

mon defense, to give foreign aid, and to have large numbers of its citizens traveling abroad.

Hence, the first order of business in your last New Year's Day Message was for Congress to enact an anti-inflation tax, which, coupled with expenditure restraint and appropriate monetary policy, could help stem the inflationary pressures which threatened our economic prosperity, stability and our trade surplus. You also urged labor and management restraints in wage-price decisions and instructed your principal officers in the economic area to work with leaders in business and labor to make effective a voluntary program of wage-price restraint. A similar instruction on preventing our exports from being reduced and our imports increased by crippling work stoppages was prescribed.

Unfortunately, delays in attending to this first order of business in 1968 contributed to a continued instability in the economy and a very substantial decline in our trade surplus. However, the progress that has been made in recent months has laid the foundation for a much better national performance in the area in 1969 and years ahead, *if* the nation carries through with the program now in progress.

The Revenue and Expenditure Control Act, finally enacted in late June, established our commitment to fiscal restraint.

The Congress and the President will have to decide in the months ahead on fiscal policy for the period beginning July 1, 1969. This policy will require decisions on expenditures and taxes necessary to provide that degree of fiscal restraint which is a fundamental element in an adequate follow-through in the ongoing process of disinflation, restoration of our competitive position and provision of a healthy trade surplus. This fiscal policy, coupled with appropriate monetary policy by the Federal Reserve Board, will make possible the avoidance of the excessive demand that has contributed to the decline in our trade surplus. It will also enhance our competitive position by arresting inflation and enabling the economy to move back toward reasonable price stability, given accompanying voluntary restraint in wage-price decisions.

The Cabinet Committee on Price Stability, after consultation with business and labor leaders, including the President's Labor-Management Advisory Committee, is submitting a report on the progress made and the plans for future cooperative efforts on the wage-price front.

In 1968 we witnessed the adverse effects on our international trade position of the work stoppage in copper and the potential work stoppages in steel and on the docks. These focused renewed attention on the need for both labor and management to recognize the implications of their actions and their positions on wage disputes and their relationship to the protection of our national interest in maintaining the strength of the dollar.