

ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH

Regarding David Nicklaus' column "Steel tariff could hurt more than it helps" (July 9):

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As a supplier to the U.S. steel industry for the past 36 years, I sometimes have to grimace when certain articles appear on tariffs, the price of domestic steel, etc. This is not your father's or your grandfather's industry anymore. The U.S has the most technologically, environmentally and employee-beneficial advanced industry in the world for producing steel. Companies such as Nucor and Steel Dynamics have pressed the old-time integrated producers to wake up and invest in the latest technology.

Most people don't know places like Hickman, Ark.; Butler and Columbia City, Ind.; and Plymouth, Utah, where millions of tons of steel are produced, providing high-paying jobs, booms to the local economies and charities, and an untold number of related jobs such as mine far exceeding the 140,000 jobs that was quoted in the column. Maybe Dan Pearson from the Cato Institute should call the mayor of Granite City to see if it has affected anyone but the steel workers who have unfortunately lost their jobs.

Although the security argument in this instance may be a stretch, domestic steelmakers could lower prices if we got rid of the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, the Environmental Protection Agency and other regulatory agencies, which do not exist in these government-subsidized nations that dump steel. We could save even more money by paying them the same wages as these countries.

I admire Nicklaus and his columns, but I think he should walk down to his press room and investigate the people, procedures and technology that work for the Post-Dispatch and deliver his column. I bet I could get the same thing from China for a whole lot cheaper.

The difference is not based on the domestic steel price but the societal differences that have yet to occur in these countries that we take advantage of everyday.