the steel crisis before us, I decided to stand up for steel, and became a sponsor of H.R. 975, legislation to freeze steel imports at their 1997 levels and establish a steel import notification and monitoring program.

Mr. Speaker, I believe in the American steel industry, and that our steel industry is the most competitive and efficient in the world. Right now, the administration is turning its head while foreign competition is violating international trade laws to gain an unfair advantage.

That is why I encourage my colleagues to support H.R. 975. On a fair playing field, American steel can win.

Mr. COYNE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the Bipartisan Steel Recovery Act.

Mr. Speaker, the surge in foreign steel imports last year seriously damaged the U.S. steel industry and put thousands of American steel workers out of work.

There is no doubt now of what many of us were saying last year—that foreign steel was being dumped in the United States at less than the cost of production. The International Trade Commission determined last November that the steel industry in the United States was threatened by steel imports from Brazil, Japan, and Russia, and the Commerce Department recently determined that dumping had, in fact, occurred. Commerce subsequently imposed

duties on Japanese and Brazilian steel imports.

Unfortunately, the dumping surge has taken its toll. The damage that has been done will, in some cases, be hard to undo. Ten thousand American steelworkers have lost their jobs, and not all of them will get those jobs back. I think that that is a tragedy and a disgrace.

I have worked actively as a member of the House Steel Caucus since last summer to push for action against foreign steel dumping. I was an original cosponsor of H.R. 506, legislation introduced by Representative VISCLOSKY which would have directed the Administration to limit the volume of steel imports to pre-surge levels. This legislation forms the foundation of H.R. 975, the bill we are considering today. The monitoring provisions drafted by Mr. REGULA make this bill even stronger than the original Visclosky bill. As an original cosponsor of both H.R. 506 and H.R. 975, I am very pleased that we have managed to bring this bipartisan compromise bill to the House floor today.

This legislation strengthens U.S. trade policy against the dumping of foreign steel. It is much needed and long overdue. I urge my colleagues to support this important anti-dumping legislation.

Ms. DUNN. Mr. Speaker, today the House of Representatives is considering a bill to establish import quotas on certain raw steel products coming into the United States. Presumably, this bill would help "save" the steel industry from foreign raw material being "dumped" on the domestic market at below market prices. Although I sympathize with the workers who are being affected by this situation, there are other remedies that can be utilized to combat this problem that will avoid the unintended consequences this bill brings about. Unfortunately, the Clinton Administration has been slow to act to use the tools at its disposal under the Trade Act and we now have before us a measure that violates the premise of free trade under which this country has flourished.

Let me provide you with one example of how this bill will negatively impact the economy in Washington State. In 1995, BHP Coated Steel Corporation invested \$221 million in a facility located in Kalama, Washington to take advantage of increasing demand for coated sheet steel on the West Coast. The plant contains a galvanizing line, a coil coating line, and a pickling/cold rolling line and is widely recognized as the most modern and cost effective facility of its kind in the U.S. It provides 235 good, family-wage jobs in Kalama and has become an important part of the community.

Because of the requirements of their manufacturing process, BHP needs large coils of hot bank steel that meet certain specifications. Although they source some of this product from domestic suppliers, much of the raw material that fits their manufacturing specifications comes from Australia. H.R. 975 would seriously jeopardize their ability to access this material and threaten the ability of the Kalama facility to expand—something the company would like to do—or even continue to exist. The bill institutes import quotas based on the average amount of steel imported into the U.S. between July 1994 and July 1997. Unfortunately, the Kalama facility did not go "online" until November 1997, meaning those im-

port levels do not reflect the demand created by the facility. With no domestic supply sufficient to operate its plant, BHP will find it extremely difficult, if not impossible, to survive.

There are a number of reasons to oppose this bill, but I believe it is important to provide Members of Congress with real examples of the negative impact of its implementation. I urge my colleagues to join the White House in opposing this effort, which clearly violates our obligations under the World Trade Organization to maintain an import regime consistent with our existing trade laws.

Ms. McCARTHY of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to stand up for steel and support H.R. 975. This important legislation will provide for a reduction in the volume of steel imports and establish a steel import notification and monitoring program. This legislation is the result of a consensus reached by my colleagues on both sides of the aisle and representative from the steel industry and unions. It is a welcome example of the way our system of government was designed to work. In addition, H.R. 975 identifies a clear path of resolving the steel import crisis that has burdened our country for more than a year. I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support this bipartisan legislation and support U.S. industry, U.S. workers, and U.S. steel.

