In March 1996 responding to requests by veterans, the Subcommittee on Human Resources, which I chair, initiated a far-reaching oversight investigation into the status of efforts to understand the clusters of symptoms and debilitating maladies known collectively as ''Gulf War Syndrome.''

After 13 hearings, Representatives TOWNS, SNOWBARGER, SANDERS and I introduced H.R. 4036, the Persian Gulf War Veterans Health Act of 1998 with strong bipartisan support and that of the Gulf War veterans' community and the veterans' community at large.

H.R. 4036 would establish in law the presumption of service-connection for illnesses associated with exposure to toxins present in the war theater. The Secretary of Veterans Affairs (VA) would be required to accept the findings of an independent scientifc body as to the illnesses linked with actual and presumed toxic exposures. The bill would also require the VA to commission an independent scientific panel to conduct ongoing health surveillance among Gulf War veterans.

The key provisions of H.R. 4036, not contained in H.R. 4110, is a ''presumption of exposure'' of sick veterans to one or more toxins known to be present during the war. This provision is critical because many of the sick Gulf War veterans, who now number more than 100,000, have a difficult time establishing service-connected disability due to missing or inadequate medical records. No other proposed House bill contains such a presumption.

By establishing a rebuttable presumption of exposure, and the presumption of service-connection for exposure effects, the bill places the burden of proof where it belong—on the VA, not the sick veteran.

The bill embodies a principal finding and legislative recommendation of an oversight report adopted without dissent by the Government Reform and Oversight Committee last November. We owe it to the brave men and women who have come forward to assist our ongoing VA oversight, and to all Gulf War veterans, to follow through with this proposal and properly diagnose, effectively treat and fairly compensate our Gulf War veterans.

It is essential we address the problems faced by Gulf War veterans and pass a bill establishing a rebuttable presumption of exposure, and presumption of service-connection for exposure effects. We should place the burden of proof on the Veterans Affairs Department, not on the sick veterans.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. STUMP) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 592.

The question was taken.

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

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 5 of rule I and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

PRIVILEGES OF THE HOUSE—FAILURE OF U.S. GOVERNMENT TO ENFORCE ANTIDUMPING LAWS REGARDING STEEL

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to a question of the privileges of the House and offer a privileged resolution that I noticed pursuant to rule IX and ask for its immediate consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the resolution.

The Clerk read as follows:

RESOLUTION

A resolution, in accordance with House Rule IX, Clause 1, expressing the sense of the House that its integrity has been impugned because the anti-dumping provisions of the Trade and Tariff Act of 1930, (Subtitle B of title VII) have not been expeditiously enforced;

Whereas the current financial crises in Asia, Russia, and other regions have involved massive depreciation in the currencies of several key steel-producing and steel consuming countries, along with a collapse in the domestic demand for steel in these countries; Whereas the crises have generated and will continue to generate surges in United States imports of steel, both from the countries whose currencies have depreciated in the crisis and from steel producing countries that are no longer able to export steel to the countries in economic crisis;

Whereas United States imports of finished steel mill products from Asian steel producing countries—the People's Republic of China, Japan, Korea, India, Taiwan, Indonesia, Thailand, and Malaysia—have increased by 79 percent in the first 5 months of 1998 compared to the same period in 1997;

Whereas year-to-date imports of steel from Russia now exceed the record import levels of 1997, and steel imports from Russia and Ukraine now approach 2,500,000 net tons;

Whereas foreign government trade restrictions and private restraints of trade distort international trade and investment patterns and result in burdens on United States commerce, including absorption of a disproportionate share of diverted steel trade;

Whereas the European Union, for example, despite also being a major economy, in 1997 imported only one-tenth as much finished steel products from Asian steel producing countries as the United States did and has restricted imports of steel from the Commonwealth of Independent States, including Russia;

Whereas the United States is simultaneously facing a substantial increase in steel imports from countries within the Commonwealth of Independent States, including Russia, caused in part by the closure of Asian markets;

Whereas there is a well-recognized need for improvements in the enforcement of United States trade laws to provide an effective response to such situations: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives, That the House of Representatives calls upon the President to—

(1) take all necessary measures to respond to the surge of steel imports resulting from the financial crises in Asia, Russia, and other regions, and for other purposes;

(2) pursue enhanced enforcement of United States trade laws with respect to the surge of steel imports into the United States, using all remedies available under those laws including offsetting duties, quantitative restraints, and other authorized remedial measures as appropriate;

(3) pursue with all tools at his disposal a more equitable sharing of the burden of accepting imports of finished steel products from Asia and the countries within the Commonwealth of Independent States;

(4) establish a task force within the executive branch with responsibility for closely monitoring United States imports of steel; and

(5) report to the Congress by no later than January 5, 1999, with a comprehensive plan for responding to this import surge, including ways of limiting its deleterious effects on employment, prices, and investment in the United States steel industry.

Mr. VISCLOSKY (during the reading). Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be considered as read and printed in the record.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. By practice, the resolution is read in full.

The Clerk completed reading the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Does any Member desire to be heard on whether the resolution presents a question of the privileges of the House?

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

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Mr. Speaker, I offer this question of privilege to bring attention to a catastrophic situation facing this Nation. The trade laws that the Congress has enacted over the last 60 years are designed to ensure that American workers are not hurt by unfair and illegal trade practices. Congressional intent, as represented by the Trade and Tariff Act of 1930, is being ignored at the present time.

