

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES—Tuesday, October 19, 1999

The House met at 9 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. TANCREDO).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
October 19, 1999.

I hereby appoint the Honorable THOMAS G. TANCREDO to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

J. DENNIS HASTERT,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING HOUR DEBATES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 19, 1999, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning hour debates. The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to 25 minutes, and each Member, except the majority leader, the minority leader, or the minority whip, limited to 5 minutes, but in no event shall debate extend beyond 9:50 a.m.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. KUCINICH) for 4 minutes.

MAINTAIN UNITED STATES TRADE (MUST) LAW RESOLUTION

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, recently the Commerce Department announced a record trade deficit of \$25.2 billion for the month of July. That means that foreign-made goods are displacing American-made goods. When foreign goods replace American-made goods, Americans are put out of work, pressure increases to lower wages, and the tax base for schools and cities shrinks.

When those foreign-made goods are illegally subsidized or sold in the United States below price, the trade deficit worsens and it is even harder for American producers to compete. The U.S. has laws to protect American producers and workers from the illegal dumping of foreign-made goods into the U.S., but we are here because there is a real danger that the administration would give away those laws in trade negotiations at the World Trade Organization.

How do we know that? Let me share something that recently came across my desk. I have here a list of American

laws that the European Union wants the administration to trade away. Here on page 9 of this summary on the report on the United States barriers to trade and investment by the European Commission, the EU, the European Union, has identified America's antidumping laws.

Mr. Speaker, when the EU identifies our antidumping laws as a problem, they are advocating on behalf of European-based multinational corporations. They want to make it easier for those companies to sell their products in the United States. Who will lose out if those European companies are allowed to export to the U.S. without regard to America's antidumping laws? American producers and American workers.

House Resolution 298 says that giving up our trade law system is a bad deal for American producers and workers. Do not trade away our trade laws. This is particularly important for people I represent in the Greater Cleveland area who work in the steel industry. Because American steel is the best-made steel in the world made with the best equipment, with the best workers. And yet for all the investment in steel, for all the efforts by the workers there, for all the commitments made by organized labor by the unions who represent those workers, American steel is in trouble. American steel manufacturers are losing money because we are having and have had steel dumped in our markets, and that is not fair.

So, Mr. Speaker, it is time to maintain U.S. trade laws. It is time to take a stand against dumping and it is time to make sure that U.S. laws that are made to protect American producers and workers from the illegal dumping of foreign-made goods into the U.S. are not just protected but are held inviolate. So I appreciate the opportunity to participate in this discussion this morning with the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. NEY), the gentleman from New York (Mr. LAZIO), the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. TRAFICANT), and the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. DOYLE) and all the other colleagues who are here who have constituencies that are similar to mine and who want to make sure that we protect American jobs from the antidumping.

H. RES. 298, THE MAINTAIN U.S. TRADE LAWS RESOLUTION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 19, 1999, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. NEY) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. NEY. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleagues on a bipartisan basis for being here today. This is an important morning hour to talk about an issue that is absolutely critical to every working man and woman in this country.

Mr. Speaker, I wanted to speak today about House Resolution 298, which is called the Maintain U.S. Trade Laws Resolution sponsored by the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. VISCLOSKEY). The gentleman, along with a lot of our colleagues on both sides of the aisle, have remained strong on these trade issues to make sure that we continue to have jobs for all of our working Americans.

Now, the big highlight of the year, I think, was the fact that a previous bill offered by the gentleman from Indiana came to this floor and had 289 votes and unfortunately it did not get past the procedures of the Senate, but it showed the whole Nation, working men and women, that in fact we can stand together. And the Stand Up for Steel campaign which was supported by the unions and also by the companies and by many Members of the House showed that we, even though it did not pass the Senate, that we can keep this issue focused and we can win for our workers.

Mr. Speaker, it put a lot of pressure and helped to stop some of the hemorrhaging of the loss of our jobs. But House Resolution 298 goes even beyond that. It is not just an issue for steel. It is an issue for many, many products and it is an important issue for our country.

Effective antidumping and countervailing duty laws are the cornerstone of an open market policy. Those who want to maintain free trade had better realize that any amount of trade we have should be fair trade and that maintaining trade depends on maintaining fair trade. Antidumping rules are designed to ensure that exporters based in countries with closed markets do not abuse other countries' open market policies. American industries which have benefited from these laws include basic industrial goods, chemicals and pharmaceuticals, advanced technology products, consumer goods such as tomatoes, oranges, fresh-cut flowers, cosmetics.

The present countervailing duty rules are and have come about as a result of the WTO Uruguay Round 1964 to 1994 negotiations and they applied to all the members. The WTO agreement on countervailing duty measures defines the term "subsidy." The definition contains three basic elements: A

☐ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., ☐ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

financial contribution by a government, or any other public payment which confers a benefit. All three of these elements must be satisfied in order for a subsidy to exist.

The scope of the negotiations at the Seattle Round discussions of the WTO was specified during the Uruguay Round, however some countries, and this is the danger, are seeking to circumvent the agreed list of negotiating topics and reopen the debate over the WTO's antidumping and antisubsidy rules.

These rules have scarcely been tested since their enactment and certainly have not proven defective. Accordingly, avoiding another series of divisive fights over these rules is the best way to promote progress on the other issues facing the WTO.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, it is essential that negotiations on these antidumping and antisubsidy matters not be reopened at the Seattle Round of discussions of the WTO.