There are close to 1,500 steelworkers in my district in Missouri, and one plant has announced that it will begin cutting back hours on March 28th. This plant employs 1,000 workers. In addition to steelworkers, I have been contacted by quarry workers who are threatened by the steel crisis because lime is used to purify the steel in the production process. All across the country, workers are living in fear that today will be the day the layoffs affect them. We must show that we support these workers and stand up for the U.S. steel today.

The United States steel industry is the most efficient and most environmentally conscious in the world. Since the 1980s, the U.S. steel industry has increased efficiency to the point where it now takes only two man hours to produce a ton of steel, as compared to the ten hours needed to produce a ton of steel before the industry transformed itself. This transformation cost the industry much—tens of billions of dollars and hundreds of thousands of jobs. We must recognize these sacrifices and show that this initiative was a good investment. We should value progress in such an economically vital industry.

The United States steel industry has also made great strides in its environmental policy. Recently, a group of 20 environmental organizations, including Wildlife Land Trust and Friends of the Earth, wrote to President Clinton in support of the U.S. steel industry. In that letter, the groups stated that U.S. steel companies are "among the very cleanest, if not the cleanest, in the world." Further, they concluded, "if you want to reduce global emissions from steel making, make more steel in America." Moreover, the U.S. steel mills are the cleanest in the world, steel mills in many other countries use outdated practices that are nothing short of an environmental disaster. Many mills still use "blast furnace" technology that is not only outdated, but is also a high pollution process.

A vote for H.R. 975 will not only support the American steel mills, it will support our global environmental goals.

Mr. COSTELLO. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support and as a cosponsor of H.R. 975, the Bipartisan Steel Recovery Act.

The United States has built a steel industry that has one of the highest productivity levels and lowest costs in the world. Unfortunately, our commitment to new technology and increased labor productivity is of little worth in a global marketplace that favors illegal trade. Our domestic markets are being flooded with cheap imports from Asia, Russia and Brazil who continue to defy international trade policies in order to prop up their own markets. We can ill afford to be the world's dumping ground for unfairly-traded steel. While I am concerned by the financial disasters in Asia, Russia and elsewhere, these countries should not be allowed to export their problems here. We must find other means to help our trading partners deal with their economic challenges; allowing unfairly-traded steel to flood our markets creates an imbalance that helps no one.

As a member of the Congressional Steel Caucus, I have worked diligently with my colleagues to urge the Administration to take a strong stand against illegally-dumped steel. The proposed agreement with Russia to reduce Russian imports of steel products by almost 70 percent is a good first step. However, it must be followed by continued pressure on other nations to reduce their dumping of illegally-subsidized steel. I am pleased the Administration has responded to those of us in Congress who continue to make steel a high-profile issue. The U.S. must continue to be vigilant in providing relief to our steel industry and its workers, after they have suffered from an unfair flood of foreign imports. However, let me be clear about this: the Administration's efforts to date are not enough. We must do more and we must do more immediately.

In my own district in Southwestern Illinois, steelworkers and their families and communities have stood up strongly for steel. Workers at Laclede Steel in Alton and National Steel in Granite City have faced difficult times since the surge in steel imports flooded our markets. Laclede is facing bankruptcy and efforts are underway just to keep the plant open. Orders have been down and prices have fallen at both plants. Unfortunately, these steel companies, like others across the nation, have been unable to avoid layoffs. Mr. Speaker, I represent approximately 4,000 USWA union members in my district. I cannot in good conscience report to them that we have done enough here.

Today, I have high hopes that I will be able to return to my district and announce that we in Washington are also standing up for steel. The Bipartisan Steel Recovery Act will stop foreign corporations from breaking our trade laws. It will save American jobs and save U.S. steel companies from bankruptcy. Passage of H.R. 975 will also ensure our national security. It is American-made steel that goes into Navy ships, aircraft, tanks, trucks and weaponry used by our military. We cannot afford to allow our steel industry to disappear and to then become reliant upon foreign countries for our steel needs.

U.S. steel companies and steelworkers are the best in the world. American steel mills are the most productive, the most efficient, the most innovative and the cleanest in the world. Given a level playing field, there is no foreign company that can compete with them. Foreign steel is being subsidized by foreign govern-

ments. Closed foreign markets mean that foreign overproductions surges into our market—against our trade laws.

