

NATIONAL FEDERATION OF INDEPENDENT BUSINESS

JULY 13, 1967.

HON. HALE BOGGS,
*Chairman, Subcommittee on Foreign Economic Policy,
Joint Economic Committee,
Washington, D.C.*

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: We wish to thank you for this opportunity to express to the Committee the views of our small business members on United States foreign trade policy. These views, as you know, are expressed by members through our The Mandate polls, of which there have been 16 during the past seven years dealing specifically with foreign trade problems, and in responses to our yearly economic surveys.

Responses to two of our economic surveys indicate the interest that our members, and all small business, have in foreign trade policy. Our current survey, based on 235,000 members, indicates 4% involved in export activity (the range of involvement runs from 1% among retailers to over 20% among manufacturers). Our 1963 survey, based on 186,362 members, indicated 15% of our respondents suffering injury due to import competition. Of this number, 89% ascribed the harm to price competition and 11% to the style or type of foreign products.

In any case, the polls, which experience has shown do reflect generally the views of small business as a whole, indicate the following convictions:

1. That Congress itself should exercise greater interest in and authority over international trade agreements, and that the authority of the Executive in this area be correspondingly curtailed; and

2. That the Congress should develop mechanisms for preventing undue injury to United States firms through import competition, such as in proposals to require clearer marking of foreign goods to identify the country of origin; to require that tariffs be tied to differentials in wage rates, and to require that the Treasury Department complete its investigations into complaints of dumping within a shorter period of time than is now the practice.

It is of interest that our 1962 survey gave strong indications that a large number of small businesses interested in foreign trade either are unaware of assistance programs available through the Commerce and State Departments, as well as the Small Business Administration, or do not understand them fully, or knowing and understanding them do not feel that they meet the needs of small business. This would indicate a need to publicize these programs more than has been done to date. We of the Federation are trying to do our part in the news section of our The Mandate.

In conclusion, we note in passing that in view of our interest in foreign trade, the Senate Commerce Committee under the Chairmanship of the Hon. Warren Magnuson twice commissioned our Vice-President, Mr. George J. Burger, to act as its unofficial special consultant in investigating small business export opportunities during two trips, made at personal expense, through the EFTA and Common Market countries.

With all best wishes,
Sincerely,

C. WILSON HARDER, *President.*