□ 1250

The U.S. steel industry and its workers are suffering because the Asian and Russian financial crises have led those countries to dump their steel on our market. The U.S. has been reluctant to stop this illegal practice. Steel that was formerly produced for domestic consumption in Asia is now being shipped to the United States where it is sold at prices below the cost of production. Steel prices in the United States have fallen 20 percent in the last 3 months alone.

The European Union has protected itself and its steel industry against dumping by erecting temporary barriers to steel imports during the crisis. Their steel industry is weathering the storm. In America, the demand for domestic steel has decreased dramatically in mills in Alabama, West Virginia, Utah, Ohio, Iowa, Indiana, and workers have been laid off because of the decreased demand for American steel. American workers should not have to pay the price of the administration's refusal to enforce trade laws which the Congress has enacted and supports. This impinges on the integrity of this House.

American steel workers, the most efficient in the world, cannot continue to be besieged by foreign steel products while waiting indefinitely for trade cases to be settled. Damage to the American steel industry is extensive, severe and rapidly growing. We need to protect our American steel workers by stemming the tide of illegally dumped steel, and the administration's failure to act again directly impinges on the integrity of this House.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CALVERT). The Chair is prepared to hear argument on this question of privilege from other Members, including those

who have noticed virtually identical resolutions on this topic, in lieu of entertaining those other resolutions separately today.

This comports with the principle that recognition on a question of order is within the discretion of the Chair. Members must address the question of order.

Mr. BERRY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to talk about the steel crisis that is escalating out of control and is having a devastating effect on the people of the First Congressional District of Arkansas as well as people around the country. I am a free trader so long as the rules of free trade are rigorously enforced. Fair trade is imperative to support free trade.

What is not fair is the export of the Asian and Russian crisis to our shores. Currently Japanese and Russian and other foreign steel companies are unable to sell their excess capacity at home. These foreign steel producers are dumping their products on the U.S. market by selling at prices less than their cost and below those in their home markets.

As a result, this growing steel import crisis is causing injury to our domestic steel companies and the industry. It is threatening the jobs of people in the First Congressional District of Arkansas and across America. As a result, the steel imports in May 1998 increased 28.5 percent from their level of the previous year. Through June 1998 the imports from Japan were up 113.7 percent, while imports from Korea rose 89.5 percent.

Mr. Speaker, we need to protect American workers and American industry by stopping the illegal dumping of steel from other countries. Now is the time to act. We have the responsibility and the opportunity to correct this problem, and I assure my colleagues that I will do everything I can to help. We can win, but we must fight.

Mr. TRAFICANT. Mr. Speaker, I am not addressing and will not address the deplorable plight and condition of the steel industry at this time. But I believe there are some precedents in legal arguments concerning the privileges of the House and its Members to advance privileged resolutions. I would like to make those arguments, and I want to make it clear through the legislative intent and history of today's request for a vote that we are challenging past precedents on the rulings and questions of privilege, and today's efforts are another step forward to bring back to the powers of the House those which the Constitution deems are within the jurisdictional authority of the House.

Having said that, specifically article I, section 8 clearly states that Congress shall regulate commerce with foreign nations. Congress. Not the White House, not the Trade Rep, not the World Trade Organization. Although they can assist the Congress, they do not have the mandated authority to undertake the actions necessary for remedy in this condition. And I hope Congress is listening. I know they want to get out of here. But let us not talk about steel. Let us talk about the Constitution.

Having said that, I believe that this matter of privilege today is within the scope of the United States House of Representatives for the following reasons. While I admit past precedents did not destroy the powers of Congress, the decisions of past Congresses, as upheld by the Chair, have diminished the Congress, specifically the House of the people. In that regard, the legal question is, if congressional powers are being diminished and there is a condition that does not lend itself to remedy by the House who has the mandated power to remedy, then the resolution must be heard on cause.

So the Traficant appeal is saying, by the nature of past decisions, Parliamentarians and the Chair have upheld denying the resolutions of privilege, while I maintain that decision has created a diminishing power and authority that is duly granted to the Constitution, duly granted to the Members of the House of Representatives, and strips us of those powers specifically. That is what my question of a ruling is on.

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY

Mr. TRAFICANT. Mr. Speaker, having said that, I would like a parliamentary inquiry with the Speaker.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman may state his inquiry.

Mr. TRAFICANT. Is article I, section 8 of the Constitution clearly in force?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair cannot interpret the Constitution in response to parliamentary inquiry.

Mr. TRAFICANT. Does article I, section 8 of the Constitution grant specific powers to the Congress?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. That is not a proper parliamentary inquiry.

Mr. TRAFICANT. In closing, ladies and gentlemen, this is more than some trickery here. I want to say this to every Member in the House. We have delegated our authority. What we have not delegated has been usurped, and both sides of the aisle has allowed that to happen, and by not challenging this today and reversing past precedents, we in fact have diminished and destroyed what powers we are granted under the Constitution.

Mr. OBERSTAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise to be heard on the question of privilege.

Mr. Speaker, the resolution under consideration, I believe, does constitute a question of privileges of the House, because the trade laws that the Congress has enacted over the last 60 years are designed to ensure that American workers are not hurt by unfair and illegal dumping of manufactured products, including steel. Congressional intent as represented by the Trade and Tariff Act of 1930, is being specifically ignored.