Mr. Speaker, House Resolution 298 simply says we have a system, let it work. To reopen these rules at the Seattle Round is not only dangerous to the United States, but most importantly, it is dangerous to the working men and women of the United States who are trying to feed their families and support their communities and educate their children and take care of their loved ones.

It is basic to the nature of our country to be able to have a job. So we are not asking for anything special. We are simply asking for fair treatment. That is why it is essential that we speak out today and I congratulate again and thank my colleagues who have put in so much time on this issue and thank all of those across the United States, Mr. Speaker, that in fact have written letters and made phone calls and supported measures to simply give the American workers a fair chance.

FREE BUT FAIR TRADE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 19, 1999, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. TRAFICANT) is recognized during morning hour debates for 4 minutes.

Mr. TRAFICANT. Mr. Speaker, the author of H. Res. 298, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. VISCLOSKEY) has worked tirelessly here, along with the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. REGULA) and many others to try and do something about this dumping and subsidy of foreign products that, in fact, have damaged American workers, American goods, and in my opinion our future economy. Even though right now it makes it look like our prices are low and our economy is helped and buoyed by this action.

The gentleman from Indiana will be here, he being the greatest Notre Dame fan in the Congress and being totally

elated by the fighting Irish's comeback victory over Southern Cal. So being an old Pitt guy, I am not going to be all that ecstatic about it, but the gentleman from Indiana is still out there cheering on the Irish.

Mr. Speaker, the very first steel mill that closed in America, we called it Black Monday back then, was in Youngstown, Ohio. 11,000 steelworkers got a notice one morning that their plant was closing and their job was gone. Congress has done a bunch of things since then to give plant closing notices, but frankly I do not even understand why we have to be doing something like this with the administration that in my opinion should know better. I think every administration should know a little better.

We are getting ripped off big time. People keep hearing about dumping. I do not know if the American people know what dumping means. It is not all that sophisticated. It is not rocket science here. Dumping is when a product costs \$20 to make but they sell it in America for \$15, \$5 below what it costs them to make the product themselves. What does that do? There are those purists that say that is great. They are subsidizing the American economy. They are doing us a favor at \$5 a product.

But, Mr. Speaker, the bottom line is the American producers now cannot meet the competition. Little by little the American competition dwindles and before long there is a vacuum. No American company produces the product and that product that looked so juicy at \$15 is now coming in here at \$35.

The final result of this is we cannot have dumping, we cannot have subsidies, if in fact they are going to play by a different set of rules. That is what frosts my pumpkin here.

I think with the dumping of illegal steel Congress did not do what they had to do. Congress should have passed a ban. Send it to the President and let these presidents that fire up all these union workers every election veto the bill and show what they are standing for.

Mr. Speaker, we should not be managing illegal trade; we should be banning illegal trade.

So I particularly feel our program is all wet. I think we have allowed these administrations to use an awful lot of rhetoric and politicking around election time and maintain a program that is anti-American, so help me God. But I want to credit the efforts at least we are trying to take. What we are doing is recommending that the administration does not allow any more of this chicanery on illegal trade. Wow. I hope that works. But in any regard, I think it is better than what we are doing.

Mr. Speaker, I think there is a lot more that has to be done. And I think it is time to pass some legislation that

says look, play by the same rules we play by because there is one trick word I believe and one magic word that deals with this trade business. It is called reciprocity. I think it is time to treat our trading partners the way they deal with us. We should ideally deal with free trade, but first we should deal with fair trade.

Mr. VISCLOSKEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak in favor of House Resolution 298, the Maintain United States Trade Law Resolution. There have been a number of pieces of legislation introduced this Congress aimed at strengthening our trade laws. While some of these bills have been very technical in nature, we have before us today a resolution that is so simple and straightforward that there can be no hidden agenda. It sends forth one basic, yet vital, message from the Congress to the Administration, and that message is this—do not allow the current antidumping and countervailing duty laws to be weakened.

Just over a month from now, the WTO will convene at the Seattle Ministerial to launch a new round of trade talks. An agenda has been set for these negotiations that does not include the antidumping and countervailing duty rules, yet there are a number of countries seeking to expand the agenda in order to debate them. The existing rules were concluded only with great difficulty during the Uruguay Round, and have hardly been tested. In no way have the existing rules been proven to be defective. Therefore, it would be clearly a rash decision to reopen them at this point in time.

Fortunately the Administration seems to have recognized the importance of maintaining these trade laws and has stated on a number of occasions that they will not allow them to be reopened at this next round of talks. Apparently, some Members in this House feel this is enough assurance, but I speak today on behalf of the almost 200 cosponsors of this resolution who know the Congress must vocalize their support for the Administration's stated approach. We must show our trading partners that we wholeheartedly support and endorse our negotiators and their position at the Seattle Ministerial.

On a number of occasions, I have heard people state their concern that there is a growing protectionist tide in the U.S. and around the world. There are even those out there who believe this resolution will help fuel this tide, but nothing could be farther from the truth. Free trade must be synonymous with fair trade, and our antidumping and countervailing duty laws target only illegal imports, not those that are fairly traded. If you really want to see a growing protectionist tide in this country, go down the road of weakening our fair trade laws and just watch what happens. Weakening these laws will lead to a flood of illegal imports like we have never seen, and the result will be scores of American companies out of business and innumerable American workers without jobs. We will then see an unprecedented discontent with foreign manufacturers and, in no time, a movement toward closing our doors to foreign imports, fair and unfair alike. If you're looking for a recipe for protectionism, weakening our existing trade laws is the quick and easy way to get there.

Nothing good can come out of reopening the antidumping and countervailing duty rules,