

be presented by the president of the American National Cattlemen's Association and believe it expresses well the substance of the changes sought in the existing law, the need for such changes and the depressing future which faces the cattle industry if these adjustments are not made promptly.

Therefore, I wish only to reiterate a few brief excerpts from the statement which I submitted to the Senate Finance Committee last fall. I said at that time:

Unless imports are more strictly limited and controlled, the domestic producer of cattle and other livestock for meat is faced with only two alternatives. Either he must continue to expect and receive inadequate prices for his products or he must quit the business. The farmer is caught both coming and going. If he reduces production in the hope of improving his price, foreign imports rush in to fill the gap, and both his price and his income suffer. If he continues to increase production, he is accused of ignoring the law of supply and demand and told that his own overproduction is the cause of the painfully inadequate prices about which he understandably complains.

Gentlemen, if the continued existence of this situation is a deliberate national policy, I submit it is grossly unfair to the producer, deceiving of the American consumer, disastrously unwise and, indeed, dangerous in terms of national security. It asks the producer to market his product for less than it costs to produce. It deludes the consumer with artificially low prices now and the likelihood that when the domestic producer is finally driven out of business the price of imported meat will skyrocket. And, it threatens the United States with future dependence upon foreign nations for an adequate food supply.

As I said in my statement last fall:

Perhaps it is not a serious matter that we should some day soon find ourselves suddenly dependent upon foreign producers for major food commodities * * * I believe that it is a serious matter. And if it is, and if we wish to avoid such a day in our future, I am hard put on the basis of existing evidence to find any solution that does not include meaningful tightening of our import quota laws.

I would hope that this committee would not wish to see repeated in the area of meat imports the sorry spectacle which we have recently witnessed with respect to "loophole" importations of dairy products to the admitted detriment of the domestic dairy industry.

I, therefore, sincerely commend to this committee the pending measures authorizing appropriate adjustments in Public Law 88-482 with the hope that, in your wisdom, you may see fit to consider them promptly and favorably.

Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Mr. Belcher. Are there any questions?

The next witness, the Honorable G. Elliott Hagan, is from the State of Georgia. We appreciate having you with us and you are recognized.

STATEMENT OF HON. G. ELLIOTT HAGAN, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF GEORGIA

Mr. HAGAN. I wish to come to you today in regard to the problem of excessive meat imports into this country. It is clear that meat imports have now reached the point where domestic livestock producers are in an untenable position of having to compete with foreign producers. Therefore, certain revisions in our present quota system are urgently needed.