The U.S. steel industry, steel workers and their families, and American consumers of steel products and its derivatives deserve a fair market for U.S. steel. Foreign dumped steel not only has immediate negative consequences on the steel industry, over time the impact on the U.S. economy in terms of lost production, high-wage jobs, and investment is irretrievable.

I hope this Congress and the Administration will take immediate action to end illegal foreign imports of steel. I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 975.

Mr. CRAMER. Mr. Speaker, regardless of how strongly some will argue to the contrary, there is a crisis occurring in the U.S. steel industry. As a result of continued and persistent "dumping" of foreign steel into the U.S.—specifically by Japan, Korea, Russia, and Brazil—domestic steel producers have been forced to decrease production or lay-off workers or even file for bankruptcy.

Already, due to the continuation of illegal dumping, the steel industry has laid off 10,000 steelworkers across the country and three companies have filed for bankruptcy. Indeed, Mr. Speaker in my state of Alabama, Gulf State Steel has had to intermittently shut down its hot-strip mill and had laid off hundreds of workers.

Mr. Speaker this is a crisis that we can no longer allow to fester.

Unfortunately, while American workers have lost their jobs and American companies have been forced to file for bankruptcy, the Administration has waffled on its commitment to the steel industry and has only offered tepid, ineffective regulatory remedies. In pursuit of abstract geopolitical goals, the Administration has refused to aggressively enforce our nation's trade laws.

The time for Congress to act is now. Today's steel industry is not the inefficient, non-competitive, and unproductive industry of the past. Since the steel crisis in the 1970's, the steel industry has painstakingly reinvented itself, with over \$60 billion of capital investments. Today, the American steel industry is among the most productive, the most efficient, the most innovative, and the cleanest in the world. In contrast, the foreign companies who are illegally dumping their steel in our market and threatening the continued vitality of our domestic steel industry, rely upon outdated, inefficient and environmentally unsafe technology.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 975 is simple, straightforward, and fair. It protects American jobs, saves American steel companies from bankruptcy, and ensures a domestic source of steel necessary to maintain our military hardware.

I urge my colleagues to take a stand today to enforce our trade laws and to protect American jobs. I urge my colleagues to pass H.R. 975.

Mr. WELLER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 975, The Bipartisan Steel Recovery Act. While this legislation is not a perfect solution to solving the crisis faced by the steel industry, I am a cosponsor of H.R. 975 because to date the Clinton administration has failed to step up and enforce existing U.S. trade laws against illegal foreign steel dumping.

As you know Mr. Speaker, my colleagues and I on the Congressional Steel Caucus have been begging the White House to take meaningful action to stem the flow of these below the price of production steel products for over a year. It was not until this Congress took action late in the last session before the White House and the Commerce Department would even acknowledge that we had a steel crisis.

Since Congress forced the Clinton administration to issue a report on the steel dumping problem, the Administration has only offered unwanted tax credits to the steel industry, more bureaucratic delays in resolving steel dumping cases, veto threats of any congressional action and not one new solution to save the jobs of the thousands of steelworkers who stand to lose their jobs if the crisis continues.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 975 is a bipartisan compromise bill combining the elements of Representative REGULA's bill H.R. 412 and Representative VISCHOSKY's bill H.R. 506. I am an original cosponsor of Mr. REGULA's bill H.R. 412, which I believe is the best long-term solution to the steel industry's problems and a solution to update section 201 of our trade laws to help American industry compete in a fair market as we enter the 21st century. I am especially pleased that the steel monitoring program and real time steel import data program contained in H.R. 412 have been included in H.R. 975.

While H.R. 975 would provide for some very tough medicine that most in Congress including myself would rather not have to administer, it is clear that the steel industry is at a crossroads. In just the last year over 10,000 steelworkers have lost their jobs. That's 10,000 families who have lost their livelihood, not to mention the impact these job losses have had on local steel communities.

In the 11th District of Illinois I have over 20 firms that produce steel products. Some are big firms like Birmingham Steel in Joliet, while others are small family owned operations like Bellson Scrap & Steel in Bourbonnais. I also have hundreds of steelworkers in my district who travel to the LTV plant in Hennepin, IL, and steel plants in Chicago and across the border in Indiana.

