

suitable for a wide variety of end-use needs. At one time, man was dependent entirely upon natural products for his drugs and medicines. Today, most of our medicines are synthesized in factories. A century ago, Goodrich learned to vulcanize rubber from the latex of trees and make it an important industrial product. Today, we have literally dozens of synthetic rubbers that for many uses are better than natural rubber. For thousands of years, man was dependent solely upon animal and vegetable fibers for clothing. Today, we make nylon superior to the best silk and a host of other synthetic fibers to meet our needs. In recent years, we have even begun to supply specialized food supplements from our factories—products such as sulphur-bearing amino acids and vitamins. Research and technology has greatly extended man's choices.

As a result of these far-reaching developments, we are no longer dependent upon specialized regions for many of our wants. It is not surprising, therefore, that foreign trade has not kept pace with industrial growth. In the United States, for example, the record shows that our foreign trade has been progressively decreasing as a percent of our total economy, even though it has increased in actual dollars. In 1800, our foreign trade represented more than 12 percent of our gross national product. By 1875, it had decreased to 6 percent and in another 75 years to about 3 percent. Currently, it is in the 2 to 3 percent range. Figure 1 shows the record of our imports as a percentage of gross national product.

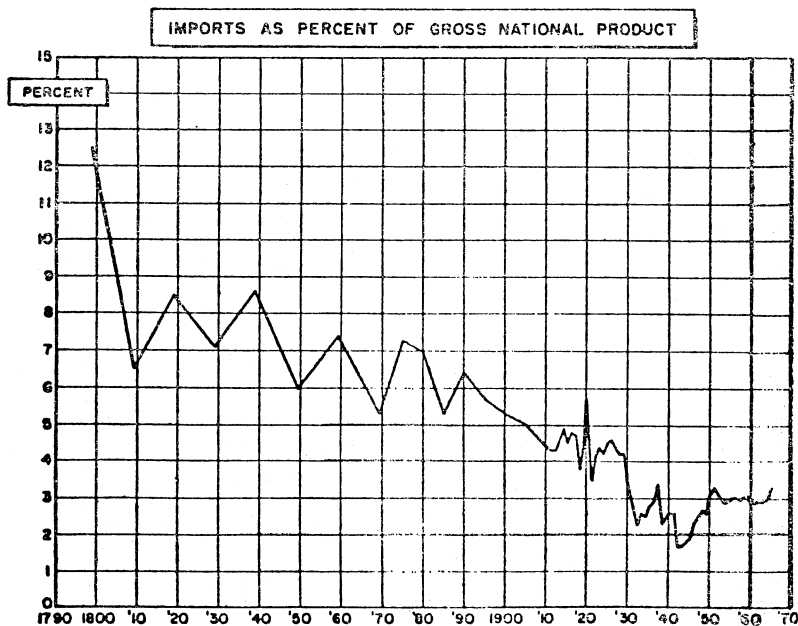


Figure 1