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Local Content and Congressional Politics: Interest-group Theory and Foreign-policy Implications

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This study analyzes congressmen's voting behavior with regard to the 'Fair Practices in Automotive Product Act (HR 5133)', commonly known as the local content legislation, which was introduced to the 97th US Congress. Among other things, we conducted a quantitative analysis involving four independent variables: congressmen's party affiliation, their closeness to labor, the unemployment rate in their home states, and their seniority in Congress. As a result, congressmen's closeness to labor was found to be more important than their party affiliation, or the other two variables, in explaining their vote on local content. On further investigation, we have arrived at a new understanding of congressional politics, namely that labor's trade impact is possibly maximized on measures unlikely to become law, and that congressmen often support such measures to send signals to domestic constituencies and to foreign governments. The study goes on to discuss the negative implications of such congressional 'signalling' for US–Japanese relations, thereby underscoring the need to examine congressional politics in the context of alliance politics and the declining US hegemony in an interdependent world.

In the 97th US Congress the House of Representatives debated and passed a controversial piece of legislation called 'Fair Practices in Automotive Product Act (HR 5133)', otherwise known as the local (domestic) content legislation, by a vote of 215 to 188. Again, almost a year later, the House passed an identical bill (HR 1234) by a 210–199 vote. It is true that the 97th Congress adjourned before the Senate could act on local content, and S 707 (the Senate counterpart of HR 1234) eventually died in the Republican-controlled Senate in 1984. Nevertheless, it is noteworthy that the House

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should have passed such obviously protectionist legislation at all, particularly at a time when the US auto industry was achieving significant progress in making structural adjustments to new global conditions. Only once since World War II did the House pass a similarly protectionist piece of legislation. In 1970 the so-called 'Mills bill', which would have levied quotas on all textile and shoe imports and tariffs on two other products, passed the House by a vote of 215 to 165. The purpose of the present study is to see what specific independent variables most closely influenced congressional voting behavior with regard to HR 5133 in 1982, with a view to making propositions and projections about broader group-theory and foreign-policy implications. We do not focus our analysis on the more recent 1983 vote because there were 81 newly elected congressmen in the 98th congress, resulting in too many missing values (including COPE scores noted later) for a meaningful statistical analysis. We believe that use of earlier data does not disturb our theoretical arguments or our hypothesis testing.

After introducing major proponents and opponents of HR 5133 as well as their arguments, we conduct a quantitative analysis involving four independent variables: congressmen's party affiliation, their relationship to labor, the unemployment rate in their home states, and their seniority in Congress. Of these, particular attention is paid to an analysis of the relative importance of the first two variables, in the interest of evaluating to what extent American political parties can still perform a gatekeeper's role, effectively aggregating various specific interests articulated by individual interest groups. If congressmen's relationship to labor is found to be more important than their party affiliation or the other two remaining variables in explaining their vote on local content, to what extent will this finding be relevant in predicting congressional voting on trade legislation in general? Our twofold proposition is that labor's trade impact is maximized on measures unlikely to become law and that congressmen often support such measures to send signals to domestic constituencies and to foreign governments. To the extent that this hypothesis is correct, it can shed important additional light on the classic and ongoing debate on the relative role of interest groups and political parties in congressional politics (Schattschneider, 1935, 1960; Bauer, Pool, and Dexter, 1963; Milbraith, 1963; Lowi, 1964; Wolf et al., 1965; Kingdon, 1973; Pincus, 1975; Brock and Magee, 1978; Pastor, 1980). Moreover, in discussing possible implications of congressional 'signalling' for US-Japanese relations, this study underscores the need to examine congressional politics in the context of alliance politics (Neustadt, 1970; Destler et al., 1976) and the declining US hegemony in an increasingly interdependent world (Krasner, 1976; Keohane and Nye, 1977; Keohane, 1984). More generally, it may be worth pointing out that no other study has yet rigorously analyzed a salient public-policy issue relating to Japan in the context of US congressional politics, using both quantitative and qualitative methods.

HR 5133: Its Proponents and Opposition

HR 5133 was introduced on December 9, 1981 by Rep. Richard L. Ottinger (D—New York), Chairman of the Energy Conservation and Power Subcommittee of the House Energy and Commerce Committee. Specific local-content requirements called for in the legislation are given in Table 1. The bill required all automobile manufacturers selling more than 100 000 cars and small trucks in the US market to meet heavy local content requirements. Those foreign auto manufacturers who sold more than 100 000 cars annually in the United States were six Japanese companies (Toyota, Nissan, Honda, Toyo Kogyo, Mitsubishi, and Isuzu) plus one West German company, Volkswagen

TABLE 1. Domestic auto content requirements under the Fair Practices in Automotive Products Act.

| <i>No. of vehicles sold in the US</i> | <i>Required minimum percentage US content requirement</i> | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|-------------|-------------|
| | <i>1983</i> | <i>1984</i> | <i>1985</i> |
| Fewer than 100000 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 100000–149999 | 8.3 | 16.7 | 25.0 |
| 150000–199999 | 16.7 | 33.3 | 50.0 |
| 200000–499999 | 25.0 | 50.0 | 75.0 |
| 500000 or more | 30.0 | 60.0 | 90.0 |

Source: HR 5133: 5–6.

(VW). Of these, VW was the only foreign company that largely met the necessary local-content requirements at the time HR 5133 was introduced.

Thus, the bill was clearly targeted at Japanese manufacturers. Enactment of the proposed legislation would force them either to set up plants in the United States or to purchase a substantial fraction of their components from American firms. Although Honda and Nissan had already decided to produce some motor vehicles in the United States and Toyota was negotiating with General Motors for joint production of small-sized cars there, moving a large part of Japanese auto-manufacturing operations across the Pacific would be quite another story. It might create serious unemployment problems in Japanese auto and related industries. And even had the Japanese companies ignored this problem and built plants in the United States, they would not be able to incorporate many Japanese-made components in their products.

Consequently, the bill's enactment would have had serious consequences for US–Japanese relations, especially in view of the fact that Japan had already agreed in May, 1981 to accommodate a US request for three-year 'voluntary' auto export restraints after painstaking intergovernmental talks. Japan had done so, despite the ruling of the US International Trade Commission in November, 1980 that imports were not a substantial cause or threat of serious injury to American car manufacturers; recession, high interest rates, and the shift in consumer demand toward small fuel-efficient cars as a result of the increase in fuel prices were mentioned as the principal causes of Detroit's distress.

