

Goldschmidt foresees roadblocks over unfavorable trade restrictions

By TIM RICHARD

NEW YORK — Transportation secretary Neil Goldschmidt says President Carter cannot restrict Japanese auto imports without fear of foreign retaliation or a lawsuit.

"I kid you not. What you're proposing — if you are for import restraint — you are going to put auto workers back to work and unemployed machinists and aerospace workers.

"That's no deal. That's no favor to anyone in the country," Goldschmidt said, responding to criticism from UAW delegates from Michigan attending the Democratic National Convention.

The nation's sixth transportation secretary said United Auto Workers and Ford Motor Co. are asking the International Trade Commission for accelerated hearings on the plight of the American auto industry, which has lost a quarter of its market to Japanese and other foreign producers.

"Under the International Trade Agreement we signed, we have provided for an International Trade Commission, a piece of machinery which has the right to make fact-finding judgments as to whether harm is being done to American industry by imports.

"If they make a finding of harm, they subsequently also make a recommendation as to how to remedy.

"But the president does not have to follow the recommendation as to remedy. From the moment in time the finding of harm occurs, the president is then free in his authority under law."

Goldschmidt said Carter could then act unilaterally to curb the imports or negotiate with the Japanese for reduced imports.

"What has been missed in all of this from the beginning is there is nothing to prevent another country from going outside the International Trade Agreements . . . and to say to us, 'We don't want Boeing, Lockheed, and McDonnell

Douglas aircraft sold in our country for the next 24 months."

"Well, 60 percent or more of our aircraft sales are to foreign countries. It is the single largest manufactured export of the country."

Goldschmidt was asked if Carter could simply ask the Japanese to restrain imports voluntarily.

"Look, when you tell somebody to do something, it isn't voluntary.

"The debate in our administration goes this way: does the president have the authority unilaterally to ask for voluntary restraints or to say to the Japanese, please restrain?"

"Answer: split."

"Half the people believe it is a violation of the Sherman Antitrust Act for any official of the U.S. to seek restraint of trade by anyone, domestic or foreign.

"Half believe — I happen to be on this half — the president of the U.S. is unlike any other federal employee and constitutionally can do whatever is necessary.

"It's not a very attractive option for us to say to the president, 'We're not sure,' because he will be sued by import dealers or citizens or someone.

"So we have taken a different tack. We have tried to find within the statutes on trade the best machinery we can to have this issue addressed."

Goldschmidt estimated it would be near the end of November before the International Trade Commission will report its findings.

Goldschmidt has been in the Carter cabinet one year. He had been mayor of Portland, Ore., since 1972 and in 1976 represented the U.S. on the United Nations Economics Commission for Europe. Goldschmidt was also co-chairman of the National League of Cities energy task force.

He gained fame for halting freeway projects in Portland and going into a public transit program.



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— Neil Goldschmidt, Transportation secretary

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Front page story

NEW YORK — High school student Joe Sipher started politicking at the top.



JOE SIPHER

The Cranbrook student from Farmington Hills is a page at the Democratic National Convention.

"It's my first political activity," the 16-year-old said. "Both of my parents are involved, although they are not delegates this year. My sister, Lynn, was a page in 1972."

His father, Allen Sipher, was a delegate to the 1974 mid-term convention in Kansas City. His mother, Ann, is active in Farmington Hills politics.

The page's job is unglamorous. "I've been moving boxes. I passed out envelopes and I've been watching the media. I enjoyed meeting celebrities." Asked which celebrities, Sipher cited Doris Biscoe and Joe Glover, television personalities, and state Sen. Doug Ross of Oak Park. "Secretary of State Richard Austin sat next to me on the bus."

Will he get enough material for a school report?

"I'm keeping a diary. I think I'll write my conclusions when I finish the diary," Sipher said.

Although the page's work is menial, Sipher is making contacts because passing out envelopes means he has met all 141 members of the Michigan delegation.

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