

STATEMENT OF FRED BISSINGER, PRESIDENT, AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF WOOLEN IMPORTERS, INC.; ACCOMPANIED BY DAVID SMITH, NORMAN LICHTENSTEIN, AND MICHAEL P. DANIELS, COUNSEL

Mr. BISSINGER. Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, my name is Fred Bissinger, Jr., president of the American Association of Woolen Importers, Inc., a nonprofit organization of American small business members. I am appearing before you today as their spokesman.

Mr. David Smith, on my right, and Mr. Norman Lichtenstein, on my left, are members of the association.

I wish to submit my prepared statement to be included in the record at this time.

I would like to preface my remarks at this time by saying I certainly wish the group of very capable, intelligent gentlemen who have preceded me all day at these hearings were members of my group. It would make my job much easier.

May I take a small portion of your valuable time to give the following personal information, with the hope you will be more understanding and more receptive to my observations and opinions dealing with imported woolen and worsted men's wear materials.

Beginning March 1918, I became employed in the men's clothing business as a stockboy. Later, as a retail salesman, retail store manager, wholesale clothing salesman, piece-goods buyer, and production manager of men's clothing manufacturing. All these positions were in the quality men's clothing bracket.

Starting April 1953, I became assistant to the vice president in charge of men's wear sales for the Forstmann Woolen Co.

In August 1956, I started selling my current line of quality worsted men's wear, materials from Japan.

In addition to contacting the men's wear wholesale clothing manufacturers the past 15 years, I have maintained a personal contact with some of my former retail clothing accounts in Los Angeles, San Francisco, Baltimore, Washington, Chicago, Cincinnati, Boston, and New York.

For the record, based on the consensus of the opinions of the quality men's clothing wholesalers and retailers, as expressed to the members of the American Association of Woolen Importers, the market for American-made quality men's wear, including suits, sport coats, slacks, topcoats, and overcoats, is largely dependent on their being tailored, using imported worsted and woolen materials.

Without an adequate supply of these imported fabrics, the quality men's clothing manufacturers and the quality men's wear retailers would no longer be able to serve the clothing needs of the affluent American men.

Obviously, the loss of this quality sales volume would result in lower employment in both the American men's wear wholesale and the men's wear retail establishments.

In the case of Japanese men's wear worsted-type materials, please let me give you an item for the record.