The steel crisis has had a real impact in my district. Small firms like Bellson Scrap and Steel have had to cut their workforce by 10 percent, while, big producers in my district like Birmingham have cut back to 32-hour work weeks, mandatory vacation periods, and are now only operating at 80 percent of precrisis production. Close to home Acme Steel of Chicago has filed for bankruptcy placing thousands of more jobs in the Chicagoland region in jeopardy in addition to the 1,000 Illinois steel jobs that have already been lost.

Mr. Speaker, the steel crisis is alive and worse than ever for thousands of steel families. Even by the numbers of the administration's own Commerce Department steel imports for January 1999 are up over 96 percent from Japan, 140 percent from China, 155 percent from Korea and 705 percent from Indonesia over the precrisis period. Just in the 1 month period between December 1998 and January 1999, steel imports are up another 6 percent and the administration hails these numbers as great progress. Ask Mark Pozan at Bellson if he thinks a 6 percent increase over already record levels of steel imports is progress.

Mr. Speaker I agree that H.R. 975 may not be the best remedy to solve the steel crisis,

but, this Congress can not stand by and watch our trade laws be continually violated and our industries continually weakened while, good paying jobs are destroyed.

The steel industry has rebounded from the financial difficulties of the 1980's that cost our country over 325,000 jobs. The American steel industry once in decline, now produces the lowest cost, highest quality and most environmentally sound steel on the planet. If we fail to ensure that American steel plays on a level playing field with the rest of the world, than we place American steel companies and American workers including the 400 at Birmingham Steel in great harm. I urge my colleagues to send the Clinton administration a message and pass H.R. 975.

Mr. PETERSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support today for H.R. 975, the Bipartisan Steel Recovery Act of 1999.

As a Member of Congress, I am well aware that the American steel industry has been facing a crisis. With the full knowledge of the White House, foreign corporations from Korea, Japan, Brazil, and Russia have been illegally dumping underpriced steel in the United States market for the past 20 months. Already, over 10,000 steelworkers nationwide have been laid off or lost their jobs. In addition, the thousands of hard-working Americans in the steel industry that have endured the crisis have seen their work hours and paychecks slashed. Mr. Speaker, I feel it is time for Congress to act by enforcing existing trade laws—the same trade laws that the administration is reluctant to enforce.

With the reluctance of the administration to do anything, I see H.R. 975 as a viable solution to the current crisis. In addition to returning our steel imports to the precrisis levels of 1997, H.R. 975 also establishes a monitoring system that requires all steel importers to obtain a "Steel Import Notification Certificate." This measure will effectively arm us with a mechanism to assist in monitoring the illegal dumping of steel and ensure that our current trade laws are not being violated. Moreover, H.R. 975 will return steel imports to precrisis levels, help us curtail illegal dumping and avoid a crisis situation in the future.

In conclusion Mr. Speaker, I stand here today in support of the Bipartisan Steel Recovery Act and the American steel worker. I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of H.R. 975 and support America.

Mr. RAMSTAD. Mr. Speaker, I rise to express my serious concerns about this legislation before us.

I strongly believe that free and open trade between nations improves the world economy, creates high-paying jobs, and lowers prices for consumers.

I certainly understand the seriousness of foreign countries and companies illegally selling goods below the price of production in our country. The United States must fight these dumping violations and must hold countries accountable for these activities.

However, H.R. 975 isn't the answer. This illegal, quota bill won't help American industry and will harm American workers. We've lived through failed, protectionist economic eras.

I also oppose this legislation and the hasty retaliatory measures within it because it violates our World Trade Organization (WTO) obligations by creating quotas to limit the importation of steel. If the U.S. expects to maintain

a viable economy free from retaliatory protectionism, we cannot break trade laws ourselves. A full scale trade war is in no one's interest.

This legislation would have real negative consequences for American consumers, manufacturers and the economy as a whole.

Mr. Speaker, while I believe every Member of the House is concerned about dumping and is willing to support strong actions against such occurrences, two wrongs don't make a right, and to retaliate with this illegal, protectionist measure is counterproductive to American workers and consumers.

At a time when we are fighting the Europeans for their flagrant violation of international trade law, we cannot thoughtlessly toss aside our own commitments to follow the rule of law. And we must make sure that we do not put in place measures that will hurt American workers and consumers.

