

That is why we must respond forcefully when foreign firms are dumping their products in the United States at prices under the fair market value. That is why we must respond forcefully when huge import surges threaten American jobs. This bipartisan measure demonstrates to the rest of the world that there is a right way and a wrong way to pursue globalization.

The plight of Birmingham Steel, which operates a mini-mill in the Ninth District of Tennessee, is an example of how the current crisis is affecting working families in our country. In Memphis, Birmingham Steel employees manufacture steel that is eventually fashioned into wire rods. Since 1993, wire rod imports from non-NAFTA nations have increased 60 percent, and in the past 18 months these imports have increased by 16 percent. Surely, we need to rectify this situation.

We also need to be wary of the macroeconomic effects of the surge in imports. A recent Business Week article noted that the merchandise trade deficit widened by 25 percent in 1998, to a record \$248 billion. Most of this can be attributed to surging imports, such as the steel surges from Brazil, Russia, and Japan. Economists agree that while the U.S. economy continues to prosper and grow, a ballooning current account deficit could prompt a correction in stock prices, a weaker dollar, and possibly even a recession. In other words, our unprecedented record of high growth—while keeping inflation and unemployment low—is jeopardized by import surges.

About two decades ago, the U.S. steel industry was widely criticized for lagging competitiveness, excessively high prices, and low labor productivity. Both management and labor realized that they had to reinvent the way steel was produced in the United States. They did so through reinvestment, streamlining, and hard work. The steel industry has since turned itself into one of the most admired, productive sectors of U.S. business.

Now, as world trading rules are being flaunted, it is time for us to come to the aid of this proud industry, an industry that is crucial to our national defense and our American heritage. Our steel workers deserve better. The world trading system deserves better. For these reasons, I am proud to be a cosponsor of the Bipartisan Steel Recovery Act of 1999.

INTRODUCTION OF A SENSE OF CONGRESS RESOLUTION REGARDING THE DAMS ON THE COLUMBIA AND SNAKE RIVERS

HON. DOC HASTINGS

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 18, 1999

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, the people of the Pacific Northwest are currently engaged in a debate on the best way to ensure the survival and recovery of endangered and threatened salmon and steelhead. These fish are very important to the people of our region, and we are dedicated to ensuring their survival.

However, Mr. Speaker, ongoing studies by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the National Marine Fisheries Service into the feasibility of removing federal dams to enhance fish runs have focused the fish recovery debate too narrowly. We do not need to choose be-

tween our economy and our salmon, which is precisely what those advocating the removal of dams are asking us to do. Instead, I believe we can have both a strong economy and healthy fish runs.

This Congress must make it clear that destroying the dams on the Columbia and Snake Rivers is not a "silver bullet" solution to restoring salmon runs. Losing the flood control, irrigation, clean power generation, and transportation benefits of these dams would be a grave mistake, and one not easily corrected. Instead, the federal government and the people of the Pacific Northwest must work together to address the entire range of factors impacting fish populations: habitat, harvest levels, hatcheries, dams, predators, and natural climate and ocean conditions.

Mr. Speaker, I am confident that the people of the Northwest will save our salmon. But we must do so in a realistic and comprehensive way, and not by grasping for easy answers. I encourage all my colleagues to who believe that we can balance human needs with the needs of endangered and threatened species to support this resolution.

IN HONOR OF STEVE POPOVICH

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 18, 1999

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Steven Popovich, founder of the Cleveland International Record label.

Over the past 36 years Mr. Popovich has achieved considerable success in the music business by taking chances on artists and music at the fringes of the mainstream. For example, Popovich signed Meat Loaf to the Cleveland International label after Meat Loaf had been rejected by several record companies. After signing Meat Loaf, Popovich launched what is considered one of the most successful marketing campaigns ever. Popovich mixed the powerful CBS marketing department with grassroots efforts to make Meat Loaf a national icon.

Popovich's success with Meat Loaf provides just one example of how and why Popovich has been successful. Once he believes in someone he puts everything he has into making that person successful. This dedication has worked for Popovich regardless of the artist or type of music he is promoting.

In 1986 Popovich applied this formula to Polygram Nashville and turned the label into a success. Acts like Johnny Cash, Kris Kristofferson, the Everly Brothers, and Kathy Mattea signed with Popovich and Polygram Nashville.