This is not a partisan matter. It is a matter that concerns Members on both sides of the aisle. It is not a matter limited to the present administration in Washington, the Clinton administration. It is an issue that has spread over several administrations, going back to the 1970s, the Carter administration, later the Reagan administration, the Bush administration. This Congress, through our congressional steel caucus, on a bipartisan basis has advocated vigorous action against unfairly traded steel.

I am happy to yield at this point to the chairman of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, the gentleman from Pennsylvania.

Mr. SHUSTER. I thank the gentleman for yielding and I rise for two purposes.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman cannot yield on a question of order but the Chair will recognize each Member separately.

Mr. SHUSTER. I was going to ask to be able to speak out of order for a unanimous-consent request.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will hear each Member on his own time, but on a question of order a Member cannot yield time.

Mr. OBERSTAR. I thank the Chair for the ruling.

□ 1300

Shortly after the end of World War II a famous American historian and journalist, John Gunther, wrote:

> What makes America a great nation is the fact that it can roll over 90 million tons of steel ingots a year, more than Great Britain, prewar Germany, Japan, France and the Soviet Union combined.

Gunther wrote: ''This is a steel age.''

We still live in that steel age. Steel is still the most versatile building material in an industrial society. We are the world's most efficient producer of steel. American steel industry has lost 350,000 jobs over the last decade, has closed over 450 plants, modernized its facilities to the tune of $50 billion of investment. We have gone from 10 man hours to produce a ton of steel in 1981 to 1½ to 3 hours depending on the type of steel today to produce a ton of steel compared with 4½ to 5 hours in Japan, 6½ hours in the European Union and 10 hours in Russia. And yet steel from those countries is being sold in the United States at below cost of production in the country of origin, and this administration, like previous administrations, until prodded by Congress, has not acted decisively to protect our domestic industry, our basic building block security industry.

We need to act. This resolution that we propose as a point of privilege calls on the administration to act, we ought to bring that resolution to the House floor before this session of Congress adjourns, and I urge the Chair to rule in the interests of working men and women of America in the steel valley, the Mon Valley of Pennsylvania-Ohio, and the taconite industry of northern Minnesota and northern Michigan and in the interest of America's standing in

the world community as a powerful economic force.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CALVERT). The gentleman from Ohio (Mr. NEY).

Mr. NEY. Mr. Speaker, I stand today to support this Visclosky privileged resolution which expresses the sense of the House that the integrity of our anti-dumping provisions of the Trade and Tariff Act of 1930 have not been enforced.

My colleague from Ohio (Mr. TRAFICANT) I think has eloquently and adequately expressed the ability of this Congress to consider this privileged resolution.

Trade laws that were enacted 60 years ago, Mr. Speaker, were designed to protect American workers. That is what this government did. It designed laws to protect American workers so they are not hurt by unfair trade practices.

The U.S. steel workers and the steel industry are suffering in one of the worst ways in recent modern times because the Asia and Russia financial crisis has led those countries to illegally dump their steel on the market. It could not be any clearer.

Steel that was formerly produced for domestic consumption in Asia is now being shipped to the United States where it is sold at prices below the cost of production. Steel prices have fallen 20 percent in the last 3 months alone. The Europeans have protected itself and the steel industry against dumping by erecting temporary barriers on steel imports. So Europe has stood up for its workers; that is what Europe has done, Mr. Speaker. The European steel industry will weather the storm while the American steel industry and its workers are announcing new layoffs daily.

We need to push for this resolution. We need to push the White House to do everything they can to stop illegal dumping practices that are damaging our steel industry.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I ask where is the Congress? Where is the White House? Where is the United States Government? Today we have a chance to answer those questions. We are here, by supporting the Visclosky resolution, to finally stand up for steel workers, to stand up for working Americans, to stand up for families in this country and to stand up for the United States. This is mandatory, it is a must, it is the right thing to do.

Mr. Speaker, I support the Visclosky privileged resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. As the Chair hears further argument, the Chair will reiterate the ruling of February 7, 1995.

When a Member offers a resolution as a question of privilege pursuant to rule IX, the Speaker may in his discretion hear argument on whether the resolution constitutes a question of the privileges of the House, but that argument should not range to the merits of the underlying matter.

The gentleman from New York.

Mr. HINCHEY. Mr. Speaker, I would like to say a word on this resolution because I think the issue that is raised is critically important to the Members of this House and to the people of this country, and it is one that we ought to have a full and complete debate on. The reason I say that is in recognition of the statements that have been made just a few moments ago with regard to the impact that the dumping of steel is having on congressional districts and the people in those congressional districts, the workers in those congressional districts and their families across the country. This is an aggravated symptom of a much larger problem however.

Mr. Speaker, we are in the midst of a global economic crisis, and one of the features of that global economic crisis is the propensity of some nations in the world suffering the effects of deflation to attempt to dump their products, both manufactured products and commodities, on to the markets of other countries. We are in a most vulnerable position indeed to this particular activity, and we have not done nearly enough to protect our economy from the effects of this kind of dumping.

One of the things that we ought to do immediately is to petition the Federal Reserve to reduce interest rates substantially so that we may buttress our economy from the effects of this kind of dumping and the larger effects of the global economic crisis.

