included within textile products for duty and customs treatment and as this Commiteee has heard, the sponsors of legislation dealing with textiles are in complete support of our suggested amendment.

Cordage products from both natural and man-made fibers are essential to various segments of our American industry. Ropes and cables for domestic maritime use, farm twine and industrial twines are vital to our business and industry. The natural fibers used in the production of these commodities are imported. In the field of man-made fibers nearly all of the raw materials for cordage products are made and produced domestically. The end products made from these raw materials are so important to our country in time of national emergency that the Government has in the past maintained and still continues to maintain a stockpile of natural fibers for the making of ropes and twines. During World War II the United States and Canadian Cordage Industries were producing, of necessity, the tremendous quantity of rope and twine needed for the war effort. In 1945 there were 22 members of the United States Cordage Industry operating 23 mills. As the effects of the War in Europe were overcome imports of cordage products from Europe began to come into the United States in significant quantities. Due in part to the continuing cheapness of labor in the European producing countries and, in the case of farm twines, the absence of duty of any kind, such imports grew at an alarming rate. The net effect has been that of these 22 companies with 23 mills in 1945 there are now only 10 companies operating 14 mills. There is no question but that the number of mills being operated will be further reduced if the usurping of United States markets by imports is allowed to continue. One way to show the effects on the domestic production is to look at the record on hard fiber rope. We start with 1955 by which time the foreign industries were again producing at what should have been their normal productive rate and bring the statistics to 1967.

During this period the growth in the use of synthetic ropes in the U.S. market reduced the market for hard fiber rope from 105,000,000 pounds per year in 1955 to approximately 72,000,000 pounds in 1967. This total figure for 1967 is not truly representative because in 1966 and 1967 there were large increases in demand for rope due entirely to an increase in demand for hard fiber cordage by the United States Government to meet the needs of the war in Vietnam. However, the commercial market for hard fiber rope has declined over 53% since 1955. Yet, during that same period imports of hard fiber rope into the United States went from 7.6% to approximately 25%. Obviously, the United States manufacturers are now selling about 45% less than what they were selling in 1955. The trend continues downward.

In the case of synthetic ropes the trend is exactly the same, but since the use of such ropes is still in its infancy the figures are not presented since there is no historical base for accurate comparison. The facts are that the American Industry pioneered the research in the use of synthetics in the production of rope and twine and were hopeful that this new development would restore its position in the American market. However, the foreign manufacturers are now producing and selling synthetic ropes at a price level which will make it impossible for United States manufacturers to compete once the Kennedy Round rates are in force. The only way that we can hope to continue supplying our part of the American market is if Congress assures us of a reasonable portion of that market.

The effects of such continued decline in American production is bringing about a corresponding decrease in the availability of spinning capacity to produce rope and twine not only to meet the requirements of industry but more importantly it will make it impossible for the United States to produce its requirements in event of national emergency. As we pointed out above, in World War II the United States was able to increase its production almost three-fold in order to meet our requirements. This, with support from contiguous foreign nations, enabled us to meet our emergency needs. We wish that we could say that is the case today. Due to the reduced number of cordage companies and the decline in spinning capacity, we seriously doubt that today we could repeat our efforts of World War II. Certainly if the industry continues to decline our country will be faced with an unacceptable risk of shortage in the event of war. This applies with equal force to contiguous nations producing cordage products.

Our country spends considerable sums and energy to assure that we will have an adequate mobilization base to meet our emergency requirements. In some areas preference is given for the purchase of American products. In