

Bush drops tariffs on steel, avoids trade war

WASHINGTON, D.C. — President Bush on Thursday scrapped import tariffs he had imposed last year to help the battered U.S. steel industry, defusing a threatened trade war with Europe and Japan but creating political problems for Bush in such key battleground states as Ohio and Pennsylvania.

The president declared that the 21 months the tariffs had been in place had given the U.S. industry a chance to consolidate and modernize and were no longer needed as a result of "changed economic circumstances."

But the decision prompted an angry response from the steel industry, who accused Bush of breaking a campaign promise and turning his back on an industry that was still in need of protection from unfair foreign competition.

Leo W. Gerard, president of the United Steelworkers of America, called the Bush's action "clear evidence of capitulating to European blackmail and a sorry betrayal of American steelworkers and their communities."

The steel tariffs carried high political stakes in Rust Belt and Midwestern states where the margin between Bush and Democrat

Al Gore was slim in 2000 and where the president is determined to prevail in 2004.

Bush scored points with the sanctions in steel-producing states such as Pennsylvania, Ohio and West Virginia, which hold 46 of the 270 electoral votes at stake in 2004. But the tariffs angered small manufacturers and their workers in Michigan, Minnesota and Wisconsin, which account for 37 electoral votes.

Adding to the political pressure, the 15-nation European Union had drawn up a \$2.2 billion retaliation list targeting a wide range of products from other key election states

Bush is hoping to win next year such as Florida, California, Louisiana and the Carolinas.

Within minutes of the president's announcement that the tariffs were to expire at midnight Thursday, the EU said it was withdrawing its \$2.2 billion list of targeted products. Japan, South Korea and other countries that had joined in a successful challenge of the tariffs before the World Trade Organization had said they would also drop their retaliation threats if the tariffs were eliminated.

Republican free-trade supporters and industries hurt by the steel tariffs praised Bush's decision, saying it had averted a debilitating tit-for-tat fight with some of America's biggest trading partners.

Bush announced that an early warning monitoring system put in place as part of the original tariffs would continue in operation.

The program requires steel importers to apply for special import licenses, supplying the government and the domestic steel industry with early information on the amount of foreign steel that will be coming into the country.

Ballenger facing defamation lawsuit

WASHINGTON, D.C. — A U.S. Muslim advocacy group has filed a defamation lawsuit against N.C. Rep. Cass Ballenger, who accused the group of funding terrorists and breaking up his 50-year marriage over the stress of living nearby.

The Council on American-Islamic Relations, which promotes Muslim civil rights, said it filed the lawsuit against the 76-year-old Republican in the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia.

Ballenger said in an October interview with The Charlotte Observer that the council, located across from his Capitol Hill home, was a "fund-raising arm" for terrorist groups. He said he had reported the group to the CIA and FBI.

Ballenger announced Tuesday that he will retire after completing his ninth term in Congress next year.

The council denies any ties to Middle Eastern groups linked to terrorism. The lawsuit claims Ballenger's statements harmed the

council's reputation and were not protected speech because he made them in an interview rather than in his role as a member of Congress.

Ballenger spokesman Preston Hartman said officials in the congressman's office had not seen the lawsuit and had no immediate comment.

In the interview, Ballenger said that after the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, his wife was anxious about all the activity at the group's headquarters, including people unloading boxes and going in and out of the office building, located just a few blocks from the U.S. Capitol. He said he and his wife worried "they could blow the place up."

The council said the remarks were malicious and bigoted.

Last December, he drew criticism when he said then-Rep. Cynthia McKinney, a black Democrat from Georgia known for her abrasive style, had stirred in him "a little bit of a segregationist feeling." He later apologized.

SMOKING

designated smoking areas," he said.

Christopher Payne, director of the Department of Housing and Residential Education, expressed similar concerns. "I think there's interesting tension between how the law is written and our goal to provide good fire safety," he said.

Scott also emphasized that the proposal was based on student

input from a recent RHA survey. "We found that the majority of students, both smokers and nonsmokers, did not want smoking inside residence halls," he said. "I'm going to stand behind our proposal because that's what residents want."

General Counsel Leslie Strohm stated in an e-mail that the new law was amended specifically to allow UNC-Chapel Hill to designate its residence halls as nonsmoking. She affirmed that legally UNC-CH

must make an effort to create smoking rooms in the buildings.

Scott said that although the proposal does not call for designated smoking areas, it does call for setting up a task force to take smokers' concerns into account. "We're doing what we think the bill's intent is, and that is to accommodate those people who wish to smoke," he said.

The housing department will make a decision on the proposal by late January, before the recontracting process begins.

"Whatever decision we make, we would want it to certainly be in support of state law," Payne said.

Conte said that, from RHA's standpoint, this law could use a modification. "Laws were made to be followed, but that doesn't mean certain laws can't be changed from time to time," she said.

"I think that this could be one of those laws that could be changed."

