STATEMENT OF MORTON H. DARMAN, CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD, NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF WOOL MANUFACTURERS, AND IN BEHALF OF NATIONAL WOOL GROWERS ASSOCIATION

Mr. DARMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, my name is Morton H. Darman. I appear here today as chairman of the board of the National Association of Wool Manufacturers, 1200 17th Street NW., this city. I am president of The Top Company, 470 Atlantic Avenue, Boston, Mass., a manufacturer of wool tops.

The association is the national trade organization of the wool textile industry. Its members manufacture more than 70 percent of the textiles made in the United States on the woolen and worsted systems, except carpets and rugs. The Boston Wool Trade Association, representing almost all the wool dealers of this country, is an affiliate of our association.

I am also speaking on behalf of the National Wool Growers Association, which represents the quarter million producers of raw wool in the United States.

The wool textile industry is situated principally in the southeastern, New England, and Middle Atlantic States, although there are mills in 32 of the 50 States. Wool is grown in all 50 States of the Union, principally in the Rocky Mountain States, Texas, California, and certain of the Midwestern States.

The wool manufacturing industry of the United States provides the only market for domestically produced raw wool. Therefore, the welfare of the wool growing industry is directly related to the health of the domestic wool textile industry.

In this connection, I should point out that Congress in enacting and extending the National Wool Act of 1954 has declared that production of raw wool in the United States is essential to the national security; but wool has no security value unless the capacity exists within this country to manufacture it into usable textile products.

Mr. Chairman, we concur in the statement of Mr. Frederick B. Dent, president of the American Textile Manufacturers Institute, Inc. To conserve the time of the committee, I shall limit my testimony to a discussion of the impact of wool textile imports upon the domestic industry, and the necessity for reasonable limitations upon these imports such as would be provided by your bill, H.R. 11578, which is cosponsored by nearly half your colleagues in the House.

At the outset, I wish to emphasize that the U.S. market for wool textiles has been penetrated far more deeply by imports than has the market of any other segment of the domestic textile industry. At the same time, however, I stress that the wool textile import problem will not be solved absent an industrywide all-fiber remedy as contemplated by the pending legislation.

Within the past 10 years the ratio of wool textile imports to domestic consumption has grown from 9.3 percent to an all time record high of 22.2 percent, according to the most recent Commerce Department statistics. Quantitatively, such imports in the first quarter of this year exceeded those of the corresponding period in 1967 by 20 percent.