Original cosponsors of HR 5133 were Rep. Barbara A. Mikulski (D—Maryland), William M. Brodhead (D—Michigan), and Donald J. Pease (D—Ohio). On March 2, the Subcommittee on Commerce, Transportation and Tourism of the Committee on Energy and Commerce held a hearing on the bill. HR 5133 passed the Subcommittee by 4 to 2 and was sent to the full Committee on Energy and Commerce chaired by John D. Dingell, a Democrat from Detroit, Michigan. The Committee passed the legislation with a slight revision by 27 to 14 on September 15 after only a brief hearing. The bill was subsequently sent to the House Ways and Means Committee. Ways and Means normally enjoys primary jurisdiction over trade bills, but in the case of local content Dingell had successfully maneuvered so that his Committee could gain primary jurisdiction, and Ways and Means was granted only a sequential referral of HR 5133. This

meant that Energy and Commerce could override a negative report from Ways and Means. Sam Gibbons (D—Florida), chairman of the Subcommittee on Trade of the Ways and Means Committee, was strongly opposed to the bill and tried to stall it by holding a long hearing. However, Thomas P. (Tip) O'Neill, Speaker of the House, wanted an early floor vote. As a result, the Subcommittee on Trade could hold only a nine-day hearing from September 21 to October 1. The bill then came up before the House Rules Committee on December 7 with Tip O'Neill's strong backing. Finally, on December 15, 1982, HR 5133 passed the House by 215 to 188 with an amendment which said that the bill should not violate any existing trade agreements.

The most important driving force behind HR 5133 outside Congress was the United Auto Workers (UAW), the group most immediately affected by the US auto slump. Approximately 300 000 auto workers, or 40 percent of the labor force, were progressively laid off in 1980 and roughly twice as many were idled in related industries (Fraser, 1982). The purpose of the bill was to force the Japanese auto manufacturers to produce cars in the United States. The UAW estimated that enactment of HR 5133 would create as many as 868 000 jobs in the automobile and related industries. UAW members were mobilized to conduct lobbying activities to get congressmen's support for the bill. Large volumes of letters were delivered to congressional offices, and local union leaders delivered petitions which listed the names of thousands of voters. A typical letter read:

Jobs Not Promises. Enact HR 5133. Support US Content Legislation Now—that would require a given percentage of automotive components to be produced here in direct proportion to yearly sales and imports. Auto companies with yearly sales in excess of 200 000 units would have at least 75 percent of North American content in their fleet; and companies with 500 000 units or more would have 90 percent North American content. The legislation would generate new investment and employment here by foreign companies with large sales in the US. [Typed copy.] Be thinking about you at the polls [handwritten] (Hillis, 1982).

While the UAW applied pressure on congressmen directly, it also began making alliances with other interest groups. It was successful in getting the AFL—CIO to give the bill top legislative priority and to mobilize its lobbying organizations. The labor federation even ignored the objection of the International Longshoremen's Association which feared a possible loss of jobs for 12 000 dock workers. The UAW was successful in getting even the Consumer Federation of America (CFA) to take its side. Stephen Brobeck, executive director of the CEA, said: 'On the surface, this might appear to go against consumer interests because of many experts' predictions that auto content law would mean higher car prices but the federation concluded that the price increases wouldn't be steep and that the benefits would offset them' (*Wall Street Journal*, 9/3/82). One relevant point may be that the UAW had been until recently a strong and steadfast defender of free trade and it worked on the side of consumers for many years. Curiously enough, US auto manufacturers did not necessarily have a unified stand on local content. While Ford, Chrysler and American Motors supported the bill, General Motors was clearly against it. For one thing, US auto makers would be unable under US local-content rules to seek out the lowest cost and the most efficient sources of supply, thus placing them at a disadvantage with other suppliers in world markets.

There were many groups aligned in opposition to HR 5133. The Automobile Importers of America, the National Automobile Dealers' Association, and the American International Automobile Dealers' Association were among the key groups

mobilized to oppose the bill. Other major free-trade groups included the Motor Vehicle Manufacturers' Association, the American Imported Automobile Dealers' Association, the American Importers' Association, the National Association of Manufacturers, the American Association of Port Authorities, the Aerospace Industries Association, the American Association of Exporters and Importers, the Chamber of Commerce of the United States, the Consumers for World Trade, the Emergency Committee for American Trade, the National Council of Farmer Cooperatives, and the National Grange. Of course, one must include Toyota, Nissan and other Japanese auto manufacturers, but they mostly worked in the background, giving the spotlight to US auto dealers and other American organizations who 'have got the votes' (*Congressional Quarterly*, 1983: 57).

These groups contended that the probable loss of jobs throughout the US economy would be much greater than what the bill appeared to offer in terms of new jobs in the auto and related industries. Particularly vulnerable were not only US auto importers and dealers but also such export-oriented industries as aircraft, capital equipment, high technology electronic products and agricultural machinery (Greene, 1982: 18–21). Moreover, as Ed Anderson, master of the National Grange, asserted, 'passage of this legislation would be a disaster for American farmers' (*Washington Post*, 12/7/82) because one-fourth of US farm income was derived from export sales (\$7.8 billion to Japan alone in 1981).

Apart from these private interest groups, HR 5133 faced formidable opposition from the US executive branch. Successive postwar US administrations have maintained a consistent, bipartisan free-trade posture, and the Reagan administration has come out particularly strongly in defense of free-trade principles. Despite America's declining hegemonic role in the international economic system, the US government's free-trade commitment is apparently being re-enforced due to America's rapidly growing dependence on world trade. US exports increased 7.7 times, imports 11.3 times in value from 1965 to 1982; since 1970, the ratio of trade to GNP has nearly doubled. Between 1977 and 1980, four out of five newly created jobs in the US manufacturing sector were in export industries; one out of seven jobs in manufacturing depend on exports (Auerbach, 1982).

It is true that, due to declining comparative advantage in many US industries, protectionist pressures have been growing in the United States. As a way of deflecting or defusing such domestic protectionism, the US executive branch has been urging Japan and Western Europe to open up their markets to US exports and capital, while at the same time throwing a sop to particularly noisy 'smokestack' industries such as textiles and steel. The Reagan administration has maintained that enactment of HR 5133 or similar legislation would mark a clear departure from the principles of free trade and would force the United States to violate its international obligations under GATT.