Popovich also signed polka legend Frankie Yankovic, the Polka King, to the label. Yankovic won a Grammy for his 1986 album "70 Years of Hits", which Popovich co-produced. Yankovic and his polka music were quick hits in Nashville. Popovich has since started Our Heritage, a polka and ethnic music subsidiary of Cleveland International.

In the fall of 1998 Popovich, along with his son, Steve, Jr., Ed Shimborske, and Michael Seday, formed another subsidiary of Cleveland International, Grappler Unlimited. With Grappler Unlimited, once again, Popovich is focusing on music that is perhaps outside the mainstream—punk.

His ear for music that is outside the mainstream, and his willingness to dedicate himself to it and the musicians who perform it, has enabled him to be successful for over 36 years. With his son at his side, Steve will undoubtedly continue to help all types of great music find an audience.

Ladies and gentlemen please join me in honoring Steve Popovich.

THE POLKA PUNK ROCKER

By Laura Demarco

Steve Popovich made Meat Loaf a main course and helped tell the world "Cleveland Rocks." Now, he's looking to strike gold again with the ethnic music of his roots—polka—and the DIY spirit of his son's passion—punk rock.

The walls of Steve Popovich's office don't have to talk to tell his story. Mixed in among the rows of gold and platinum records hang "I love kieska" and "polka naked" bumper stickers. A "Cleveland Rocks" sticker decorates the window. His son's high school class photo hangs near a backstage snapshot of Bruce Springsteen and Billy Joel. A huge, psychedelic poster of Meat Loaf is framed near a smiling reproduction of Frankie Yankovic.

It's a scene as colorful and complex as the man himself. Each memento stands for a part of Popovich's life: Music mogul. Proud ethnic. Even prouder father. Genius Meat Loaf marketer. Polka promoter. The man who helped Ian Hunter tell the world "Cleveland Rocks."

He's also the busy head of two new subsidiaries of his Cleveland International Record label, the ethnic/polka Our Heritage * * * Pass It On line and the punk/metal offshoot, Grappler Unlimited.

Why polka and punk? Like the other music Popovich has championed through his 36-year music industry career, they're styles that often get overlooked. Both have a devoted core of fans who buy the records, wear the fashions and seek out the shows. Neither gets radio play nor respect in mainstream media. Then again, neither did a certain hefty singer, until Popovich made Meat Loaf a household name.

Popovich may look like anything but a music mogul in his jeans, Cleveland International T-shirt and Pat Dailey's baseball cap, but he has struck gold more than once by betting on the underdog. Today, he's trying it again.

COAL MINER'S SON

Popovich doesn't like to talk about the past. He's rather discuss what he's working on now—expanding Our Heritage * * * Pass It On and promoting Grappler's first band, Porn Flakes.

But to understand how Popovich got to this cluttered, homey midtown office, you have to look at where he came from.

Born in 1942 to a Serbian father and Croatian-Slovenian mother in the coal-mining town of Nemaocolin, Penn., Popovich's early life was a long way from the Manhattan office buildings he would find himself in years later. His father was a miner who opened a grocery store in the last two years of his life. It was from him and another father figure, Popovich's lifelong friend, Father Branko Skaljic, that his love for music began.

"My dad played in a tamburitza band with his two brothers and a couple other guys. They always played music around the house and sang. Fr. Branko came and taught us tambura [a stringed Balkan instrument] every Thursday."

Looking back, Popovich sees the importance of music for people in a place like Nemaocolin.

"I really believe polka was our people's Prozac," he says. "When they were working

in the mines, factory jobs, they'd get depressed, so they'd throw on their music or pick up their accordion or tambura."

A few years after learning the tambura, another stringed instrument caught Popovich's attention: the upright bass. He formed a polka-rock band called Ronnie and the Savoyos that played out at local hotels and the Masontown, Penn., Italian Club.

When Popovich's father died in 1960, he moved to Cleveland with his mother and sister, where they had family. He attended John Carroll on a football scholarship, but quit after a year, spending the next few years doing odd jobs.

Then in 1963, two articles in a paper he was reading caught his attention. The first was a notice that Columbia Records was opening a Cleveland warehouse. The second was a story saying one of his favorite polka artists, Cleveland's Frankie Yankovic, who recorded for Columbia, had been injured in a car accident.

