

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES—Tuesday, February 2, 1999

The House met at 12:30 p.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. BARRETT of Nebraska).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
February 2, 1999.

I hereby designate the Honorable BILL BARRETT 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 30 minutes, and each Member, except the majority leader, the minority leader, or the minority whip, limited to 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. VISCLOSKY) for 5 minutes.

ILLEGAL DUMPING OF STEEL, A CRISIS IN AMERICA

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to announce the introduction of legislation along with the gentleman from New York (Mr. QUINN), the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. KUCINICH), the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. NEY) and 96 other of my colleagues.

The 100 of us join together today to try to provide a solution to the crisis we face in the United States of America today involving the domestic steel industry. We want to help those Americans who want to work in a steel mill in the United States of America, and I say want to because using the administration's figures it is clear that over the last 12 months, 8,775 steel workers have already lost their job because of this crisis. That translates into 24 steel workers, 24 American families today will lose a breadwinner in everything that connotes.

What is the cause of this crisis? Illegal dumping. Countries selling steel in the United States, or I should almost suggest giving it away in the United States of America, at below their costs

of production, at below what they sell it in their home market.

This crisis began after July of 1997, and it is of astronomical proportions. Using trade figures from November of this past year, imports have increased over that approximately 18-month period of time by 48 percent. Imports in November of 1998, compared to pre-crisis level in July 1997, from Japan, increased by 303 percent; 303 percent as shown on the first chart.

Steel exports from Russia increased from July 1997 to November 1998 by 151 percent, 151 percent. Steel exports to the United States increased from Korea from July 1997 to November 1998 by 111 percent. Exports of steel to the United States from the Ukraine increased from July 1997 to November 1998 by 196 percent.

The result at Timken Company is that 160 workers were laid off in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Forty-seven workers were laid off at three Ohio steel manufacturing facilities. Forty union workers were laid off at Timken Latrobe Steel in Latrobe, Pennsylvania. Four hundred people were released from the former Inland Steel Company in Indiana. At Geneva Steel Company in Vineyard, Utah, there is an 18 percent cutback. USX laid off 200 workers in Fairfield, Alabama, and 100 workers at the Mon Valley Works near Pittsburgh. Slater Steel Corporation has slashed 51 positions. It has altogether reduced the salaried workforce by 22½ percent. Acme Metals in Riverdale, Illinois, has filed for Chapter XI bankruptcy.

There is Gulf States Steel Corporation in Gadsden, Alabama, where 100 steel workers have been laid off. Northwestern Steel and Wire Corporation in Sterling Falls, Illinois, 300 of 400 workers are out of work today. Weirton Steel Corporation, Weirton, West Virginia, more than 900 steel workers have lost their job.

No action was taken by last fall, and the Congressional Steel Caucus introduced a resolution. Language ultimately was sent to the administration begging, imploring and demanding that the President of the United States act. The President reported back to Congress with his action plan in January of this past year, and among other things the President indicated that the Japanese government has indicated, the President's word to us, that Japanese steel imports would return close to 1997 levels, close to 1997 levels, in 1999. A representative of the Japanese government later indicated that that potentially was not true.

The administration will come before us today and indicate that the Japanese have begun to correct their problem with the United States, and my colleagues can see by the second chart that, yes, indeed, exports from Japan have declined. Today they are 94 percent higher than they were at pre crisis levels, and I will bet steel workers in Japan have not lost their job.

But that contrasts to the USS/Fairless Works where Mike Dobrowolsky and Kenneth Houser were laid off the day before Thanksgiving. They are both in their mid forties, they are married, they each have two children. Both have worked for more than 20 years at Fairless; they are not working today. At Geneva Steel Corporation in Utah, Eric Shepherd is married with three children and was among those laid off in September.

We need to act.

SOLUTIONS TO THE CHALLENGES WE FACE

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

Mr. WELLER. Mr. Speaker, I have the privilege of representing a very diverse district in Illinois. I represent the south side of Chicago, the south suburbs in Cook and Will Counties, a lot of bedroom communities like the town of Morris where I live, towns like Peru, and a lot of farm towns. When representing a diverse district, of course one wants to listen and find out what is a common message, and I find, as I listen and learn, the concerns of the people of this very diverse district. They tell me one very clear message, and that is the people of our part of Illinois want solutions, solutions to the challenges that we face.

In fact, in 1994 when we were elected they sent us here with a very clear message that was part of that effort to find solutions, and that is we want to change how Washington works and make Washington responsive to the folks back home. When we were elected in 1994, we wanted to bring solutions to balance the budget, to cut taxes, to reform welfare, to tame the IRS. There were an awful lot of folks in Washington who said we could not do any of those things because they had always failed in the past. But I am proud to say that we did. I am pretty proud of our accomplishments: balancing the budget for the first time in 28 years,

□ 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.