In addition to that, we have a major issue that is currently before the Congress with regard to the International Monetary Fund which this Congress has not yet addressed. We need to increase the funding for the IMF, and if we were to do so, that increase in funding would make it less likely that resolutions of this nature would have to be brought to the floor.

We are in an important issue right now. We need to decide this issue, bring that question of IMF funding before on the floor so that we can have a full and complete debate on it.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair would remind the Members that the issue before the Members is neither the advisability of the United States trade policy nor the actions of the administration on trade, but rather the procedural question of whether the resolution offered by the gentleman from Indiana constitutes a question of the privileges of the House under rule IX. The Chair would ask Members to confine their arguments to that issue.

The gentleman from Ohio (Mr. KUCINICH).

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise in favor of a privileged motion for H. Con. Resolution 328 which provides Congress with an opportunity to protect the American steel worker and the American steel industry. I am in concurrence with previous speakers who cited the Constitution of the United States with respect to Congress' ability to protect commerce in this country and to protect the jobs of the people whom we serve.

Mr. Speaker, I think that we are here as a Congress to say that Congress needs to take action on the crisis posed by cheap subsidized steel imports from developing countries that are trying to earn foreign exchange to repay their own onerous debts. American steel is under siege, and we need to stand up for American steel and for American jobs.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman will keep his remarks to the issue of the parliamentary question of order.

Mr. KUCINICH. So, therefore, I rise in favor of the privileged motion for H. Con. Resolution 328. I ask the Chair to grant the privileged motion. Otherwise I ask Members to vote for a motion to appeal a ruling of the Chair and vote for H. Con. Resolution 328. It is important that we stand up for America and stand up for American steel.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will hear from one more Member, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. DOYLE).

Mr. DOYLE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to be heard on the question of privilege offered by the gentleman from Indiana. The resolution under consideration constitutes a question of privilege of the House because trade laws enacted by the House over 60 years ago are being ignored. These laws were specifically designed to ensure that American workers are not hurt by unfair and illegal dumping of manufactured products including steel.

I am sorry to say that the congressional intent, as represented by the Trade and Tariff Act of 1930, is specifically ignored. This is an external crisis caused by steel dumping in the U.S. by foreign producers for whom any price for steel is higher than the price they would get at home.

□ 1310

Because of a result of the Asian and Russian financial crisis, there is no market for steel in their home countries. This is a crisis addressable by laws currently in effect which are not being enforced.

U.S. steel remains very competitive. But steel was being dumped in the U.S. at below the cost of production, which is illegal and a violation of the laws that the Legislative Branch has enacted. U.S. trade laws are supposed to be enforced by the Executive Branch. The administration has failed to stop these illegal activities, and the dignity of this House is being impugned. I urge the support of the resolution.

Mr. WELLER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to bring attention to a matter of the utmost importance to the future of the American steel industry and to thousands of steelworkers around the country, many of which I represent in the 11th Congressional District in Chicago's south suburbs.

Mr. Speaker, the American steel market is in the midst of a crisis due to a unprecedented flow of below market value foreign steel. The economic problems in Russia, Asia and Latin

America have led to large scale dumping of foreign steel on the U.S. market with most of this steel being sold at below the price of production in their home markets. As you know Mr. Speaker, this is an unfair and illegal trade practice under both international and U.S. trade policies, and the dumping of foreign steel threatens many good paying American jobs.

This past spring, I along with 64 other members of this House signed a letter to the President asking him to enforce existing U.S. laws against these unfairly traded steel imports. Unfortunately Mr. Speaker, the Administration has failed to act on behalf of the steel industry and American workers. In fact, the problem has only grown worse since this spring. Steel imports for this past July were up almost 45% over July 1997. Imports from Japan and South Korea are up over 113% and 89% respectively.

The impact of this dumped steel has already resulted in layoffs and reduced orders in factories around the country. U.S. Steel has laid off over 100 workers in Pittsburgh and is planning to lay off more workers as orders continue to slow. Geneva Steel has had to let go of over 500 employees, and Northwestern Steel and Wire Company in my state of Illinois has said that it might have to let go as many as 450 workers because of the these unfair trade practices. Even Acme Steel Company in Chicago has been forced to file for bankruptcy protection putting even more jobs in question.

I have over 20 firms in my district that produce steel or steel products. Some of these firms are large cooperations like Birmingham Steel whose mill in Joliet, Illinois employs almost 400 people, while others are small family owned businesses like Bellson Scrap and Steel in Bourbonnais. Without immediate action to stem the tide of this unfairly dumped steel, I fear that these steel producers and their workers will face severe harm.

Mr. Speaker, both the steel industry and the steelworkers union have filed suit to stop these unfair practices, but, without swift action by the Administration to stop this unchecked flow of dumped steel, it may be too late for many of our steel companies and steel workers to wait for the courts resolution.

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 and highest quality 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.

[From the Chicago Tribune, Oct. 1, 1998]

STEEL FIRMS FILE TRADE COMPLAINT—TARGETS: BRAZIL, JAPAN, RUSSIA

(By Michael Arndt)

Battered by imported steel arriving by the shipload, a coalition of domestic steel companies Wednesday asked the government to slap hefty duties on steel sheet—one of the industry's most widely used products—from Brazil, Japan and Russia.