"So I called Frank out of the blue and said 'hey you don't know me, but I play your music back in Pennsylvania. Can you get me an interview?'" says Popovich. "And he did that from his hospital bed. I never forgot that."

Popovich got the job and thus began his music industry career; schlepping boxes around 80 hours a week for \$30. On his nights off he would play with the Savoyos, who had followed him up to Cleveland.

But with his strong work ethic, Popovich quickly climbed out of the warehouse. He soon found himself working promotions in the local Columbia office, and in 1969 was offered a promotions job in the label's New York office.

A year later, at age 26, Popovich became the youngest vice president of promotions ever at CBS Records (Columbia's parent company). While there, he worked with the label's roster, including rising stars Bruce Springsteen, Boz Scaggs and Chicago. He was the first and youngest recipient of the Clive Davis Award for promotion (named for the legendary president of CBS Records), and for two years in a row was named top promotion executive in the country by *Billboard*. Quite an accomplishment for a "hunky" (Popovich's slang term for ethnics) from a part of America most record execs not-so-fondly dub "fly-over country."

Promoting artists led to signing artists when Popovich became head of A&R (artists and repertoire) in 1974 at CBS subsidiary Epic. If his promotions career seemed remarkable, his time in A&R was even more impressive. Popovich presided over the signing of Michael Jackson, Cheap Trick, Boston, Ted Nugent and Southside Johnny & the Asbury Jukes. He also helped Steubenville's Wild Cherry, of "Play that Funky Music (White Boy)" fame, and Michael Stanley find a home on Epic. (Decades later, Popovich helped another local band when he took a tape of Dink to Capitol Records head Gary Gersh, who signed the band).

Sales at Epic rose from \$12 million to over \$100 million in three years under Popovich. He credits this to his ability to look for artists where other A&R pros never bothered. "Small-town America, I always try to represent that," he says. "What's going on with the blue-collar people . . . those have always been the fans."

Cleveland (International) rocks "Cleveland, in fact, back then did rock," says Popovich, leaning forward in this chair, the red sticker with the motto he brought to the world looming on the window behind him. "Through it sounds really trite and old-fashioned to now even say the words 'Cleveland rocks.'"

For Popovich, this wasn't just a slogan. In 1976, he and two other CBS Records execu-

tive left New York to form an independent label called Cleveland International that was backed by Columbia.

"Cleveland was a very important market in those days," says Popovich. "It really was WMMS . . . they made a real big impact nationally. That was the reason I moved back here from New York. It was such a viable record breakout market that I thought basing a company here would be a good idea."

He was correct. Not seven months after the label started, Popovich signed another underdog no one else would be near, but one who soon put Cleveland International on the map.

"Meat Loaf was too fat, too ugly. His hair was too long, the voice was too operatic," says Popovich.

That's what the labels that passed on Meat Loaf thought. But the fans thought otherwise. The product of songwriter Jim Steinman, producer Tod Rundgren and a one-of-a-kind singer with a voice big enough to match his girth, Marvin Aday (a.k.a. Meat Loaf), *Bat out of Hell* is an album few rock fans can claim not to have heard—it has sold an astonishing estimated 28 million copies. But at the time New York attorney David Sonenberg was shopping it around, no one in the music business new what to think about it. So they just stayed away. Except for Popovich.

After signing Meat Loaf, Popovich embarked on what is regarded as one of the most successful marketing campaigns ever in the music industry. It included radical tactics, such as Popovich showing up at radio stations and retailers across the nation to drop off Meat Loaf tapes—an unheard of activity for a record company president. He also convinced CBS to make a \$25,000 Meat Loaf promotional film for play in movie theaters—a novel idea will before the video age. He also battled CBS to put the full force of its marketing department behind the album. "Adroit marketing propels Meat Loaf up the charts," proclaims the *Wall Street Journal* in a 1978 front-page article that raved about Popovich's tactics.

But though he may have been the biggest, Meat Loaf wasn't the only act on Cleveland International. The label was also home to Ellen Foley, Ronnie Spector and others; it was the management company for Ian Hunter. It was Popovich who convinced the E Street Band to back Hunter on his 1979 *You're Never Alone With a Schizophrenic* record, which includes the now infamous "Cleveland Rocks."