I urge my colleagues to vote against this protectionist bill before us today.

Mr. ORTIZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 975, a bill which will control the amount of foreign steel imports entering the United States.

The U.S. steel industry is the foundation of many of the economic development engines across the country. While our economy is buzzing, we are in a position to get back in the steel business after the steel industry's downturn in the 1980's. People all over the world want quality steel "made-in-the-USA." This bill is our attempt to revitalize the steel industry and provide a level playing field for our steel producers.

The steel industries in other countries get subsidies for their products. In doing so, several countries have taken advantage of the NAFTA rules to wreck havoc on our steel market. As a supporter and advocate of NAFTA, let me say as clearly as I can: free trade does not mean cheating. Free trade means fair trade. We are the world leader on economic and trade issues, and therefore must speak up when there is an injustice. Flooding a market with underpriced materials is unjust.

As a member of the Armed Services Committee, I want to remind the House that steel is the base product that we use in our warfighting equipment, as well as a host of our domestic transportation system needs. It is the steel industry that has made the United States what we are today, and it is the basis for much of the prosperity we currently enjoy.

In my South Texas district, there is one steel plant currently operating, providing economic development in the area. There is a prospective plant in the works in another part of my district, so the need for a quality product is out there, but Congress must support those who are in the business of making steel.

When other countries break the rules for fair trade policies, it is our job, our right, and our responsibility to speak up and demand that the rule-breaking end. NAFTA, the hot economy and smart economic policy enacted in 1993, have brought the United States to the front of the class when it comes to matters of trade. If we do not act to highlight these illegal practices and reverse them, we will see others get the impression they can get away with similar practices.

Free trade does not mean cheating. The United States and the House of Representatives will not allow it. Please join me in supporting H.R. 975.

Mr. EVANS. Mr. Speaker, today there are hundreds of men and women in the 17th District of Illinois who are without work because we have failed to protect them from illegally dumped steel.

Last year, when the European Union felt the steel crisis blowing their way, they quickly sealed their borders to protect their industry and its employees. Yet, American steelworkers were left to twist in the wind as the administration dragged its feet on enforcing our antidumping laws and taking an aggressive approach to conquer the crisis.

As the months have passed, the crisis has steadily worsened. If we don't stand up for the working men and women of our steel industry, who will?

Today, I am proud to be an original cosponsor of the answer to the steel problem. By imposing quotas, and establishing a monitoring system to uphold our trade laws, H.R. 975 accomplishes what should have been done long ago—protection for our steelworkers, our steel industry and requiring that other nations share the burden of the steel crisis.

I would also like to remind my colleagues of what caused this crisis: the International Monetary Fund's harsh austerity measures that cause developing countries to export cheap steel. Until we stop funding, promoting and enabling the IMF to wreak havoc on financially strapped nations with their "bad economic medicine", we will continue to watch our trade deficit skyrocket and Americans go without work.

I urge my colleagues to vote "yes" on the Bipartisan Steel Recovery Act.

Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the steelworkers. I am a proud member of organized labor. Organized labor enabled me to finance my house, and to educate myself and my children. I live in America. I am an American Congressman. The people who sent me here live in America and I want the people of America to be able to have the same opportunity I had and my family had. Lets keep the steel workers of America working. And when and if the time comes when our American workers are all employed, then we can look abroad for their assistance. Lets take care of our home First!

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to support H.R. 975, The Steel Recovery Act. As a Representative from the State of Michigan and a member of the Steel Caucus, I am well aware of the impact that the flood of cheap steel has had on thousands of families across this country. 10,000 steelworkers have lost their jobs. The ironic aspect of this situation is that it has occurred as the U.S. Steel industry has remade itself into the worldwide leader. It is efficient, it produces a clean, high-quality product, and pumps \$70 billion annually into the U.S. economy. Moreover, steel is a vital element of our national security. All the industry wants and needs is the ability to compete with the rest of the world on a level playing field. This is hard to accomplish when steel imports from Japan rise 170% in a single year.

Free trade does not mean that the United States becomes the dumping ground for inferior products sold at below the cost of production. We must stringently enforce the antidumping and countervailing duty laws to make sure that such practices do not continue to put American workers at risk. The trick of future trade policy is to ensure the viability of core

U.S. industries and the jobs associated with them while slowly penetrating markets that are in many cases overwhelmingly closed to us. I believe that trade and exposure to American products will help break down these barriers, but I also do not believe it is unreasonable to insist that current law be enforced as intended.

