

or meat products. These bills are, in my opinion, unnecessary and unwarranted.

The American consumer today is in the fortunate position of having a tremendous choice of merchandise. With specific reference to food products, no nation in the world boasts either such variety in its stores or such quality in the foods on sale there.

Manufacturing this food and transporting it—getting it to the right place when it is required—is a tremendous and complicated endeavor. Maintaining food availability requires a constant balance of many forces. American consumers are fortunate in being able to purchase a wide variety of high protein, nutritious, low-fat content manufactured meat products. In large metropolitan areas, such as my own, many consumers depend upon products such as frankfurters, sausages, and ground beef, as food staples. Imported meat serves an indispensable role in supplying manufacturing meats for the many U.S. concerns that make these necessary, low-cost food products.

As you gentlemen may well know, the New York City area has the largest proportion of low-income citizens in the country and these people, and the stores that supply them with food, depend on these less-expensive meat products. It would be a crime to deprive the several millions of these, mostly minority groups, of their regular diet. It is well known in industry circles how much higher the price on these important less-expensive meat products would go, if there should be any further curtailment of available supplies of this type meat. I notice someone said about 2 or 3 cents a pound. That is ridiculous.

The less-expensive meat foods we are talking about are, without question, the year-round, daily diet foods of the poor, the old, and the infirm—the blacks, Puerto Ricans, and other Spanish-speaking people, as well as all recent immigrants. These are the people that need your help.

Over the last decade, suitable manufacturing meat from domestic sources has become scarce. Though I claim no complete knowledge of the beef cattle business, I am told this is because of the decline in dairy cow numbers, the failure of an increase in bull numbers, increased longevity on the part of beef cows—in short, because our sources for the manufacturing meat are either declining or not keeping pace with the tremendous upsurge in demand for such products.

Over these last 10 years, meat processors have come more and more to depend on imported beef from Australia and New Zealand to supplement what is frequently an erratic and insufficient domestic supply. They may enter into contracts for the purchase of imported meat well ahead of actual delivery and this gives them a form of insurance without which prices would vary erratically.

But while the meat processors and retail stores depend on a free availability of imported meat, it is the consumers who would be hurt the most without it. In the lower income areas around the New York metropolitan area, for example, these manufactured products are mainstays. With our present concern with poverty, with hunger, malnutrition, and even starvation in the United States, it would be tragic to inflict yet another blow upon such people by the enactment of new quota proposals on imported meats.

In times of calamity, whether natural or man made, people must have food. The Coordinating Committee of the Food Industries, Inc.,