According to the US Department of Transportation, the local content legislation would create new sourcing problems for domestic manufacturers, create a Federal bureaucratic burden, reduce competition, and serve to retard industrial progress in the United States (Greene, 1982: 21). The US Congressional Budget Office (1982: 9) concluded that HR 5133's enactment would create only 211 000 jobs by 1990, and that negative effects would more than offset such meagre benefits. The bill would invite retaliatory trade actions from foreign exporting countries as allowed by GATT. If America's trading partners were to take equivalent retaliatory trade restriction measures, it would increase the US price level about 0.2 percent, decrease real GNP by 0.3 percent, and increase the overall unemployment rate 0.1 percent by 1990. The administration's case against local content was aptly summed up by US Trade Repre-

sentative William Brock: 'HR 5133 is the worst threat to the international trading system and our own prosperity to be put before the Congress in a decade. It would cost us jobs, sales, markets, and real economic growth' (Greene, 1982: 21).

Inevitably, congressmen were exposed to intense cross-pressures. Representative Michael Synar of Oklahoma described his predicament as follows:

There has been an excruciating amount of pressure on both sides . . . for months, I have been besieged by letters, phone calls and visits from Oklahoma auto workers favoring the bill and from auto dealers and agricultural interests opposing it. When I finally decided to oppose the bill largely because possible trade retaliation could hurt Oklahoma farmers, the UAW ran radio ads in my district in one last attempt to get me to change my mind (*Wall Street Journal*, 9/3/82).

Given the nature of pressure exerted by the UAW and auto workers as described by Synar, it is not difficult to understand why some congressmen voted for the bill. Less easy to understand is why the legislation passed the House by a clear majority. As we have shown above, an impressive number of important groups were opposed to the bill. Why did these groups and labor unions not at least cancel each other out? Could not the executive branch more than match the political punch of any single group, even had there been no effective countervailing groups in the private sector, as Pastor's study of congressional politics of foreign economic policy suggests? (Pastor, 1980: 344)

One possible explanation may be that the US auto industry was not just another industry, and auto workers were not just another special interest group in the perception of the American people. Auto manufacturing has been a key industry in the United States, often symbolizing the prowess of the American economy in the world. It also affects many jobs in related industries. One out of every 12 manufacturing jobs is directly related to the auto industry. Automobile production accounts for 56 percent of the rubber demand, 24 percent of domestic steel demand, and 15 percent of aluminium demand. This accounts for an additional three or more workers in their industries for every auto worker (Winham and Kabashima, 1982: 73). Hence, there existed an unusually strong American incentive to protect the industry from foreign competition by all means. This sentiment was well stated by Senator John C. Danforth:

On the one hand, many of us consider ourselves strong advocates of an international trading system based on free and fair exchange of goods and services. On the other hand, we cannot allow ourselves to sit idly by and watch an American automobile industry—so vital to basic industrial structure—wither away into oblivion (US Senate Committee on Finance, Subcommittee on International Trade, 1982: 1).

Related to the above was the perception dominant in America that Japanese trade policy was 'unfair'. According to Congressman Dingell, 'The Japanese do not trade fairly and do not practice free trade with the US or any other of their trading partners . . . They are going to destroy our jobs, take our dollars and leave us and our economy colonies of Japan' (*Washington Post*, 12/8/82). While this type of observation was not necessarily based on an objective analysis of the real situation, it did seem to appeal to no small part of the American public. During the campaign for the mid-term election in 1982, many candidates discovered or rediscovered the powerful appeal of protectionism, with Japanese imports as a main target. Preaching protectionism did not guarantee victory, but many who did also get elected, particularly those who focused their attacks on Japan (Saunders, 1982).

It is true that the Japanese government protected the domestic auto industry in its infant stage. It applied various trade barriers, freeing domestic industry of competition from more powerful foreign auto competitors. For example, in 1967 the tariff rate on small passenger cars in Japan was 40 percent while in the United States and in the European Community it was 6.5 percent and 22 percent, respectively. Today, Japan has no tariff on any passenger cars while the US and the EEC still maintain their respective tariffs of 3 percent and 11 percent (Winham and Kabashima, 1982: 77). One sees a similar pattern in other Japanese industries as well. In the past, the United States has largely tolerated Japan's protectionist policies on foreign policy grounds, because it needed Japanese support in maintaining the cohesion of the free-world coalition against the communist bloc. The United States was also able to afford this practice because of the strong and healthy state of its economy.

However, cold war tension declined in the latter half of the 1960s, coinciding with the relative decline of the macroeconomic position of the United States and its declining competitiveness in specific industries. As a result, domestic support for the externally tolerant free trade policy began to dissipate, forcing the United States to take a tougher and less patient stand with Japan and other traditional allies over bilateral economic disputes (Sato, 1978: 147). In any case, Japan's past protectionist policies had apparently helped create a strong impression among many Americans that the Japanese were flooding the US market with auto and other exports while closing their own market to foreign imports. If Japan had played the game fairly, the argument goes, the United States would never have lost out in competition with the Japanese. Consequently, Japanese auto makers should be induced, through local content requirements, to build plants in the United States so that they will be placed 'on an equal footing' with American producers. In sum, one may say that HR 5133 conveniently rode on a widespread US sentiment critical of Japanese trade policy and perhaps of Japan itself.

Local Content and Congressional Voting

What has been discussed above concerns only contextual factors that may have influenced the House passage of the local content legislation in December, 1982. Now we turn to more specific independent variables and examine in a rigorous fashion possible relationships between them and the congressional roll-call voting on the bill in question. We have chosen four different independent variables, in part for their quantifiability: congressmen's party affiliation, their relationship (closeness) to labor, the unemployment rate in their home states, and their seniority (the length of their service) in Congress (Barone and Ujifusa, 1982; US Department of Commerce, 1984).

Party Affiliation

Party identification 'raises a perceptual screen through which an individual tends to see what is favorable to his partisan orientation' (Campbell et al., 1964: 67), and 'despite the absence of the kind of party cohesion one finds in a parliamentary system, party differences in the US Congress are still substantial' (Kingdon, 1973: 105). It is reasonable to assume also that party leaders can exert some influence on the voting behavior of rank-and-file congressmen in the same party. We can expect then that Democrats in Congress are more likely than Republicans to vote in favor of protectionist legislation, because the Democratic party is considered less strongly committed than is the Republican party to the idea that the government should stay out of the free market system.

