JOINT STATEMENT OF OVER 100 MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE, PRESENTED BY HON. WILLIAM JENNINGS BRYAN DORN (SOUTH CAROLINA), SECRETARY, INFORMAL HOUSE TEXTILE COMMITTEE GROUP

The volume and trend of low-wage foreign textile imports including man-made fiber, filaments, and filament yarns are undermining the U.S. textile industry. Their rate of growth demonstrates beyond questiton that foreign exporters, in the absence of inclusive quantitative limitations on imports, can exploit the U.S. market for textiles at will.

For the first four months of 1968, total textile imports reached 1,055,600,000 equivalent square yards—a record for any consecutive four-month period. At this rate, they will reach almost 3.2 billion square yards in 1968, 14% over the previous record set in 1966.

The textile import problem resolves itself into this overriding issue:

> Will U.S. textile trade policy be such as to permit the textile industry to survive and grow as textile markets expand, to provide additional job opportunities and enlarge its contributions to our economy in general; or will it cause the shifting of productive capacity abroad to supply this market with a consequent loss of jobs, capital investment, and tax revenues?

Despite the fact that the U.S. textile industry is the world's most efficient, it is marked by unique characteristics which impose no inherent economic limitation on a low-wage producer's ability to exploit its markets. These characteristics, which are worldwide in their application, have led other industrialized countries to adopt quantitative restrictions on textile imports of all fibers as the only answer to the import problem. The United States of all developed countries, has perhaps the most liberal textile trade policy. Except for very lenient restraints on cotton textile imports, no limits on the growth of U.S. textile imports.

The impact of textile imports is widespread, but nowhere is it greater than on employment. The textile-fiber-apparel industry provides 26% of the manufacturing jobs in the Appalachian region. More than one-third of the manufacturing jobs in New York City are in this industry. In the States of North Carolina and South Carolina, and Georgia, it is the leading manufacturing employer. In Virginia, it supplies over one-quarter of the manufacturing employment, and in Tennessee, 30%. It makes substantial contributions to industrial employment in New England, and in such States as Pennsylvania and New Jersey.

Altogether, some 970,000 persons are employed by the textile industry. Another 1.3 million manufacture apparel. Still another 2,000,000 are employed in activities supplying the industry, such as the production of fibers, chemicals and machinery. It is the largest customer of the nation's chemical industry. It provides the only domestic market for the products of 243,000 sheep ranches and 500,000 cotton farms.

The jobs of millions of Americans depend, in large measure, on responsible action to limit the growth of textile imports.

The legislation which you have introduced, Mr. Chairman, and which we are co-sponsoring provides just this. It recognizes the necessity for sharing the growth of U.S. textile markets with our friends abroad. It provides for a large volume of textile imports plus participation in future market growth. At the same time, it would place some restraint on the rate at which imports can grow.

If we have learned anything in our efforts to meet the problem of textile imports, it is that its solution must come through Congressional action. And, its solution requires quantitative limitations on an all-fiber basis, limitations which apply to textile products, manmade staple fiber, filaments, and filament yarns.

What is more important: the provisions of jobs for workers in Japan or Hong Kong—or for United States workers? What is more urgent: a textile trade policy that seeks the retrenchment of the domestic industry or its expansion? We believe the answers to these questions are obvious.

To achieve the answers to those questions and consistent with the recommendations of the Textile industry, we strongly urge the Committee's approval and Congressional passage of H.R. 11578 with an amendment to the definition to insure that cordage products are recognized as a part of the Textile industry.

Mr. Chairman, 196 of your colleagues have joined you in sponsoring your legislation. Over 100 members have by letter, phone, or personal request authorized me, as the Secretary of our Informal House Textile Committee