



**American
Iron and Steel
Institute**

Letter to the Editor/Producer

60 Minutes

America's Defense Should be Made with American-made Steel

March 24, 2026

To the Editors:

The American Iron and Steel Institute would like to express our concern about statements in the March 22nd *60 Minutes* segment "Turning the Ship Around," regarding the impact of steel tariffs and the use of American steel versus foreign, subsidized steel.

To propose using Chinese or other imported steel to build ships in the United States because it is "cheaper" is irresponsible at best and a severe national security threat at worst. In fact, the steel tariffs were originally put in place in 2018 as a direct result of an extensive investigation by the U.S. Department of Commerce that concluded that surging steel imports threatened U.S. national security, given the critical role steel plays for defense systems, critical infrastructure and economic security generally.

This threat to American steel producers is the direct result of foreign government policies and practices. Chinese steel producers, for example, benefit from massive government subsidies that have fueled significant and growing global overcapacity in steel. According to the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), over half of the world's excess steelmaking capacity resides in China, but there is also significant overcapacity in many other countries in Asia and other world regions.

As China's economy slows, its steelmakers are diverting surplus production at an unprecedented scale to international markets to make up for lost domestic sales, disrupting steel markets around the world. Their high level of subsidization allows them to sell their production far below the cost of production compared to steel made in market-based economies like the United States.

Just this week, the Chair of the OECD Steel Committee announced that, according to the latest data, Chinese steel companies received 15 times more subsidies than the average subsidies granted in all other countries – and that China's steel subsidy rate has nearly doubled since 2019. China's annual exports of steel have also nearly doubled over the last three years, with its export volume last year surpassing the combined exports from the rest of Asia for the first time in recent history.

Surging Chinese steel exports displace steel production in other countries and force producers in those markets to divert their production to new export markets, leading to depressed prices and employment losses in many markets around the world. This has led numerous countries – including the EU, Canada and Mexico – to follow the lead of the United States to impose tariffs on steel imports to protect their producers from injury from surging low-priced imports.

For the United States to unilaterally disarm by eliminating its steel tariffs would not help rebuild the U.S. shipbuilding industry but would only accelerate the deindustrialization of our country that has resulted from years of weak enforcement against foreign unfair trade practices. China’s aggressive subsidization of both its steel and shipbuilding sectors has distorted global markets for decades. As your piece referenced, President Trump has made reinvigorating our shipbuilding industry a priority. But we cannot have a strong domestic shipbuilding industry without a strong steel industry.

As the American steel industry is one of the primary suppliers of critical raw materials to America’s shipbuilding industry, we have seen firsthand the impact China’s non-market policies and practices can have. In future coverage of this crisis, we would request thorough exposure of the grave risks posed by Chinese and other foreign government policies that distort steel markets and threaten manufacturers and workers in the United States and around the world.

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