LAWSUITS, TV SHOWS AND MEAT LOAF

"We were conveniently left out of it. Hey, people try to change history, but a fact's a fact," says Popovich.

He's referring to a recent VH-1 "Behind the Music" show on Meat Loaf that failed to mention of his role in the making of Mr. Loaf.

"It's been well documented everywhere, the historical role the marketing of that record played, the fact that it had been [rejected by] three or four other labels before we got it."

Popovich says that when he found out the show was in the works, he called the president of VH-1, John Sykes, whom he had worked with when Sykes was a promotions man for Columbia in Buffalo.

"I called him before it ran and said 'John, just tell the truth,' and [the show] didn't. He's the president of VH-1, he knows better."

When questioned about Popovich's absence, the producers of "Behind the Music" replied that "regrettably, in the course of telling a person's life story, someone always feels left out." Sykes did not return a call asking for a comment.

Why the black out? Considering that the show was obviously sanctioned by Meat

Loaf, who appeared in multiple interviews, it could have something to do with a 1995 lawsuit that Popovich's Cleveland Entertainment Inc. filed against Sony Music Entertainment Inc. and CBS Records in Cuyahoga County Common Pleas Court. The suit alleged that Popovich was defrauded out of royalties for *Bat Out of Hell* through various devices, including fraudulently calculated royalties for the sales of CDs. Meat Loaf, who re-signed to Sony following the filing of Popovich's initial complaint, was expected to testify against Popovich at the trial.

But the suit never made it to court. Popovich, who sought \$100 million, and Sony settled for a confidential amount last February. Ancillary litigation filed in New York federal court by Meat Loaf against Sony and Cleveland Entertainment was dismissed at the same time.

Today, Popovich will only say that his suit was settled "amicably." For the first time in two decades, Meat Loaf is off his plate—though Popovich says that as a result of his Sony lawsuit he does receive royalties from sales of *Bat Out of Hell*.

OLD WORLD

Popovich grabs a black-and-white photo off a pile of papers on his desk. "Here, look what I found," he says, talking to his son, Steve, Jr., who just walked into his office, a muscular, spiky haired, tattooed contrast to his father.

The photo shows a young boy, about 6-years-old, standing proudly, hands on his hips talking to a group of men around him. The men are Johnny Cash, Hank Williams Jr. and Cowboy Jack Clements. The boy is Steve, Jr.

"You're talking to them like you're Clive Davis," his father continues, laughing.

The photo was taken during Popovich's years as vice president of Polygram Nashville, a position he took in 1986.

"I had been through a pretty intense divorce . . . there had been a whole series of misadventures, including coming out of having one of the biggest acts in the world and ending up with very little," says Popovich about his decision to shut down Cleveland International. "The reality of that set in, and out of the blue an old friend of mine who took over Polygram in New York called and said 'hey, you want to have some fun,' and I was like, 'I'm ready for that.'"

In typical Popovich fashion, he took Nashville's least successful label and built it into a powerhouse, signing Johnny Cash, Kris Kristofferson and the Everly Brothers and turning Kathy Mattea into a star.

In not so typical Nashville fashion, Popovich signed his old friend, Frankie Yankovic—whose 1986 Grammy Award-winning album, *70 Years of Hits* he co-produced—to the label. Yankovic became a quick favorite in Nashville, selling out concerts and recording one album, *Live In Nashville*.

But Popovich wasn't a country boy for long. In 1993, he returned to Cleveland.

"My son wanted to go to Lake Catholic High School to play football and wanted to see more of his mother. My family's up here, and I thought it was an opportune time to start another label."

It wasn't long before he revived Cleveland International, this time in partnership with Cleveland businessman and metalwork factory owner Bill Sopko, a friend since the '70s.

"The concept was to try to find some new people that the big companies were not interested in, to try to do something regionally," says Sopko. "And he would keep his ears open and possibly pick another winner. We're still trying to accomplish that."

Since Cleveland International's humble rebirth—it has a staff of two, including

Popovich, who often even answers the company phone—the label has released 31 albums.