The coalition also warned it would file unfair trade complaints against other steel goods from the same three teetering nations and others, including possibly South Korea, in what is shaping up to be the biggest counteroffensive against imports of any kind in at least a decade.

Before it's over, the Clinton administration may intervene and negotiate trade pacts that would give these nations a limited slice of the U.S. market, avoiding a cutoff that could hurt foreign governments important to U.S. interests.

The complaint, filed with the U.S. International Trade Commission and the Commerce Department, followed a record surge in low-priced imports that have smashed through mill towns this summer and fall like a Category 5 hurricane.

Already, Acme Metals Inc. of south suburban Riverdale has sought bankruptcy protection while J&L Specialty Steel Inc. has shelved plans for a new mill because prices and orders are skidding. Others have idled production lines, trimmed work-weeks and furloughed or fired hundreds of employees.

And layoffs, limited thus far by terms of the United Steelworkers of America's master labor contract, could balloon to the thousands by year's end if the flow of imports is not quickly dammed.

''We are in an absolute crisis,'' Paul Wilhelm, chief executive of USX Corp.'s U.S. Steel Group, said in a teleconference. ''In my 35 years in the business, I have never seen the unprecedented levels of imports or the cutthroat prices coming into this country.''

To people who have peripherally followed the steel industry, Wilhelm and the other CEOs in the Stand Up for Steel coalition sound like men crying wolf. Since 1980, when the nation's current trade laws went into effect, steelmakers have filed more complaints than every other industry combined.

But the increase in imports and tandem decline in spot-market prices triggered by Asia's economic collapse have been extraordinarily steep, suggesting that the steel industry—still a bedrock even in an Information Age economy—is truly in as much trouble as these men claim.

Indeed, only hours after the coalition announced its trade complaint in a Washington news conference, analyst Michelle Applebaum of Salomon Smith Barney urged investors to sell steel stocks, figuring that it may take until late 1999 for the trade complaint to lift overall prices.

The industry's latest bugbear is imported hot-rolled steel sheet, a commodity used in a variety of manufactured products, including vehicle parts, appliances and office furniture.

In their unfair trade complaint, the coalition notes that imports of this steel from Brazil, Japan and Russia jumped 81 percent in the first seven months of 1998 from the year-earlier period, giving them 27 percent of this market segment, up from 10.9 percent in 1997.

Looking over a longer timeframe, the coalition says that hot-rolled steel imports from the three nations are currently running at six times their 1995 annual total.

The price of these products is also unfairly low, according to the coalition. Under U.S. trade law, it is illegal to sell imported steel here for lower prices than in the foreign producer's home market or for less than the cost of production—practices known colloquially and legally as dumping.

To make these goods fairly priced, the coalition is demanding duties that would boost import prices from Brazil by 31 percent to 91 percent; from Japan by 28 percent to 85 percent; and from Russia by 91 percent to 167 percent.

The 12-company coalition—led by U.S. Steel, Bethlehem Steel Corp. and LTV Corp.—also accuses the Brazilian government of subsidizing its steel exports, another violation of U.S. trade law.

The trade complaint goes first to the International Trade Commission, which is scheduled to rule preliminary by mid-November whether the imports have injured the domestic industry. If so, the Commerce Department could set tentative duties by late April.

Well before then, however, coalition members said they plan to file unfair trade complaints against so-called emerging-market nations in Asia, Latin America and the former Soviet bloc on other widely traded products, such as high quality cold-rolled sheet, heavy-duty plate and multipurpose coils.

In the next few months, ''we will be meeting with you many more times'' as more complaints are brought, Curtis Barnette, chairman and chief executive of Bethlehem Steel, promised reporters. The coalition, he added, will go after ''all products and all countries that are trading unfairly. No one is excluded.''

There is almost a sense of tragedy in the steel industry's current troubles. Since 1980, the industry has spent an estimated $50 billion on more-productive equipment and mills to bring itself up to world standards. Some 325,000 jobs were eliminated in the process.

But just as the industry seemed finally to have put its house in order, Asia's economies came apart. With few consumers in their home markets, manufacturers in these nations turned toward exports to keep their factories busy and avoid layoffs that could be politically disruptive.

Steel executives and workers said they feel cheated.

Over the last 12 years, for instance, investors spent $420 million on Geneva Steel Inc., which enabled the Provo, Utah-based company to survive while every other traditional steel mill west of the Mississippi River went under.

Now, Geneva Steel has fired 270 employees and put another 335 on temporary layoff because of falling orders.

''Years and years of work will go down the drain very quickly if something does not happen,'' said Robert Grow, its president.

Other steelmakers are cutting back as well. Nucor Corp. has slowed production at three mills, including one in Crawfordsville, Ind. U.S. Steel has shut a blast furnace at its Gary Works that accounts for 7.5 percent of its total iron output, and has laid off about 100 workers in Pennsylvania.

And Northwestern Steel and Wire Co. of Sterling, Ill., recently said it would fire 450 workers as it exits nearly half its wire-products lines, in part because of heightened competition from low-priced imports.

''This is a not a regional problem,'' said George Becker, president of the United Steelworkers union, which joined in the trade complaint. ''This is happening all over the United States, from Provo to Alabama, in Pennsylvania and south of Chicago.''

Mr. LIPINSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of this privileged resolution.

For far too long, this Administration has turned its back on American workers. The Administration's failed trade policies has failed American workers. Free trade at any cost? I don't think so especially when American workers are the ones who suffer.

