

Mr. Gilbert, do you think that we were wrong in our position in the Kennedy Round negotiations in asking for a guaranteed access for grains from the Common Market?

Mr. GILBERT. No, I think this was certainly indicated. I think the chances of getting it, of course, were very limited, because the Common Market was in the process of being formed while the negotiations were going on.

Senator MILLER. Yes. But by the time the negotiations were finalized it was well formed and had set its policy up. And as you know, we did not receive the guaranteed access that we requested. Do you think that we were proper in asking for that?

Mr. GILBERT. I think so. I also have the feeling that perhaps what we did get was a sharing of free grain around the world, which perhaps as a practical matter got us more than the access agreement would have afforded us. But I am not an expert on the agricultural side.

Senator MILLER. Well I would like to ask you how you justify that statement you have just made. Do you think perhaps that this gave us something just as good?

Mr. GILBERT. I think I would probably have to justify it on the basis of a very great confidence in Ambassador Roth and his staff. And I know that that was his impression, that he would have got more as a practical matter than he would have gotten any other way.

Senator MILLER. I don't recall Ambassador Roth so testifying before this committee. I believe that he indicated some optimism that it might be a suitable matter, but I don't believe that he testified that this was just as good.

Mr. GILBERT. I don't want to put words in his mouth, I think as a negotiated matter he got the best he could for us under the circumstances.

Senator MILLER. On that I agree with you. But I think Ambassador Roth expressed his unhappiness over the fact that this was the best he could do, and he implied that he would have much preferred to have the guaranteed access.

Now, do you think that on our side that we were wrong in taking a position that certain types of imports such as dairy, meats, mink pelts, and the like, should be limited to a certain base percentage of our domestic consumption, with the understanding that as our consumption increases the percentage will stay stable, but the volume within the percentage will go up?

Mr. GILBERT. Can I make an indirect answer to that question and the one before? It seems to me—and I again repeat that I don't try to pass off as an expert on anything agricultural—but it seems to me that what we did export to Europe is a system of agricultural support and controls which they have copied pretty well from ourselves, and that as a citizen I would certainly wish that we didn't and weren't committed to this general approach of price supports and controls. Once we do those internally, we have certainly got to have something which parallels on the inside, or we would be supporting the price of these commodities all over the world. We let them come in with freedom. But I think in effect that that is about what the EEC was doing with its agricultural products. I wish we both would learn not to do it.