TABLE 2. Effect of party difference on vote for HR 5133.

| Party ID | Vote for | Vote against | Did not vote ^a | Total |
|------------|----------|--------------|---------------------------|-------|
| Republican | 46 | 129 | 18 | 193 |
| (%) | (23.8) | (66.8) | (9.3) | (100) |
| Democrat | 169 | 59 | 14 | 242 |
| (%) | (69.8) | (24.4) | (5.8) | (100) |
| Total | 215 | 188 | 32 | 435 |
| (%) | (49.4) | (43.2) | (7.4) | (100) |

$\chi^2 = 88.07$ (with 2 degrees of freedom); significance = 0.00.

^a Includes *paired for* and *paired against*.

There have been times in the 20th century when the Republican party was quite resistant to government interference in the domestic economy, yet favored considerable protection against foreign trade. However, in recent decades there has been a reversal of the two parties in terms of leadership toward international openness. Republicans are particularly reluctant to support such legislation if the White House is occupied by a Republican president personally committed to the free-trade principle. As one analyst puts it, ‘the administration wields more influence on members of the president’s political party than on the other party’s members’ (Kingdon, 1973: 172). Consequently, the White House influence, as well as the influence of party leaders, on congressional roll-call votes may be largely subsumed under party affiliation.

Table 2 supports our expectation. There is a strong relationship between congressmen’s party affiliation and their vote on HR 5133. There were 193 Republicans and 242 Democrats in the 97th Congress, and 70 percent of Democrats voted for the bill, while only 24 percent of Republicans did. The chi-square of 88 implies that this relationship is statistically significant at less than the 0.01 level. Yet, the same table shows that nearly one-quarter of each party did not vote as we expected.

Closeness to Labor

Since the UAW and related labor groups were the primary force behind HR 5133, the nature of each congressman’s relationship to labor should be considered another important determinant of congressional voting behavior with regard to this bill. The UAW’s lobbying activities should be more effective with congressmen friendly to labor and therefore presumably sympathetic to labor interests and problems.

Table 3 illustrates the relationship between congressmen’s closeness to labor and their roll-call votes. The extent of congressmen’s closeness to labor is measured by the scores given to congressmen by the Committee on Political Education of the AFL–CIO (COPE). COPE is the AFL–CIO’s political action arm concerned with economic and labor issues. It rates a congressman high or low, depending on how he voted on what the group considered to be pro-labor issues in the past. One can say, therefore, that the higher the COPE score for a congressman, the greater is the likelihood of his voting for labor in an ordinary labor-related issue such as labor law reform. But the local-content bill was viewed by many as the most protectionist piece of legislation since the Smoot-Hawley Act of 1930. To the extent that this view was shared by a large number of

TABLE 3. Effect of closeness to labor unions on vote for HR 5133.

| <i>Group (COPE score)</i> | <i>Vote for</i> | <i>Vote against</i> | <i>Did not vote^a</i> | <i>Total</i> |
|---------------------------|-----------------|---------------------|---------------------------------|--------------|
| Group 1 (0–19) | 8 | 72 | 7 | 87 |
| (%) | (9.2) | (82.8) | (8.0) | (100.0) |
| Group 2 (20–39) | 21 | 37 | 6 | 64 |
| (%) | (32.8) | (57.8) | (9.4) | (100.0) |
| Group 3 (40–59) | 29 | 21 | 3 | 53 |
| (%) | (54.7) | (39.6) | (5.7) | (100.0) |
| Group 4 (60–79) | 64 | 11 | 4 | 79 |
| (%) | (81.0) | (13.9) | (5.1) | (100.0) |
| Group 5 (80–100) | 59 | 4 | 8 | 71 |
| (%) | (83.1) | (5.6) | (11.3) | (100.0) |
| Unclassified | 34 | 43 | 4 | 81 |
| (%) | (42.0) | (53.1) | (4.9) | (100.0) |
| Total | 215 | 188 | 32 | 435 |
| (%) | (49.4) | (43.2) | (7.4) | (100.0) |

$\chi^2 = 141.87$ (with 10 degrees of freedom); significance = 0.00.

^a Includes *paired for* and *paired against*.

congressmen, we wanted to know how close they had to be to labor to cast their vote in favor of the bill. Given an equal amount of pressure from labor and other groups to vote for the bill, those congressmen with high COPE scores should be the most susceptible to such pressure.

COPE scores range from 0 to 100. We divided congressmen into five groups according to their COPE scores. Groups 1 to 5 represent those congressmen with scores of 0–19, 20–39, 40–59, 60–79, and 80–100, respectively. Table 3 shows a clear positive relationship between congressmen's closeness to labor and their vote for the local-content legislation. There were 87 congressmen in the first group least friendly to labor, and among them, eight (9 percent) voted in favor while 72 (82 percent) voted against the bill. The percentage of congressmen who voted for the bill then increased to 33, 55, 81, and 83 in groups 2, 3, 4, and 5, respectively. The chi-square of 142 indicates that the above relationship was statistically significant at less than the 0.01 level.

Whether a congressman is friendly to labor or not in part depends on his party affiliation. Generally, Democrats are considered more friendly to labor than Republicans. Table 4 illustrates the relationship between congressmen's closeness to labor and their vote for HR 5133, controlling for party affiliation. Among 242 Democrats, 138 (or 57 percent) had COPE scores equal to or higher than 60, whereas among 193 Republicans, only 12 (or 6 percent) were in the same category. It is important to note, however, that when party affiliation was in conflict with closeness to labor, the latter variable clearly held sway. For example, all Republicans in group 5 (most friendly to labor) voted for the bill, and all Democrats in group 1 (least friendly to labor) voted against it.

Unemployment Rate

Since the serious unemployment problem facing auto workers touched off the UAW's

TABLE 4. Effect of closeness to labor on vote for HR 5133 while controlling for party affiliation.

| Group (COPE score) | Democratic party | | | Republican party | | |
|--------------------|------------------|--------------|---------------------------|------------------|--------------|---------------------------|
| | Vote for | Vote against | Did not vote ^a | Vote for | Vote against | Did not vote ^a |
| Group 1 (0–19) | 0 | 9 | 0 | 8 | 63 | 7 |
| (%) | (0.0) | (100.0) | (0.0) | (10.3) | (80.8) | (9.0) |
| Group 2 (20–39) | 7 | 16 | 0 | 14 | 21 | 6 |
| (%) | (30.4) | (69.6) | (0.0) | (34.1) | (51.2) | (14.6) |
| Group 3 (40–59) | 27 | 17 | 3 | 2 | 4 | 0 |
| (%) | (57.4) | (36.2) | (6.4) | (33.3) | (66.7) | (0.0) |
| Group 4 (60–79) | 56 | 11 | 2 | 8 | 0 | 2 |
| (%) | (81.2) | (15.9) | (2.9) | (80.0) | (0.0) | (20.0) |
| Group 5 (80–100) | 57 | 4 | 8 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| (%) | (82.6) | (5.8) | (11.6) | (100.0) | (0.0) | (0.0) |
| Unclassified | 22 | 2 | 1 | 12 | 41 | 3 |
| (%) | (88.0) | (8.0) | (4.0) | (21.4) | (73.2) | (5.4) |
| Total | 169 | 59 | 14 | 46 | 129 | 18 |
| (%) | (69.8) | (24.4) | (5.8) | (23.8) | (66.8) | (9.3) |

$\chi^2 = 41.30$ (with 10 degrees of freedom); significance = 0.00 (Republican Party).