The diversity of sounds is striking: Danish pop-rock from Michael Learns to Rock to Hanne Boel; a Browns protest compilation called *Dawg Gone*; a Cockney folk duo called Chas and Dave; the cast album from the touring Woody Guthrie American Song production; Ian Hunter's 1995 *Dirty Laundry*; new releases from Polish polka king Eddie Blazarczyk; and the Grammy-nominated 1995 release by Frankie Yankovic and Friends, *Songs of the Polka King*. But it's his return to his ethnic roots that Popovich is most excited about.

"Maybe that's what I'm supposed to do at 56 years old. This is what I grew up with, so maybe as you get older what you grew up with becomes more important. Or maybe it's a reaction to the Sony-fication of the world," he says.

His roots revival has led Popovich to create *Our Heritage* . . . *Pass It On*, a mid-priced label he describes as "meant to reflect the ethnicity of Cleveland and the Midwest." So far, the label features releases by Cleveland crooner Rocco Scotti and the *Here Come the Polka Heroes* compilation, and Popovich plans to expand the variety of nationalities represented on the subsidiary. He's looking into working with Irish and Latin music groups, and he recently assisted Cleveland's Kosovo Men's Choir, a Serbian church group, in releasing a record on their own label that he may pick up for *Our Heritage*.

But while his first reason for *Our Heritage* may be his love for the music, it's not Popovich's only impetus. "I'd like to see this break through, and I'd be the king of polka records. If Sony wanted to deal with polka music, they'd have to come to me," he says.

He sees a real future in celebrating the past.

"There is a hunger for the Euro-ethnic. Whether it's in books, music or videos. I'm not saying on a titanic level at all, but there's something very interesting going on," he says.

To prove his point, he pops a video into the VCR next to his desk. Groups of brightly clad dancers emerge on the screen, doing a Croatian folk dance.

"You have this group [The Duquesne University Tamburitans] in Pittsburgh, 35 born and raised in America Euro-ethnic kids who go and do two hours shows to standing ovations and play all over the country. And then you go see them after the show, and they're wearing their Nine Inch Nails T-shirts."

He pops in another video, and the screen is filled with polkaing twentysomethings.

"He pops in another video, and the screen is filled with polkaing twentysomethings.

"This goes on at Seven Springs on July 4th every year," he explains, referring to an annual polka-fest held at the Pennsylvania ski resort. "I'm the oldest one there.

"They should get PBS in Pittsburgh down there. This is America, man. If I say polka, people are like, 'the p word'. . . but you see the ages of these dancers. The whole floor's going nuts.

"We need someone with a TV camera. Someone interviewing these people about the history of this thing and why they love this. They don't hear it on the radio, they don't see it on TV, they don't see it on movie theaters, but it stays alive. Why? It's an underground thing and has been for the greater part of this century. That's what I love about it."

NEW WORLD

"Show her your tattoo, Pop," says Steve Popovich to his son, using the nickname they call one another.

Steve, Jr., in chain-clad baggy jeans and a button-down Adidas shirt, pulls up his sleeve to reveal the words *Zivili Brace, Zivili Sestra*, a Serbo-Croatian saying meaning roughly "to life brother, to life sister." It's also the name of a polka by Johnny Krizancic.

Like father, like son.

A cliché perhaps, but a saying that rings true for the Popoviches. Nineteen-year-old Steve, Jr. has just made his move into the music world, in partnership with his father and the owners of Toledo-based punk-metal label *Sin Klub Entertainment*, Ed Shimborske and Michael Seday. The four have just formed *Grappler Unlimited*, a subsidiary of *Cleveland International*.

Unlike *Our Heritage*, this label has nothing to do with Popovich's love for the Old World. It has everything to do with his love for the little boy who once stood talking to Johnny Cash and Hank Williams Jr.

Steve, Jr. was a major reason *Sin Klub* first caught his father's attention. Seday was dating Popovich's daughter, Pamela. He and Steve, Jr. became friends, and he took the younger Popovich to Toledo to see some of *Sin Klub*'s bands, including a heavy rap-punk called *Porn Flakes*.

"Something just clicked, I was just drawn to it," says Steve, Jr. "It was like a disease. It was catchy, it really was."