The current international economic crises has hit our steel industry hard. Asian nations such as Taiwan, China, Indonesia, Thailand, Malaysia, Korea and Japan have been illegally dumping their steel in our market. In the five months of 1998, U.S. steel imports from those Asian nations have increased by 79 percent from the same period from 1997. Compare that with the European Union which, despite being a major economy, only imported one-tenth as

much finished steel products from Asia as the U.S. did.

And what is the difference between the European Union and the U.S.? The difference is the European Union enforces their trade laws—the U.S. doesn't.

Mr. Speaker, this body passed tough trade laws that level the playing field as we compete in the global economy, but these trade laws only work if they are enforced. And right now, under this Administration, they aren't.

I strongly urge the Administration to fully utilize U.S. trade laws to protect our domestic steel industry. When foreign nations dump steel at below-market prices in the U.S., it is unfair. When the Administration, charged with enforcing out trade laws and the responsibility of protecting American jobs and American industry from inequitable, foreign competition fails to do so, it is unfair. This worsens the U.S. trade deficit, exports American jobs, and causes a contractionary effect on U.S. economic growth. It is wrong for American workers to bear the burden of this nation's failed trade policies.

I urge all of my colleagues to join me in support of this resolution.

Mr. ENGLISH of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my views on the ruling of the Chair on the question of whether this is in fact a ''Privileged Resolution'' under the rules of this House.

I support the ruling of the Chair. I do not believe that this is in fact a privileged resolution under the rules of the House. I do believe that this issue should be brought up under regular order. I fully support the underlying resolution, H. Con. Res. 328, of which I am an original cosponsor. I urge the House of Representatives to call up and pass this important legislation under its regular order of business.

I call on the President and the Administration to act expeditiously to eliminate the damage being caused by illegal dumping of foreign steel products in America. Russia, Brazil, Korea, China, and Japan should not be allowed to export their economic mismanagement to the United States. Dumping is an unfair, intolerable and illegal trade practice that is hurting American steel companies and puts American jobs at risk.

Due to economic crises, Korean, Japanese, Russian, and other foreign steel companies cannot sell their products domestically. In order to liquidate their inventory, foreign steel producers are ''dumping'' their products in the U.S. by selling at prices below production cost in their home and U.S. markets. Steel imports in May 1998 increased a staggering 28.5 percent from last year.

Over the last decade, U.S. steel has revitalized to become one of the most competitive industries in the world. This enormous accomplishment is now in jeopardy due to illegal traded steel imports.

H. Con. Res. 328 is valuable legislation that calls on the Administration to act and respond to the surge of unfairly traded steel imports resulting from the financial crises in Asia, Russia and other parts of the world. It is an important step in addressing the growing steel import crisis and should be brought up and passed by the House.

An economic crisis in Russia and Asia does not give these countries the right to violate trade laws. Congress and the Administration need to act now to enforce trade laws and stop an economic crisis in the U.S. steel industry. We need a level playing field for everyone who participates in the global marketplace.

I support the underlying resolution, but Mr. Speaker I am compelled on procedural grounds to oppose the motion of the Gentleman from Indiana. By invoking this procedure, the Gentleman has unnecessarily politicized what should be a consensus issue in this House.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CALVERT). The Chair is prepared to rule on whether the resolution offered by the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. VISCLOSKY) presents a question of the privileges of the House under rule IX.

The resolution offered by the gentleman from Indiana calls upon the President to address a trade imbalance in the area of steel imports. Specifically, the resolution calls upon the President to pursue enhanced enforcement of trade laws, to establish a task force on monitoring imports, and to submit a report to Congress by the date certain on that matter.

A resolution expressing the legislative sentiment that the President should take specified action to achieve desired public policy end does not present the question affecting the rights of the House, collectively, its safety, dignity, or integrity of its proceedings as required under rule IX.

In the opinion of the Chair, the resolution offered by the gentleman from Indiana is purely a legislative proposition, properly initiated through the introduction in the hopper under clause 4 of rule 22.

The Chair will note a recent relevant precedent on this point. On February 7, 1995, Speaker GINGRICH ruled, consistent with the landmark ruling of May 6, 1921 by Speaker Gillett, that a resolution invoking the legislative powers enumerated in the Constitution and requiring a multifaceted evaluation and report by the Comptroller General on the proposed support of the Mexican pesos did not constitute the question of the privileges of the House.

In his ruling, Speaker GINGRICH stated: ''Were the Chair to rule otherwise, then any alleged infringement by the Executive Branch, even, for example, through the regulatory process conferred on Congress by the Constitution would give rise to a question of the privileges of the House.''

Although constitutional prerogatives have not been invoked in the text of the resolution before us today, the principle put forth in the 1995 ruling is nevertheless pertinent, as evidenced by the debate on this question. To permit a question of the privileges of the House addressing presidential trade policy through the mere invocation of the Constitution would permit any Member to advance virtually any legislative proposal as a question of the privileges of the House.

Accordingly, the resolution offered by the gentleman from Indiana does not request constitute a question of the privileges of the House under rule IX and may not be considered at this time.

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY

Mr. TRAFICANT. Mr. Speaker, parliamentary inquiry.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman may state his parliamentary inquiry.

Mr. TRAFICANT. Mr. Speaker, I do not mean to belabor the House.