Mr. Speaker, standing up for the principles of fair trade will do more to promote a freer global trading environment than allowing our industries to bear the brunt of dumped products. This is the trade environment I will continue to push for, and this is the one we are voting on today. I urge all of my colleagues to vote in favor of H.R. 975.

Mrs. TAUSCHER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 975, the Steel Import Reduction Act, because the need to protect the vital domestic steel industry is clear. Since the start of the Asian financial crisis two and a half years ago, imports of steel into the United States has risen dramatically—over 24% in 1997 and 30% in 1998. Nationally, at least 10,000 U.S. steel jobs have been lost in the past year. Furthermore, three American steel companies have filed for bankruptcy over the last year, and thousands more jobs are threatened because a steel oversupply remains on the docks from abroad.

Import surges have occurred from nations like Japan, Korea, Brazil and Russia, and this is not surprising when one considers that their normal Asian markets are now dry. The steel industries in these countries need a market, and the United States continues to have the strongest economy in the world. Therefore, these nations must, in effect, “dump” their steel on our thriving economy to the detriment of our domestic industry.

Mr. Speaker, the American steel industry is second to none in the world. Gone are the days when U.S. steel was non-competitive with other nations—the necessary infrastructure investments and facility improvements occurred over a decade ago. Were it not for the current global economic situation, I would not be standing today on the floor of the House urging passage of H.R. 975.

At the same time, I have real concerns with the legality of the measure vis-a-vis the World Trade Organization, or WTO. My support for free trade remains uncontested. However, I have always stated that along with free trade principles, fair trade practices must be enforced. This is not occurring as a result of the struggling economies in Asia, Russia, and Brazil. It is my hope that as this bill moves forward in the legislative process, a solution can be developed which will effectively shield American steel while keeping the U.S. out of the WTO dispute settlement system.

Finally, I want to express my concerns that imports of specialty steel will not be effected by passage of this bill. Industries in my district in the East Bay of California, for instance, have been importing high strength steel from Japan for many years. This steel is used for the under bodies of passenger vehicles, and it is processed in a way which is not readily available on the domestic market. It is my understanding that these imports would not be effected by the import reductions called for in this legislation, and I appreciate that.

Mr. Speaker, I thank you for working toward a solution to this problem of great magnitude to a vital U.S. industry.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the thousands of hard

working men, women and their families who have lost their jobs due to a practice some refer to as “steel dumping” and their families.

Mr. Speaker, America's steel companies and America's steel workers are the best in the world. Given a level playing field, there is no foreign company that can compete with them.

In the past year, three steel mills have filed for bankruptcy and over 10,000 workers have been laid off. Mr. Speaker, this is 10,000 too many.

If these imports continue, what does that mean for the families of these workers? What does that mean for the tens of thousands of jobs of those employed by the steel industry? We cannot—and we must not—turn our backs on American steel companies, American Steel workers and the communities they support.

The American steel industry and its workers are in a severe crisis, and as representatives of these workers, I urge my colleagues to vote yes on H.R. 975 and reduce the importing of steel.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to urge my colleagues to protect American workers.

The American steel industry is a \$70 billion industry that employs 170,000 people nationwide. Steel is also at the heart of Maryland's industrial base and thousands of Maryland jobs depend upon the steel industry. Over the past 15 years, the U.S. Steel Industry has worked aggressively to streamline its operations, improve productivity and cut costs. Bethlehem Steel Corporation, which has long operated a plant at Sparrows Point in Baltimore, has been at the forefront of these efforts. Bethlehem Steel is also among twelve companies and the United Steelworkers of America who, in response to this crisis, have filed unfair trade cases. Workers at Sparrows Point, and many plants like it, are already feeling the dramatic effects of allowing this massive influx of foreign steel.

Ultimately, this matter expands beyond the steel industry. Steel is critically interwoven into the fabric of our society. It is utilized in automobiles, medical equipment, homes, and military systems. Thus, we must act now to provide the appropriate safeguards to prevent risk to these industries.

Opponents of H.R. 975, the “Steel Import Reduction Act,” have focused on protectionism for our steel industry. Let us remember, our duty is to the American people. So, protectionism is key. We must “protect” our home, American jobs, and families from the irreparable harm caused by unprecedented and unfair levels of steel imports.

