

Afterword

A decade ago, Michael Finger, one of the most astute analysts of antidumping laws and practices, stated simply, “Antidumping is ordinary protection with a grand public relations program” (Finger 1993, 34). In tracing the damaging and counterproductive outcomes of U.S. antidumping policy in four high-technology sectors, this study has demonstrated the continuing validity of Finger’s observation. But while economists and other trade policy wonks (like the author) will continue to hammer away at the irrationality of antidumping, the best hope for reform of the system lies in the fact that protectionist chickens (that is, antidumping actions) are coming home to roost—and increasingly U.S. exporting firms and sectors are finding themselves the object of the same arbitrary findings that have plagued imports to the U.S. market. We can only hope, over the next few years, that a combination of exporting U.S. firms and users of higher-priced “dumped” imported products will join forces to change the political calculus in Congress and the electorate.

Notes

1. Some portions of this study, now updated, originally appeared in Claude E. Barfield and Mark A. Groombridge, "The Irrationality of Anti-Dumping Laws in the New Economy," *International Studies Review* 3, no. 2 (December 2000): 1–29.

2. On September 14, 2003, just as this study was going to press, the WTO Ministerial Meeting to chart a course for the conclusion of the Doha Round in 2004 collapsed in disagreement. At this point, it is almost certain that the deadline for the conclusion of the round by the end of 2004 will not be met; and negotiations will go on until the end of 2006. This new deadline stems from the fact Congress has granted expedited clearance of trade agreements (so-called fast-track authority) only until the end of 2006.

At the ministerial meeting in Cancun Mexico, antidumping issues did not play a prominent role; the reason is that the language of the original Doha Declaration (*infra* 7), even with the conflicting interpretations, fixed the parameters of future Doha Round negotiations. There are many media accounts of the history and fate of the Cancun ministerial meeting; for detailed analyses, see ITR September 4, 11, 18, 2003. For an article assigning responsibility among the WTO members and coalitions, see Barfield and Glassman 2003.

3. With vector processors, memory is "shared": only one instruction is needed to perform an operation on an array of numbers. Non-vector systems, or parallel processing, require as many instructions as there are numbers.

4. As this study was going to press, the Bush administration was conducting a mid-course review of the original safeguard actions, in order to determine whether these protectionist actions should be partially and wholly ended, or remain in place. For an analysis of the conflicting pressures and arguments relating to the current steel safeguards, see Stone 2003. For a discussion of the implications of the Bush administration steel safeguard actions in relation to policy recommendations made in this study, see note 5.

5. While this study is not the place to present a detailed analysis of the ongoing debate over the president's decision to impose safeguard actions for many steel products in March 2002, several points should be noted that are relevant to the above recommendations. First, evidence of the greater substantive and political flexibility in the Section 201 process abounds in the unfolding of events. The USITC did undertake a midterm review of the economic impact of the 2002 steel

safeguards on the U.S. economy and published its finding on September 19, 2003 (USITC 2003a, 2003b). Though its findings were controversial and disputed by all sides (USITC did not find significant positive or negative impacts on the total U.S. economy), the report did trigger an important public debate that set forth the pros and cons of the steel safeguard actions. This political—and public—debate will continue as the Bush White House decides whether or not to continue the safeguards protection, curtail it, or eliminate it altogether this fall. Second, the process has produced a new phenomenon in the emergence of a strong counterforce to steel producers and workers—that is, a coalition of industry steel users (Consuming Industries Trade Action Coalition) and consumer organizations (Consumers for World Trade and others) who have mounted a strong campaign to scrap the safeguards. Such a political process and debate is not possible under more restrictive and closed rules for antidumping proceedings. The president may well decide to favor the steel industry for political (as well as substantive) reasons; but the decision process, and the political jockeying that has accompanied it, has been fully and comprehensively reported in the press. For analysis of the current political debate, see Stone 2003 and Allen and Weisman 2003. For analysis of the substantive pros and cons of the safeguard actions, see *ITR* March 27, August 14, 2003; Lawrence 2003; and Hogan and Hartson 2003.

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