My question is, the ruling of the Chair is only enforced by an affirmative vote to sustain the Chair's ruling. If the House votes to overturn the tabling of this, does it not set precedent to give back to the House that which exists within its mandated constitutional authority? If we vote in deference to the Chair's ruling, does it not allow us to thus change precedence, change the rules of the House, and allow debate on such issues?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The ruling of the Chair is subject to appeal and could be overturned.

Mr. TRAFICANT. Mr. Speaker, question. If it is overturned, the ruling of the Chair then would allow these issues of privilege to exist for constitutional powers granted to the Congress.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair cannot anticipate the precedential effect of a future action. If the appeal were taken and the Chair was overruled, the resolution would be pending.

Mr. TRAFICANT. I thank the Chair.

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Mr. Speaker, I appeal the ruling of the Chair.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is: Shall the decision of the Chair stand as the judgment of the House?

MOTION TO TABLE OFFERED BY MR. DAVIS OF VIRGINIA

Mr. DAVIS of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I move to lay the appeal on the table.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. DAVIS) to lay on the table the appeal of the ruling of the Chair.

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

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Evidently a quorum is not present.

The Sergeant at Arms will notify absent Members.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. This 15-minute vote on tabling the appeal will be followed by votes on the four questions postponed earlier today.

Without objection, each postponed vote will be conducted as a 5-minute vote.

There was no objection.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 219, nays 204, not voting 11, as follows:

[Roll No. 512]

YEAS—219

Aderholt
Archer
Armey
Bachus
Baker
Ballenger
Barr
Barrett (NE)
Bartlett
Barton
Bass
Bateman
Bereuter
Bilbray
Bilirakis
Bliley
Blunt
Boehlert
Boehner
Bonilla
Bono
Brady (TX)
Bryant
Bunning
Burr
Burton
Buyer
Callahan
Calvert
Camp
Campbell
Canady
Cannon
Castle
Chabot
Chambliss
Chenoweth
Christensen
Coble
Coburn
Combest
Cook
Cooksey
Cox
Crane
Crapo
Cubin
Cunningham
Davis (VA)
Deal
DeLay
Diaz-Balart
Dickey
Doolittle
Dreier
Duncan
Dunn
Ehlers
Ehrlich
Emerson
English
Ensign
Everett
Ewing
Fawell
Foley
Forbes
Fossella
Fowler
Fox
Franks (NJ)
Frelinghuysen
Gallegly
Ganske
Gekas
Gibbons
Gilchrest
Gillmor
Gilman
Goodlatte
Goodling
Goss
Graham
Granger
Greenwood
Gutknecht
Hansen
Hastert
Hastings (WA)
Hayworth
Hefley
Herger
Hill
Hilleary
Hobson
Hoekstra
Hostettler
Houghton
Hulshof
Hunter
Hutchinson
Hyde
Inglis
Istook
Jenkins
Johnson (CT)
Johnson, Sam
Jones
Kasich
Kelly
Kim
King (NY)
Kingston
Klug
Knollenberg
Kolbe
LaHood
Largent
Latham
LaTourette
Leach
Lewis (CA)
Lewis (KY)
Linder
Livingston
LoBiondo
Lucas
Manzullo
McCollum
McCrery
McDade
McHugh
McInnis
McIntosh
McKeon
Mica
Miller (FL)
Moran (KS)
Morella
Myrick
Northup
Norwood
Nussle
Oxley
Packard
Pappas
Paul
Paxon
Pease
Peterson (PA)
Petri
Pickering
Pitts
Pombo
Porter
Portman
Quinn
Radanovich
Ramstad
Redmond
Regula
Riggs
Riley
Rogan
Rogers
Rohrabacher
Ros-Lehtinen
Roukema
Royce
Ryun
Salmon
Sanford
Saxton
Scarborough
Schaefer, Dan
Schaffer, Bob
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shadegg
Shaw
Shays
Shimkus
Shuster
Skaggs
Skeen
Smith (MI)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (OR)
Smith (TX)
Smith, Linda
Snowbarger
Solomon
Souder
Spence
Stearns
Stump
Sununu
Talent
Tauzin
Taylor (NC)
Thomas
Thornberry
Thune
Tiahrt
Upton
Walsh
Wamp
Watkins
Watts (OK)
Weldon (FL)
Weldon (PA)
Weller
White
Whitfield
Wicker
Wilson
Wolf
Young (AK)
Young (FL)

