

President Trump Orders an Investigation Into Foreign Steel

President Donald Trump signed an executive order Thursday that ordered the Department of Commerce to investigate foreign steel imports and their potential impact on national security.

Prior to signing the order, the president made the following statement:

It's a historic day for American steel and, most importantly, for American steelworkers. Thanks, especially, to Secretary Wilbur Ross for helping to lead this critical effort. We've been working on it since I came to office, and long before I came to office. We're going to fight for American workers and American-made steel. And that's beginning immediately.

For decades, America has lost our jobs and our factories to unfair foreign trade. And one steel mill after another has been shut down, abandoned and closed, and we're going to reverse that. Other countries have made a living taking advantage of the United States in so many ways, as you know, and I've been talking about that for a long time.

As I traveled the country, I saw the shuttered factories, of the shattered dreams, and I pledged that I would take action. And I think it's probably one of the primary reasons I'm sitting here today as president.

And since the day I entered office, I have followed through on that pledge, big league, beginning with our withdrawal from the Trans-Pacific Partnership, which would have been a catastrophe for our businesses and for our workers. I'm very proud of that withdrawal. Some people say, oh, gee, I wish

you didn't do that, but the smart people say, thank you, thank you, thank you. That would have been another NAFTA disaster. And NAFTA, believe me, was a disaster and continues to be a disaster for our country.

On Tuesday, I signed an order to enforce the Buy American laws and stop foreign countries from stealing contracts from American companies and, essentially, from American workers.

Today, I'm directing the Department of Commerce to immediately prioritize the investigation that began yesterday and really long before that—because Wilbur and I have been working on this for a long time—into foreign steel arriving into our markets, and to submit a report on the effects of these foreign steel products on the national security of the United States. It's not just the pricing, it's not just employment, it also has to do with the national security of our country, which people never talk about. I talked about it.

Maintaining the production of American steel is extremely important to our national security and our defense industrial base. Steel is critical to both our economy and our military. This is not an area where we can afford to become dependent on foreign countries. We have a product where we actually need foreign countries to be nice to us in order to fight for our people. And that's not going to happen any longer, believe me—especially as it comes to steel.

This investigation will look at how steel imports are impacting the United States national security, taking into account foreign practices such as steel dumping. Dumping is a tremendous problem in this country. They're dumping vast amounts of steel in our country, and they're really hurting not only our country, but our companies. Their targeting of American industry and other foreign strategies designed to

undermine American industry as a whole.

Based on the findings of this report, Secretary Wilbur Ross will make formal recommendations to the White House in a very, very, near future. He'll be back very soon with those recommendations that we will implement.

From now on, we're going to stand up for American jobs, workers, their security and for American steel companies and companies generally. Today's action is the next vital step toward making America strong and prosperous once again.

And I want to just add—I wasn't going to do this—but I was in Wisconsin the other day, and I want to end and add by saying that Canada, what they've done to our dairy farm workers is a disgrace. It's a disgrace. I spent time with some of the farmers in Wisconsin, and, as you know, rules, regulations, different things have changed. And our farmers in Wisconsin and New York State are being put out of business, our dairy farmers. And that also includes what's happening along our northern border states with Canada, having to do with lumber and timber.

The fact is, NAFTA—whether it's Mexico or Canada—is a disaster for our country. It's a disaster. It's a trading disaster. And we'll be reporting back sometime over the next two weeks as to NAFTA and what we're going to do about it. But what happened to our dairy farmers in Wisconsin and New York State—we're not going to let it happen. We can't let Canada or anybody else take advantage and do what they did to our workers and to our farmers. And again, I want to also just mention, included in there is lumber, timber and energy. So we're going to have to get to the negotiating table with Canada very, very quickly. Again, just to tell you, this is another NAFTA disaster, and we're not going to let it continue onward.

I think what I'd like to do is ask a few of the people if

they'd like to—these are some of the great steel companies of our country. Now, some of those companies were much bigger years ago. U.S. Steel would be an example, and others would be examples. But they were much—these were the greatest companies in the world years ago. And today, they've been hurt but they'll be great again. And they'll be great, I think, very soon. We're going to impose very, very strict regulations on unfair competition from the outside world.

Secretary of Commerce Wilbur Ross also briefed the press on the order, which has been in the works for several weeks. He said similar actions have been taken by other presidents, most notably by President Jimmy Carter during the Arab oil crisis in the 1970s.

“So what it will include consideration of is, one, the domestic production needed for our projected national defense requirements; two, the domestic industry's capacity to meet those requirements; third, the related human and material resources; fourth, the importation of goods in terms of their quantities and use; fifth, the close relation of national economic welfare to national security; sixth, the loss of skills and investment, substantial unemployment and decrease in government revenue; and finally, the impact of foreign competition on specific domestic industries and the impact of displacement of a domestic product by excess of import,” he said. {eoa]