Join me in protecting American workers and families. Let's stop illegal “dumping” by voting in favor of H.R. 975.

Mrs. BIGGERT. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to H.R. 975. When I was running for Congress last year, not one of my constituents asked me to vote to raise the prices of the goods they buy. I doubt that any of my colleagues' constituents did either. Yet that is exactly what we are asked to do today with H.R. 975. Quotas have only one effect—higher prices for consumers, our constituents.

What does H.R. 975 do, Mr. Chairman? Nominally, it imposes quotas on steel imports. But in truth, it does so much more.

H.R. 975 solves a crisis that does not exist. Imports are down, way down. In January, steel imports fell to about 2.6 million tons, below the

monthly average of imported steel from the last “pre-crisis” quarter of April to June 1997. Our anti-dumping laws have worked.

H.R. 975 violates our international obligations under the World Trade Organization. Violations by the strongest proponent of the WTO will only lead to quid pro quo protectionism.

H.R. 975 benefits a few, at the expense of many. There are 266,000 steel workers in America who might be helped by this bill. There are 8.3 million workers in steel consuming industries, such as the automobile industry and the construction industry, that will be hurt by this bill. And when our foreign trading partners retaliate with quotas of their own, all of our workers suffer.

Mr. Speaker, our steel industry is not failing. In fact, it is the most efficient steel industry in the world. U.S. steel mills shipped 102 million tons in 1998, the second highest annual total ever, while increasing their share of global production from 12.3 percent to 12.6 percent.

What is not well known is that U.S. steel producers—the very ones who are laying off steel workers and asking for quotas—are themselves purchasing imported steel. On average, our domestic steel producers purchase 20 to 25 percent of all steel imports to satisfy their own accounts. Our own steel industry benefits from the lower prices brought on by imports.

Mr. Speaker, free trade is indispensable to our prosperity. We cannot allow ourselves to be turned from the path that has led to our remarkable economic success. I strongly urge my colleagues to vote no on H.R. 975.

Mr. PHELPS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my strong support for H.R. 975, the Steel Import Reduction bill, of which I am proud to be a co-sponsor. This legislation requires the President to take action to reduce steel imports into this country to pre-1997 levels and directs the administration to establish a steel import notification and monitoring program.

Mr. Speaker, our steel industry is in crisis. Last year, 10,000 steelworkers found themselves out of work in this country, and more are losing their jobs each day. Steel companies are filing for bankruptcy, laying off employees and shutting their doors. In short, American businesses and workers are paying the price of illegal dumping of steel products by Japan, Brazil, Russia and other nations which are not being forced to comply with our trade laws.

I appreciate the attention which President Clinton and his administration have begun to give this issue and the steps which they have taken to address it. Sadly, their efforts will not be enough to end this crisis. Instead, we need to adopt the comprehensive, global approach embodied in H.R. 975 to ensure that our steel industry can compete in the global economy on a level playing field.

The steel industry is critical to our national security and to our economy. If we do not address this crisis now, the implications will only grow in severity. Therefore, I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this important legislation. It is time to send a signal that we will not tolerate violations of our trade laws, especially when they place the security of our workforce, our economy and our nation in jeopardy.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. All time for debate has expired.

The bill is considered read for amendment.

Pursuant to House Resolution 114, the previous question is ordered.

The question is on the engrossment and the third reading of the bill.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, and was read the third time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the passage of the bill.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. ARCHER. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

REPORT ON H.R. 1141, EMERGENCY SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS, 1999

Mr. YOUNG of Florida (during consideration of H.R. 975), from the Committee on Appropriations, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 106-64) on the bill (H.R. 1141) making emergency supplemental appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1999, and for other purposes, which was referred to the Union Calendar and ordered to be printed.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under clause 1 of rule XXI, all points of order against provisions in the bill are reserved.

COAST GUARD AUTHORIZATION ACT OF 1999

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. QUINN). Pursuant to House Resolution 113 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union for the consideration of the bill, H.R. 820.

□ 1337

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union for the consideration of the bill (H.R. 820) to authorize appropriations for fiscal years 2000 and 2001 for the Coast Guard, and for other purposes, with Mr. GILLMOR in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The CHAIRMAN. Pursuant to the rule, the bill is considered as having been read the first time.