NAYS—204

Abercrombie
Ackerman
Allen
Andrews
Baesler
Baldacci
Barcia
Barrett (WI)
Becerra
Bentsen
Berry
Bishop
Blagojevich
Blumenauer
Bonior
Borski
Boswell
Boyd
Brady (PA)
Brown (CA)
Brown (FL)
Brown (OH)
Capps
Cardin
Carson
Clay
Clayton
Clement
Clyburn
Condit
Conyers
Costello
Coyne
Cramer
Cummings
Danner
Davis (FL)
Davis (IL)
DeFazio
DeGette
Delahunt
DeLauro
Deutsch
Dicks
Dingell
Dixon
Doggett
Dooley
Doyle
Edwards
Engel
Eshoo
Etheridge
Evans
Farr
Fattah
Fazio
Filner
Ford
Frank (MA)
Frost
Furse
Gejdenson
Gephardt
Gonzalez
Goode
Gordon
Green
Gutierrez
Hall (OH)
Hall (TX)
Hamilton
Harman
Hastings (FL)
Hilliard
Hinchey
Hinojosa
Holden
Hooley
Horn
Hoyer
Jackson (IL)
Jackson-Lee (TX)
Jefferson
John
Johnson (WI)
Johnson, E.B.
Kanjorski
Kaptur
Kennedy (MA)
Kennedy (RI)
Kildee
Kilpatrick
Kind (WI)
Kleczka
Klink
Kucinich
LaFalce
Lampson
Lantos
Lee
Levin
Lewis (GA)
Lipinski
Lofgren
Lowey
Luther
Maloney (CT)
Maloney (NY)
Manton
Markey
Martinez
Mascara
Matsui
McCarthy (MO)
McCarthy (NY)
McDermott
McGovern
McHale
McIntyre
McKinney
McNulty
Meehan
Meek (FL)
Meeks (NY)
Menendez
Metcalf
Millender-McDonald
Miller (CA)
Minge
Mink
Moakley
Mollohan
Moran (VA)
Murtha
Nadler
Neal
Neumann
Ney
Oberstar
Obey
Olver
Ortiz
Owens
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor
Payne
Pelosi
Peterson (MN)
Pickett
Pomeroy
Price (NC)
Rahall
Reyes
Rivers
Rodriguez
Roemer
Rothman
Roybal-Allard
Rush
Sabo
Sanchez
Sanders
Sandlin
Sawyer
Schumer
Scott
Serrano
Sherman
Sisisky
Skelton
Slaughter
Smith, Adam
Snyder
Spratt
Stabenow
Stark
Stenholm
Stokes
Strickland
Stupak
Tanner
Tauscher
Taylor (MS)
Thompson
Thurman
Tierney
Torres
Towns
Traficant
Turner
Velazquez
Vento
Visclosky
Waters
Watt (NC)
Waxman
Wexler
Weygand
Wise
Woolsey
Wynn
Yates

NOT VOTING—11

Berman
Boucher
Collins
Hefner
Kennelly
Lazio
Nethercutt
Parker
Poshard
Pryce (OH)
Rangel

□ 1345

Ms. RIVERS and Mr. GILMAN changed their vote from ''yea'' to ''nay.''

Messrs. LEWIS of California, LARGENT, KIM, WELDON, PITTS, LATOURETTE, ADERHOLT, BILIRAKIS, GILMAN, BUYER and Mrs. LINDA SMITH of Washington changed their vote from ''nay'' to ''yea.''

□ 1350

So the motion to table the appeal of the ruling of the Chair was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CALVERT). Pursuant to clause 5 of rule I, and the Chair's prior announcement, the Chair will now put each question on which further proceedings were postponed earlier today in the following order:

Ordering the previous question on House Resolution 589 by the yeas and nays; the adoption of House Resolution 589; the adoption of House Resolution 588 by the yeas and nays; and suspend the rules and agree to House Resolution 592.

Also in the current series will be the following five questions: H.R. 4567, by the yeas and nays; House Resolution 334, de novo; House Concurrent Resolution 320, by the yeas and nays; H.R. 2616, by the yeas and nays; and 852, by the yeas and nays.

The Chair will reduce to 5 minutes the time for any electronic vote in this series, and remind the Members to stay on the floor.

WAIVING REQUIREMENT OF CLAUSE 4(b) OF RULE XI WITH RESPECT TO CONSIDERATION OF CERTAIN RESOLUTIONS REPORTED FROM COMMITTEE ON RULES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The pending business is the question of ordering the previous question on House Resolution 589, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on ordering the previous question.

This is a 5 minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 221, nays 201, not voting 12, as follows:

[Roll No. 513]

YEAS—221

Aderholt
Archer
Armey
Bachus
Baker
Ballenger
Barr
Barrett (NE)
Bartlett
Barton
Bass
Bateman
Bereuter
Bilbray
Bilirakis
Bliley
Blunt
Boehlert
Boehner
Bonilla
Bono
Brady (TX)
Bryant
Bunning
Burr
Burton
Buyer
Callahan
Calvert
Camp
Campbell
Canady
Cannon
Castle
Chabot
Chambliss
Chenoweth
Christensen
Coble
Coburn
Combest
Cook
Cooksey
Cox
Crane
Crapo
Cubin
Cunningham
Davis (VA)
Deal
DeLay
Diaz-Balart
Dickey
Doolittle
Dreier
Duncan
Dunn
Ehlers
Ehrlich
Emerson
English
Ensign
Everett
Ewing
Fawell
Foley
Forbes
Fossella
Fowler
Fox
Franks (NJ)
Frelinghuysen
Gallegly
Ganske
Gekas
Gibbons
Gilchrest
Gillmor
Gilman
Goodlatte
Goodling
Goss
Graham
Granger
Greenwood
Gutknecht
Hansen
Hastert
Hastings (WA)
Hayworth
Hefley
Herger
Hill
Hilleary
Hobson
Hoekstra
Horn
Hostettler
Houghton
Hulshof
Hunter
Hutchinson
Hyde
Inglis
Istook
Jenkins
Johnson (CT)
Johnson, Sam
Jones
Kasich
Kelly
Kim
King (NY)
Kingston
Klug
Knollenberg
Kolbe