$\chi^2 = 78.60$ (with 10 degrees of freedom); significance = 0.00 (Democratic Party).

^a Includes *paired for* and *paired against*.

aggressive lobbying campaign for HR 5133 in the first place, it is plausible to assume that those congressmen who represented states facing a severe unemployment problem would be exposed to stronger labor pressures and should be more inclined to sympathize with the plight of auto workers. Thus, they should be more likely to vote in favor of legislation such as local content. This should be so, particularly in view of the magnitude of the automobile and supply industries and the presumption that high unemployment rates were due largely to layoffs in the automobile industry.

Table 5 supports our hypothesis. Of those congressmen elected from states with an unemployment rate of less than 7 percent (in 1982), 39 percent voted for HR 5133. The percentage of congressmen voting in favor went up as the unemployment rate in their home states increased. Of those congressmen who came from states with unemployment rates of between 7 and 9.9 percent, approximately 40 to 45 percent voted for the bill, and of those who came from states with unemployment rates of 10 percent and more, 59 to 61 percent voted in favor.

Seniority in Congress

It takes time for congressmen to develop necessary on-the-job experience and perspective as national legislators. Therefore, those who have been elected many times should be in more of a position to think in terms of broader national interests than those who have served Congress for only a few years. The former might also feel secure enough about re-election to promote general rather than special interests which concern only their own constituencies. Hence, the longer congressmen have served on Capitol

TABLE 5. Effect of unemployment-rate difference in the home states on vote for HR 5133.

| <i>Unemployment rate</i> | <i>Vote for</i> | <i>Vote against</i> | <i>Did not vote</i> ^a | <i>Total</i> |
|--------------------------|-----------------|---------------------|----------------------------------|--------------|
| Less than 7 % | 20 | 30 | 1 | 51 |
| (%) | (39.2) | (58.8) | (2.0) | (100.0) |
| 7–8.4 % | 29 | 37 | 6 | 72 |
| (%) | (40.3) | (51.4) | (8.3) | (100.0) |
| 8.5–9.9 % | 64 | 63 | 15 | 142 |
| (%) | (45.1) | (44.4) | (10.6) | (100.0) |
| 10.0–11.4 % | 51 | 31 | 5 | 87 |
| (%) | (58.6) | (35.6) | (5.7) | (100.0) |
| More than 11.5 % | 51 | 27 | 5 | 83 |
| (%) | (61.4) | (32.5) | (6.0) | (100.0) |
| Total | 215 | 188 | 32 | 435 |
| (%) | (49.4) | (43.2) | (7.4) | (100.0) |

$\chi^2 = 13.5$ (with 4 degrees of freedom); significance = 0.00.

^a Includes *paired for* and *paired against*.

Hill, the less likely they should be to support such special-interest legislation as local content.

Table 6 illustrates the relationship between congressmen's seniority and their vote on HR 5133. Contrary to the above hypothesis, the relationship between the two variables was not significant at the 0.05 level. Of those who had served Congress for 13 years or more, 51 percent voted for the bill. But only 42 percent of freshman congressmen voted in favor. One could contend that many congressmen manage to be re-elected precisely because they have been sensitive to narrow, constituent interests, whereas some freshman congressman or those without much seniority may not yet be hardened by the cold facts of life as politicians and thus are still idealistic enough to seriously defend a general principle like free trade.

TABLE 6. Effect of difference in seniority on vote for HR 5133.

| <i>Service in the Congress</i> | <i>Vote for</i> | <i>Vote against</i> | <i>Did not vote</i> ^a | <i>Total</i> |
|--------------------------------|-----------------|---------------------|----------------------------------|--------------|
| 13 years or more | 53 | 40 | 11 | 104 |
| (%) | (51.0) | (38.5) | (10.6) | (100.0) |
| 3–12 years | 127 | 102 | 18 | 247 |
| (%) | (51.4) | (41.3) | (7.3) | (100.0) |
| 2 years or less | 34 | 44 | 2 | 80 |
| (%) | (42.5) | (55.0) | (2.5) | (100.0) |
| Total | 214 | 186 | 31 | 431 |
| (%) | (49.7) | (43.2) | (7.2) | (100.0) |

$\chi^2 = 8.45$ (with 4 degrees of freedom); significance = 0.07.

^a Includes *paired for* and *paired against*.

TABLE 7. Alternative estimates of roll-call voting logit model.

| Equation | Intercept | Party affiliation | Closeness to labor | Unemployment rate | Seniority | Campaign contributions | | | R ^a | N |
|----------|-----------|----------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|------------------|------------------------|-----------------|--|----------------|-----|
| | | | | | | Labor | Agriculture | | | |
| [1] | -2.54 | -0.42 (0.40) | 0.07 (0.008) | | | | | | 0.59 | 323 |
| [2] | -4.44 | -0.23 (0.41) | 0.06 (0.008) | 0.02 (0.007) | | | | | 0.60 | 323 |
| [3] | -4.33 | -0.23 (0.41) | 0.06 (0.008) | 0.02 (0.007) | -0.001 (0.02) | | | | 0.60 | 323 |
| [4] | -2.68 | -0.18 (0.47) | 0.06 (0.01) | 0.02 (0.008) | -0.02 (0.02) | 0.005 (0.01) | 0.002 (0.02) | | 0.59 | 265 |
| [5] | -1.74 | 1.39 (0.33) | | 0.02 (0.006) | -0.02 (0.02) | 0.04 (0.009) | | | 0.50 | 322 |

^a The R statistic is similar to the multiple correlation coefficient.
Note: The figures in the table are unstandardized logistic regression coefficients, and those in parentheses indicate the standard error. When the coefficients are twice the standard error, the parameter associated with each independent variable is statistically significant at the 0.05 level in a two-tailed test.