Under the rule, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. SHUSTER) and the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. SHUSTER).

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I might consume.

Mr. Chairman, this is the 11th bill which the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure has brought to the floor thus far in this new session. Indeed, the other 10 bills passed overwhelmingly. I believe that this leg-

islation, the Coast Guard authorization, deserves the same kind of overwhelming support.

We are taking action today to authorize funding for one of the most important programs in the United States Government. This Act authorizes approximately \$4.6 billion in fiscal year 2000 and \$4.8 billion in fiscal year 2001 in expenditures for the Coast Guard operations. It provides funds for the Coast Guard at the levels requested by the President with additional amounts provided for drug interdiction operations.

Last year, the Coast Guard received about \$250 million in emergency supplemental funds to boost drug interdiction resources in the Caribbean. I can report to the House that I personally have gone out on missions with the Coast Guard and have seen firsthand the outstanding job they do.

This legislation maintains the level of drug interdiction provided for fiscal year 1999 with additional amounts consistent with the Western Hemisphere Drug Elimination Act. This bill also contains additional funds for fishing vessel safety and to modernize the national distress and response system. The bill authorizes \$128 million in fiscal 2001 to construct a replacement icebreaking vessel for the Great Lakes.

I certainly urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

I would like to close by sharing with my colleagues examples of what our Coast Guard accomplishes every day. In any given day, on the average, our United States Coast Guard saves 14 lives. It conducts 180 search and rescue missions. It keeps \$7 million worth of illegal drugs out of our country. It responds to 32 oil spills or hazardous chemical releases. It stops hundreds of illegal aliens from entering our country.

So in a year, that is over 4,000 lives saved, over 65,000 rescue missions, \$2.6 billion in illegal drugs stopped from entering America's streets, over 11,000 environmental cleanups or responses to pollution, and the stopping of tens of thousands of illegal aliens entering our country.

Indeed, in addition to this, it also is involved in conducting local boat safety courses, port inspections, support of U.S. military and humanitarian missions, and more, all with the stewardship of the resources that should make the taxpayers of America very proud of their investment in the world's finest Coast Guard.

So I strongly urge my colleagues to support this bipartisan legislation. It is worthy of their vote.

Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, this is very important legislation for this body. As the chairman of the full committee has pointed out, it is supported strongly in a bipartisan manner. That is because almost all of the Members of this Congress and

certainly the Members of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure share a common concern in the Coast Guard's activities and giving them adequate resources to fulfill the burdens that we put on them.

The chairman has already gone on at some length, but I think it should be restated just so people remember, the Coast Guard does everything from local boating safety courses to search and rescue. If one is in trouble out on the water, they are the ones who respond. Sometimes in very hazardous situations, sometimes to loss of life to members of the Coast Guard, they are attempting to save mariners in distress.

They safeguard our borders by watching for smugglers and people attempting both to enter the country illegally or to enter drugs and other substances illegally into our country. They are our first line of protection for our coastal resources and the environment.

That leads me to some comments that are very close to home for me. The Coast Guard has been involved now for more than a month in the wreck of the *New Carrisa* which went aground in stormy weather outside the largest port in my district, very close to the mouth of the harbor.

The Coast Guard is still working on its own internal investigation and summary of the events that led up to this tragedy. I think there will be much to be learned from that critical review, perhaps some further changes in authority for the Coast Guard, changes of law regarding insurance of these freighters and other ships.

Today a freighter carries as much oil, these larger freighters, as did a small tanker 20, 25 years ago. They often carry more fuel than they need to accomplish their mission, as did this ship in this case, for ballast.

So the potential for oil spill no longer just extends to tankers and tanker safety, but now the potential for catastrophic oil spills extends to large freighters. Yet, they do not have the same insurance requirements that we put on tankers, nor do they have the same hull safety requirements we put on tankers; and those are critical issues that we will need to look at in the future to safeguard our precious coastal resources here in the United States.

□ 1345

I am very pleased that this bill, with unanimous vote in the committee, and hopefully a similar vote here on the floor of the House, includes some modest initial amendments for changes in the law that I have proposed as I became educated as to what happens when a foreign ship is headed towards the United States. And in this case, had these provisions of law which are in this bill today by my amendment been in effect, we might not have had the *New Carrisa* tragedy on the coast of Oregon; we might not have despoiled our precious coastal waters.