Steve, Jr. was so impressed with *Porn Flakes* that he came back to Cleveland and, at age 16, promoted his first show, a concert at the Agora featuring *Porn Flakes*, *Fifth Wheel*, *Cannibus Major* and *Cows in the Graveyard*. He also told his father about what he saw. Steve, Sr. began to take notice of this young label that was taking the same kind of regional marketing approach that he had always practiced.

"Popovich started putting his hand into [*Sin Klub*] and helping us out, giving us advice. He was kind of like a father figure to the label," says Shimborske. "He helped throw his weight around a little, getting us some better shows."

"He admired the fact that we stuck it out for so long," he says. "Plus, I think he needed, or wanted, to kind of fill the void with his conglomeration of labels, as far as having a younger, more cutting-edge sound. A fresher, alternative sound."

Popovich admits appealing to a younger audience was a factor behind *Grappler*.

"We established a certain kind of image for *Cleveland International*, and I got a little concerned when people would think it was only a polka label," he says.

Grappler was finally formed in the fall of '98 with *Porn Flakes* as the first signing. Though in some ways the new subsidiary has a loose, family feel—Shimborske's parents help out with art and photo work, and Popovich once took Frankie Yankovic to Shimborske's grandparents' house for homemade pierogis—all four partners are very serious. Seday and Shimborske, who still run *Sin Klub*, are doing A&R and marketing. Steve, Jr. is doing promotions out of his father's office. And Steve, Sr. is doing what he can to help without trying to run the show.

"I don't want my rules to apply to that label. It's whatever they feel people their age want. These are three pretty talented guys who know the music business," he says. "They're real passionate, and that's the key word."

"Cleveland International funded it. I try to stay in the background and bring these guys along with what contacts I have."

So far this has meant making calls to radio stations on the label's behalf and taking the label's product to conventions. This week, Popovich, his son and Seday have taken *Porn Flakes* product to the Midem conference in France, the world's largest

music-industry convention, in hopes of getting world licensing for the group.

Despite his connections, Popovich realizes it's not going to be easy to break *Porn Flakes* or any other new band. The times have changed since he started in the music industry, and different rules now apply. High-priced consultants who dictate playlists across the country rule contemporary radio, making a grassroots regional push like the one used with *Meat Loaf* almost impossible. And Cleveland is far from the music hub it was in the days when WMMS mattered.

"The problem is you have five major companies that control American radio. You have great local radio people still, people like Walk Tiburski and John Lannigan. The people are here. The ownership unfortunately is not here, and the consultants for the most part are not based here. They live in Washington, D.C. or Texas and are adding records in Cleveland, Ohio."

Still, Popovich predicts a future when radio might not matter that much.

"Mushroomhead is not on the radio, and they're packing bars. People love it, and they still manage to attract a crowd. It's beyond that now going into the next century. You don't need A&R people now. If you believe in what you do, get somebody to put up the money to press up a thousand records and put them in stores in consignment. If those records go away, get a thousand more. And then go on with your Website. You can start that way. Then at some point you need to be seen at South by Southwest or one of those New York gigs."

Popovich also has some forward thinking ideas about *Cleveland International*. He's talking about starting an Internet radio station and believes that to sell records you need to get them into unorthodox places, like hotel lobbies and drug stores, not just mega-record stores.

"I need a person who is a head of sales who has no rules, who can think into the next century," he says.

Still, there are some troublesome factors. "It's a questionable time to be doing what I'm doing, given the fact that people can now make their own CDs and that there's MP3," says Popovich. "The industry's going through a lot of changes."

So why start *Grappler*?

"They're kind of keeping me in balance," he says. "There's a whole new world of 19-year-olds out there who don't necessarily love 'N Sync or Backstreet Boys or what MTV is trying to shove down their throats. I've always loved that end of the business. Most of the artists I dealt with no one believed in, in the beginning."

That's how he got all of those records on the wall.

GOVERNMENT SHUTDOWN PREVENTION ACT OF 1999

HON. GEORGE W. GEKAS

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 18, 1999

Mr. GEKAS. Mr. Speaker, yesterday, the NFL owners approved the use of an "instant replay" system to review controversial calls in football games. Well, it looks like the NFL is one step ahead of Congress. The Government Shutdown Prevention Act would be an "instant replay" for the budget, so there is never a threat of a shutdown as the clock ticks down on the fiscal year. There have been innumerable "controversial calls" as budget negotiations have stalled and even completely broken