The contingency tables shown above indicated that there was a close relationship between congressmen's voting on HR 5133 on the one hand and their party affiliation, their closeness to labor, and the unemployment rate in their home states on the other. Such a relationship was not demonstrated between voting and the length of service in Congress. While this type of contingency-table analysis has the advantage of simplicity and easy comprehension, it has its drawbacks as well. First, grouping continuous variables into a few categories may not necessarily be a reliable method because the results may vary according to how the variables are grouped. Second, when we ascertain the relationship between independent and dependent variables through contingency tables, we tend to assume that there is no relationship between included and excluded variables.

We next conducted a multivariate analysis, which allowed us to ascertain the effect of independent variables simultaneously. We employed a logistic regression model since: (1) estimating a dichotomous dependent variable with a linear model does not guarantee that predicted probabilities of outcome will fall between 1 and 0; (2) a dichotomous voting model is assumed to be a nonlinear function of general S-shape; and (3) effects of independent variables on roll-call voting are assumed to be interactive rather than additive (Hanushek and Jackson, 1977: 183). The model is shown as follows.

$$\text{Log} \frac{p_i}{1 - p_i} = \beta_0 + \sum_{j=1}^4 \beta_j \chi_{ji} + \varepsilon_i$$

where: P = probability of voting for HR 5133;

β_0 = constant;

β_j = logistic regression coefficients;

χ_1 = party affiliation ($D = 1$, $R = 0$);

χ_2 = closeness to labor in 1981;

χ_3 = unemployment rate ($\times 10$) in home state in 1982;

χ_4 = seniority (year elected) in Congress;

ε = error terms.

Estimates of the model are presented in equation [3] in Table 7. The most striking feature of the results is that the independent effect of party affiliation was slight when the effect of other variables was estimated simultaneously. The standard error implies that the effect of party affiliation was not significant at the 0.05 level of significance. The analysis supported the hypothesis that 'closeness to labor' and the unemployment situation in their home states influenced congressmen's decision to vote for HR 5133.¹ The standard errors show that 'closeness to labor' and unemployment rate were statistically significant at the 0.05 level. However, the former is more important than the latter in explaining the variance in congressmen's voting behavior. The inclusion of unemployment in the model only increases the R statistic by 0.01—see the difference between equations [1] and [2]—which implies that how congressmen voted on the bill was almost totally dependent on their relationship to labor. The hypothesis that the

¹ In order to demonstrate that we were not picking up 'ideology' rather than 'closeness to labor' by using COPE scores, we considered both COPE scores and scores given by Americans for Constitutional Action, a good indicator of a Liberal-Conservative scale. The result showed that the former had a significant effect on voting but not the latter. We used the 1981 COPE score because the 1982 score reflects the actual roll-call voting on HR 5133 in December 1982.

more senior congressmen were less likely to vote for the bill was again rejected at the 0.05 level of significance. The model predicted 81 percent of the cases correctly.

Finally, we attempted to measure the possible impact on congressmen of campaign contributions by labor (and by agricultural groups) given to candidates during the 1982 primary, runoff and general election campaigns (Barone and Ujifusa, 1984). The result showed that the effect of 'closeness to labor' remained statistically significant at the 0.05 level while the effect of campaign contributions by labor (as well as by agricultural organizations) was not statistically significant—see equation [4]. It may be that the effect of labor's campaign contributions tends to be underestimated because campaign contributions covary with COPE scores. In exploring this possibility, we replaced COPE scores with labor's campaign contributions in the model. The analysis showed that the greater were labor's contributions to congressmen, the more likely they would be to vote for HR 5133—see equation [5]. In any case, we believe that the already established relationship between congressmen and labor (as measured by COPE scores) is more important than instrumental pressures such as campaign contributions.

Based on the above logistic model, we estimated the predicted value and the discrepancy between observed and predicted values for each congressman. Table 8 lists those congressmen who showed a large discrepancy between observed and predicted behavior (for a complete list see Kabashima, 1983). The presence of these congressmen may have significantly reduced the fitness of the model, but a close examination of their individual backgrounds provides a partial explanation of this anomaly.

We found above that there was little relationship between congressmen's seniority and their vote for HR 5133. But a close look at the names of those congressmen who voted against the bill in Table 8 suggests that when a congressman assumes an extremely important trade-related position (committee or subcommittee chairmanship) he is more likely to vote against protectionist legislation like local content when other factors are held constant. Henry A. Waxman was chairman of the Health and Environmental Subcommittee of the House Energy and Commerce Committee; Dan Rostenkowski, chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee; Jonathan B. Bingham,

TABLE 8. Congressmen with large discrepancy between observed and predicted behavior.

| <i>Name</i> | <i>Observed value</i> | <i>Predicted value</i> | <i>Discrepancy</i> |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------|
| Henry Waxman (D—California) | 0 | 0.94 | −0.94 |
| Dan Rostenkowski (D—Illinois) | 0 | 0.95 | −0.95 |
| Jonathan Bingham (D—New York) | 0 | 0.96 | −0.96 |
| Matthew McHugh (D—New York) | 0 | 0.89 | −0.89 |
| Albert Gore (D—Tennessee) | 0 | 0.90 | −0.90 |
| Thomas Foley (D—Washington) | 0 | 0.89 | −0.89 |
| Henry Reuss (D—Wisconsin) | 0 | 0.92 | −0.92 |
| Newt Gingrich (R—Georgia) | 1 | 0.09 | 0.91 |
| Thomas Coleman (R—Missouri) | 1 | 0.12 | 0.88 |
| Sam Hall (D—Texas) | 1 | 0.13 | 0.87 |
| Toby Roth (R—Wisconsin) | 1 | 0.12 | 0.88 |

chairman of the International Economic Policy Subcommittee of the House Foreign Affairs Committee; Thomas S. Foley, chairman of the Wheat, Soybeans, and Feed Grains Subcommittee of the House Agricultural Committee; and Henry S. Reuss, chairman of the Joint Economic Committee. Our model predicted an 89–96 percent chance that they would vote for the bill, but they voted against it. Their responsible leadership positions in trade-policy areas may have led them to vote in line with broader national economic interests; their positions may also have made them think seriously about the impact of their own behavior on the rank-and-file.

