

a company that is progressive and in which management has been making a major capital investment; a modern steel company. This company had filed for protection under our bankruptcy laws.

Their CEO called it, and I quote, "a last resort as it struggled with the double blow of a domestic slump in the industry and surging energy costs."

I must say this is not the first time recently this has happened in my district. Earlier this year, we received the news that an employee-owned company, Erie Forge and Steel, another long-standing institution in our community, had filed for bankruptcy. They cited a variety of reasons for this, including foreign dumping and a slow economy.

The fact is, this is part of a pattern we are seeing around the country. America's steel industry is struggling. We are experiencing a steel crisis. A major core industry of our manufacturing capacity is being threatened, and in the process we face the risk that a major strategic part of our manufacturing sector could be hollowed out in the near future.

Our companies are facing predatory trade practices from our foreign competitors, and so it was encouraging to me to read on Tuesday that the U.S. Department of Commerce had made a preliminary determination confirming that a number of our foreign trade competitors were dumping hot-rolled steel in the U.S. market. I have to say this is a very important decision and a very encouraging one. This preliminary ruling found that 11 countries had been violating our trade laws, including Argentina, China, India and Taiwan, and were benefiting from countervailable subsidies as high as 40 percent.

This finding points to major infringements not only of international trade norms but also our anti-dumping laws.

This preliminary decision is good news for our struggling domestic steel industry. It means that beginning this week, we collected a bond from the importers in the amount of the preliminary dumping margin, providing immediate relief to our employers. If, in the final determination, the decision stands that these countries are indeed dumping on U.S. markets, anti-dumping orders will be issued.

The problem of dumping, Mr. Speaker, is not unique to western Pennsylvania employers but, rather, is part of a bigger picture of what is happening nationwide with the steel industry facing a cascade of layoffs. The companies that were injured by unfair trade practices in this decision are not only from Pennsylvania; but they are also from Kentucky, Illinois, North Carolina, Indiana, and Ohio.

□ 1530

This decision by the Commerce Department is an important and initial recognition of how severe the problem of dumping is as it faces our domestic industry.

I would like to commend the Bush administration for their quick action in this area. It is good to know that President Bush is willing to enforce the existing trade laws. But this is only a beginning. I urge the administration to continue to take action to protect American workers and their jobs when they face clearly unfair competition.

The economic slowdown in the United States and East Asia intensifies the need for enforcement of our trade laws. Yes, there was a drop in steel imports last month, but as we have analyzed that change, clearly this only reflects a buildup of excess inventory. The steel industry continues to be flat on its back facing a depression even as we debate whether other areas of the economy are heading toward a recession.

We must be very vigilant against dumping and unfair trade practices by our competitors. I encourage President Bush to look at all of his options, including seeking an action under section 201 and supporting our efforts to dramatically strengthen domestic trade laws that allow the administration to police our markets.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. ISSA). Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. NORTON addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. INSLEE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. INSLEE addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

REVIEWING THE PRESIDENT'S FIRST 100 DAYS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, as we approach the 100th day of the Bush presidency, we have seen history made. President Bush just may have compiled the worst environmental record in the shortest time of any President ever.

Let us run through the milestone of the Bush administration's environmental policy: Repealed the arsenic standard; unilaterally declared the Kyoto agreement on global warming dead; abandoned a campaign pledge seconded by his EPA administrator to reduce carbon dioxide emissions; supported drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

And the manner in which the Bush White House has executed its environmental policy makes matters even worse. The President, who repeatedly claimed during his campaign that the previous administration had failed to

author a consistent principled energy policy, seems to be making environmental policy based on no principle at all, but rather on the basis of what he can get away with at the behest of the oil companies, at the behest of the mining companies, at the behest of the chemical companies.

It is no secret that the Bush administration owes these big polluters for the President's election last year, and they are cashing in their chips fast.

The White House even seems to be disregarding the advice of its own Environmental Protection Agency Administrator, Christie Todd Whitman. Earlier this year, Administrator Whitman publicly acknowledged the issue of global warming and said that President Bush would honor his campaign promise to regulate carbon dioxide as a pollutant. She recommended by memo that he do so, only to be publicly rebuked. It seems Administrator Whitman was told, along with the rest of us, that President Bush was simply abandoning his campaign pledge.

Then, earlier this week, Whitman was publicly rebuked again by her boss. Just 2 days ago, Bush spokesman Ari Fleischer appeared to chide the EPA administrator for speaking in "confusion" Sunday when she announced that a White House energy task force would not recommend oil drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge in Alaska. He clarified that Vice President CHENEY's task force would in fact recommend that oil drilling be allowed in the Refuge after all.

When big oil talks, this administration listens. It is no big surprise, considering Vice President CHENEY as an oil executive last year, in 1 year as an oil executive, made \$36 million.

Strangely, it now seems possible that Christine Todd Whitman, not necessarily a great friend of the environment when she was Governor of New Jersey, Whitman may become the lone administration official willing to occasionally, occasionally oppose the naked assault on the environment.

As cochair of the Water Infrastructure Caucus in the House, the Bush administration decision that has irked me most is his weakening of the arsenic standard. Those of us who pushed for a stronger, safer new arsenic standard during a 5-year administrative process know that EPA's January decision ordering arsenic levels in America's drinking water be reduced, strengthened, if you will to 10 parts per billion, was quite simply the right thing to do.

EPA took this action in response to a National Academy of Science report, not a partisan group, not an ideological group, a scientific group, which recommended that the 1942 standard of 50 parts per billion be reduced "as promptly as possible."

Arsenic's toxic properties have been common knowledge for a long time. Two hundred years ago, Napoleon's death was attributed by some to arsenic poisoning at the hands of the