SEARCH

The biggest difference between this search and the prior one is that it will be conducted within the academic year, Matson said. The last committee's work was interrupted by the summer which could have hampered its success.

Bresciani said the search has been challenging because the vice chancellor for student affairs plays a pivotal role at UNC.

"It is a very complex role because it has similar responsibilities to other vice chancellor roles, but it also has a very unique twist to it," he said. "There are very few if any aspects or segments of the university that the position doesn't interact with".

Assistant University Editor Emily Steel contributed to this report.

Contact the University Editor at udesk@unc.edu.

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NEIGHBORHOOD

the fragility of the communities, which already are showing the effects of university expansion.

"It was an attractive, livable neighborhood that is slowly but surely disappearing," Brown said. A parking lot creates "an area right downtown where residents are being taken away."

Others argue that community erosion might have economic ramifications as well. Aaron Nelson, executive director of Chapel Hill-Carrboro Chamber of Commerce, said the historic neighborhoods near the University define the town and aid in recruiting new employers and employees.

"The University has argued they need that property," Nelson said. "I hope that that's the end, that there's not further erosion of neighborhoods that add to the success of Chapel Hill."

Town planners have designated

protected historic districts around campus. Zoning laws for the Cameron-McCauley Historic District protect some neighborhoods off of Cameron Avenue. Nevertheless, the parking lot's proximity might cause it to affect the protected areas.

"Whenever you have development eating away from a historic district at the edges, you sort of have to hold firm," said Chris Belcher, chairman of the Chapel Hill Historic District Commission.

Despite warning from preservationists such as Belcher, many residents fear University expansion will continue unchecked.

"We feel doomed," said Diana Steele, who lives on Mason Farm Road and operates a pre-school on nearby property, which like her residence, is surrounded by the future site of the University's married-student housing complex.

Steele said she fears UNC will claim eminent domain over her land and that her compensation

will not be generous.

Similarly, Hill said he thought he had no other option but to leave. "If I didn't sell my house before they built the parking lot, I would have a home in the middle of it that's worth nothing to any appraiser," he said.

Steele believes UNC officials are buying into an unnecessary "bigger-is-better" philosophy.

Other residents, such as Roland Giduz, who lives two blocks from campus on East Rosemary Street, believe that growth is inevitable. "The University is a dynamic institution, it has to change."

However, Steele remains concerned primarily with the quality of life in Chapel Hill. "The reputation of Chapel Hill is that it is a wonderful place to live long-term," she said. "I wonder how much of what led to that original reputation is still here."

Contact the City Editor at citydesk@unc.edu.

THE Daily Crossword

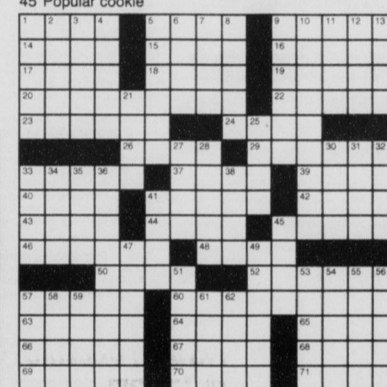
By Roger Coburn

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- ACROSS**
- 1 Flesh mark
 - 5 Alum
 - 9 Son of Venus
 - 14 Sugar source
 - 15 ___ avis
 - 16 With dispatch
 - 17 Sets up
 - 18 With in Arles
 - 19 Spread here and there
 - 20 Not bizarre?
 - 22 Shock or lock
 - 23 Runt
 - 24 "Alice's Restaurant" singer Guthrie
 - 26 Retarding force
 - 29 Marsh plants
 - 33 Lots and lots
 - 37 Con's knife
 - 39 Be gutsy
 - 40 Marco ___
 - 41 Brownstone entrance
 - 42 Heroic saga
 - 43 Declare
 - 44 LummoX
 - 45 Beginning
 - 46 Handled
 - 48 Den
 - 50 Leak slowly
 - 52 Ebb
 - 57 Type of ray
 - 60 Not embroiled?
 - 63 Zones
 - 64 Needle case
 - 65 Top-notch
 - 66 Trapper's

- DOWN**
- 1 Temporary money
 - 2 "The ___ Mutiny"
 - 3 Viewpoint
 - 4 Shorten a plank
 - 5 Evaluator
 - 6 Sitarist Shankar
 - 7 God of war
 - 8 Russian villa
 - 9 Elsinore or Balmoral
 - 10 Not oppressed?
 - 11 Whittle
 - 12 Tops the cupcakes
 - 13 Moisture of mornings
 - 21 Beatty and Kelly

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RELIEF ELOI INA
ACLEAR IDLENESS
GRILLING DYNES
GAPS CONSCIENCE
ETS HAM WON ATT
DEERE GAP ASST
ISJUSTTHE
ROBB ERA ISLAS
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All you need to know (and more) about how to survive this year's final exams is in Wednesday's DTH.