Why did junior congressmen like Matthew F. McHugh and Albert Gore, Jr vote against the bill even though our model predicted a high chance of their voting for it? According to Barone and Ujifusa, ‘McHugh, unlike many other junior members, concentrates on problems with broad national implications rather than issues that can give him quick points in his district’ (Barone and Ujifusa, 1982: 788). Gore represented the district where Nissan was building a small-truck assembly plant with possible employment for more than 2000 people. Nissan had maintained: ‘Not only would the bill possibly force Nissan to abandon its truck-making plants for Tennessee but it would certainly not force new foreign auto investment in the US’ (*Automotive News*, 10/4/84). As regards those other congressmen who voted for the bill against our model’s prediction, we cannot provide any specific explanation, except to say that they were relatively junior congressmen who did not hold any responsible trade-related positions at the time.

Trade-policy and Foreign-policy Implications

One of the most important findings of the present study is that congressmen’s voting on the bill was more strongly influenced by the nature of their established relationship to labor than by their party affiliation. In fact, congressmen’s decisions to vote for or against the bill were almost totally dependent on how friendly they were to labor. This finding seems to support what Schattschneider and a number of other theorists have said about the dominance of narrow, special interests in the legislative process (Schattschneider, 1935, 1960; Wolf et al., 1965; Pincus, 1975; Brock and Magee, 1978). The study of reciprocal trade by Bauer, Pool, and Dexter, and the study of Washington lobbyists by Milbraith concluded otherwise, suggesting that congressional decisions might be fairly independent of pressures from particular interest groups (Milbraith, 1963).

To some extent, these differing observations may be explained in terms of different types of public policies à la Lowi (distributive, regulative and redistributive) (Lowi, 1964: 677–715), or in terms of the changing macro politico-economic environment. For instance, in the context of the Cold War and the hegemonic reign of the US economy in the 1950s and the early 1960s—the period covered by the above two studies—there was a strong societal consensus in the United States for ‘free trade for the free world’, thus making it difficult for protectionist interest groups to exert dominant influence in Congress (Bergsten, 1971: 620–621; Krasner, 1978: 51–81).

Kingdon takes a middle view that ‘interest groups constitute neither the most important nor the least important of the influences on a congressman’s vote’ (Kingdon, 1973: 140). According to his study of congressmen’s voting decisions, legislators themselves ranked interest groups third in a rank ordering of actual importance, behind fellow congressmen and constituency. But the study points out that an interest group can exert much greater influence when it has some connection with congressmen’s

constituencies (Kingdon, 1973: 143–145). It may be true that the UAW was as influential as it was on the roll-call votes with respect to the local-content legislation because it had effectively mobilized local union members in their lobbying campaign, reminding congressmen of the link between their vote for the bill and their constituency support in elections. There may be yet another explanation, however.

If we focus our attention, as we have, simply on the House vote for local content, the influence of labor was clearly dominant. But it is important to remember that while local content passed the House, it did not become law. If we shift our attention to the fact that the legislation failed to be enacted, then we can conclude just as easily that the influence of the Reagan administration or the free-trade lobby was greater than that of the protectionist lobby led by the UAW. In any case, one needs to draw a distinction ‘between the initiation of a bill and the passage of a law, between the emission of a signal and the commitment of a policy’ (Pastor, 1980: 192). After all, a large majority of bills submitted to Congress every year do not get enacted. But the initiation of a bill itself can serve several different purposes for congressmen. In this regard, Pastor writes:

The purpose (of initiating a bill) is to inform injured or adversely affected groups that the Congress or a particular Legislator is listening and aware of their plight . . . to indicate to a foreign government that the U.S. intends to pursue its interests more forcefully in international negotiations . . . to signal to the executive branch that its administrative or negotiating behavior has either not been satisfactory or not been responsive to the law’s intent (Pastor, 1980: 192).

Perhaps one can say the same thing about voting for a bill, even if, or particularly if, the bill is unlikely to become law in the end.

In 1970, Wilbur Mills, then chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee, introduced a highly protectionist bill on textile imports (the so-called ‘Mills Bill’) to help strengthen the Nixon administration’s negotiating position vis-à-vis Japan on textile export restraint, even though he was a free-trade advocate and opposed to the substance of the bill. He did so because he thought he had an understanding that Nixon would oppose the bill and exercise his veto power, if necessary (Destler, Fukui, and Sato, 1979). We have found no evidence to support the view that there was a similar ‘legislative-executive conspiracy’ on the local content bill. But there is ample evidence to show that many congressmen supported HR 5133 primarily to send a signal to Japan. Tip O’Neill exercised his leadership as Speaker of the House in bringing the bill to the floor in December, 1982 (which was the last month before congressional adjournment) over Sam Gibbons’ objection, because, he believed, ‘it will send a signal to the Japanese that the American people no longer will stand the trade-barriers to US products’ (*Washington Post*, 12/7/82). O’Neill may or may not have seriously wanted HR 5133 to become law. But some congressmen voted for the bill even though they had reservations about its substance, because they did not expect such legislation to clear the Senate or be signed into law by the president. Robert T. Matsui (D—Calif.) was one of them. He voted for local content in the 97th Congress and was going to do the same in the 98th. ‘I don’t know if I would vote for it if I thought it would become law,’ he said, ‘but I think to send messages or signals it is important’ (*Congressional Quarterly*, 1983: 1398).

In fact, some labor representatives themselves admitted in interviews with one of the authors that they never seriously thought local content would become law. What they wanted most was to send messages to the Japanese and the Republican White House which, according to them, had not been sufficiently receptive to labor interests

(Interviews, 1983).² In his public speech in 1983, Sam Gibbons made an apt summary observation about the behavior of some of his colleagues with regard to HR 5133 as follows:

I think that some of the Members voted for it because they figured it never was going to pass; they'd get a free ticket from Labor for having voted for it; and they knew the President would veto it and there was no chance of getting the two-thirds override in the Senate. So they voted for it. But most of them held their nose and came to me to apologize for having to vote for a piece of legislation that was so atrocious as this (LTV, 1983: 110).

In short, believing it would never become law, some congressmen thought of their vote on local content as a 'throwaway vote' and used it to please labor or to log-roll with fellow congressmen seriously promoting the bill, or to send signals to the Japanese government as well as to the US executive branch.

Based on the foregoing discussion, we may be able to offer a proposition that congressmen's voting decisions are more likely to be influenced by their already established closeness to special-interest groups rather than by their party affiliation or ideological convictions when they know that the legislation at hand is unlikely to become law, and that congressmen often use their vote under such circumstances to send signals to domestic constituencies and to foreign governments. On the other hand, if congressmen perceive that a given piece of legislation with potentially serious social consequences is likely to get enacted, they will be more likely to deflect pressures from particular interest groups. Conversely, they may be strongly motivated to resist incorporating special-interest demands into an important bill with generally positive expected social consequences so that the chance of its successful enactment can be enhanced.³ For instance, labor did not seem to exert much influence over the Trade and Tariff Act of 1984, which passed Congress in October of that year despite labor opposition. Moreover, most of the protectionist provisions in the reciprocity legislation and in the trade remedy reform legislation (which labor would have liked) were either diluted or eliminated before they were incorporated into that 'omnibus' trade act.

From the standpoint of alliance management between the United States and Japan, the above theoretical observations provide less than total reassurance. Even if a bill introduced in the US Congress does not become law, it can have serious, detrimental effects on the bilateral relationship if the bill is highly visible and perceived by the Japanese as being targeted at them. The Japanese are hypersensitive to what the Americans say about them. When a US congressman, even a relatively unknown figure, makes a critical remark about Japan it often becomes front-page news in Tokyo

² One heard a similar argument in the summer of 1985 when a highly protectionist bill called the 'Trade Emergency and Export Promotion Act' was introduced in both houses of Congress by three senior Democrats. The legislation would require Japan and three other US trading partners to cut their trade surpluses with the United States by 5 percent, or face a punitive 25 percent additional tariff on all exports to the US market. Sponsors of the bill, which was described by Treasury Secretary, James A. Baker III, as 'protectionist legislation of the rankest kind', made clear that their major goal was to prod the president to step up the administration's efforts to get greater advantages for American exporters—especially in the Japanese market—and to signal to Japan that greater access to its market was the only way to avert a punitive tax (*Washington Post and New York Times*, July 18, 1985).

³ This would be especially true if the man in the White House represented his own party and took a firm stand on such legislation in an election year. Under such circumstances, congressmen's party affiliation may prove to be a more important determinant of their voting behavior than the nature of their relationship to labor or any other special interests. These points deserve further investigation in additional case studies.

(Sato and Hodin, 1982). Thus, one can imagine the impact of year-long acrimonious congressional debates on anti-Japanese, protectionist legislation, to say nothing of its final passage in the House. The media in Japan closely followed the proceedings on HR 5133 in the House, and its passage in December, 1982 was reported as a shocking news event across the Pacific, as was the House approval of HR 1234 (a local-content bill submitted in the 98th Congress) in November, 1983, which came only two days after Japan announced an extension of 'voluntary' restraints on its automobile exports to the United States for a fourth year beginning in April, 1984.

Some argue that although the Japanese have complained about the US pressure tactics, it is because of such tactics that they have made a series of trade concessions. They contend that not only has there been no visible long-term damage to the bilateral relationship, but that same relationship continues to deepen and improve as the two economies adjust to each other. It may look that way on the surface. However, the fact that the Japanese have in the past made concessions under US pressure does not necessarily guarantee that the tactics employed will not prove counterproductive in the long run. For, under the surface of a seemingly calm and quiet ocean, there may be a strong undercurrent of nationalistic Japanese resentment and hostility building in an ominous fashion. In the perceptions of most Americans, Japan may not seem to be carrying out international responsibilities commensurate with its economic power; however, the United States may not seem to be properly adjusting itself in Japanese eyes to the new international reality *after hegemony* (Keohane, 1984). Instead of treating Japan as an equal partner with whom to consult closely and to share economic leadership, 'Some Americans still tend to look on Japan as a protégé that should acquiesce to US wishes' (Destler and Sato, 1982: 8).

We do not mean to suggest that signals should not be sent to Japan. But they should be sent more quietly, more responsibly, in a controlled fashion, and preferably at the intergovernmental working level (Destler et al., 1976). The Japanese are increasingly upset these days by frequent and noisy signals from Capitol Hill, based on what they perceive as one-sided and oversimplified presentations of reality. This was most evident in early 1985 when Congress passed two resolutions condemning Japan and Japanese trade policy, despite the fact that the main cause of the \$35 billion bilateral trade deficit (and the \$123 billion global trade deficit) of 1984 was the US federal budget deficit and the overvalued dollar. Moreover, numerous pieces of highly protectionist legislation have been introduced in the 99th Congress, aimed specifically at Japan as a target, including a new automobile local content bill (HR 1350) introduced by Representative Dennis Hertel (D—Michigan). According to a survey of all Japanese Lower House members (with a response rate of 82.7 percent) conducted in October, 1985, as much as 61 percent of the respondents considered the anti-Japanese protectionist move in the US Congress as 'unreasonable' and 'unconscionable' (*Mainichi Shimbun*, 10/18/85). 'Scape-goating' of Japan or 'Japan-bashing' may be useful as an emotional outlet in the short run. But, in addition to distracting the American public from the domestic roots of trade problems, it may have a serious 'spill-over effect' on the bilateral relationship. When an economic dispute becomes especially 'visible and embittered', this 'jeopardizes cooperation in non-economic as well as economic fields' (The United States—Japan Economic Relations Group, 1981: 96).

Carried to the extreme, the sending of threatening signals from Washington may help tilt Japan's delicate domestic political balance in favor of those groups which anxiously await an opportunity to assert an 'independent' policy line divorced from the context of the US—Japan security treaty, as implicit in the title of a 1980 publication on Japanese

defense policy, *Waiting for a Pearl Harbor* (Kataoka, 1980). This view is echoed by a European analyst who writes: 'economic conflict will spill over into political conflict and may have a serious impact on Japan's current orientation towards the West' (Mendle, 1983). In short, sending acrimonious and irresponsible signals to Japan by way of Congress, such as those on local content, may prove counterproductive in the long run by triggering a nationalistic backlash on the part of the Japanese, making the resolution of future bilateral issues enormously more difficult and threatening the viability of what Ambassador Mike Mansfield calls 'the most important bilateral relationship in the world' (Destler and Sato, 1982: 271–293).

Unfortunately, as far as most congressmen are considered, whatever impact their actions may have in Japan or in any other foreign country may be only a secondary consideration. This point is driven home by Neustadt: 'men are booed and booted out at home or cheered and re-elected or promoted there. Whatever the effects on them of happenings abroad, these cannot be made manifest in their careers except at home' (Neustadt, 1970: 118). One could say that this kind of myopic orientation among politicians and policymakers may be almost inevitable in a state-centered international system, particularly in a country like the United States which has long been used to a dominant leadership role in the world. But such an orientation is getting increasingly out of line with the reality of declining US hegemony and growing international interdependence, which requires closer cooperation and greater mutual political sensitivity among the major industrialized countries of the West.

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