

(Prepared statement of Mr. Keith follows:)

STATEMENT OF HON. HASTINGS KEITH, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE
STATE OF MASSACHUSETTS

This morning, Mr. Chairman, as your Committee hears the cases presented by many hard-pressed industries, the fishing industry of New England is in the midst of its worst, and perhaps last, crisis. In traditional fishing ports of Gloucester, Boston, and New Bedford, captains are tying up their boats in desperation at their vanishing profits and their disappearing markets. Inundated by imports and left helpless by government inaction, this industry now faces the ultimate prospect of extinction.

To my understanding, this has never been what is meant by "free trade." The argument for healthy competition with imports has never meant monopoly domination of our market by imports. And yet this is exactly what the American fishing industry is facing today. In the fish products market as a whole, foreign imports now supply 60%—some \$720 million annually—but in the market for New England's groundfish products, imports supply an astounding 80%.

For New England especially, the situation has obviously gone beyond any definition of the word competition. Verified dumping attempts by foreign exporters indicate that their intention is to eliminate the American domestic supplier from the American market entirely. The United States has now become the world's foremost importer of fish products, and has slipped from second to sixth place among fishing nations—behind Russia, Communist China, Japan, Peru, and Norway.

The plight of this industry, Mr. Chairman, is solid evidence of the need for some minimal protection—whether through the comprehensive fair trade bill now before your Committee, or through the particular legislation which I have filed affecting imported fish products. American fishermen are not asking for elimination of foreign competition; they are asking for protection against extinction.

We who represent fishing communities know that import restrictions are no substitute for a strong and competitive industry, and it is essential that American fishing be upgraded and modernized. While this industry struggles to get back on its feet, however, it is crucial to reserve some share of the American market for its products.

Should the process of monopolization by imports continue, American commercial fishing will have no chance to grow and our opportunity to participate in the further development of the vast food resources of the seas will be lost. As one who has long worked for government approval of Fish Protein Concentrate—a revolutionary new food product, commonly called "fish flour"—I believe the oceans can produce a tremendous new abundance of food for the hungry both here and abroad.

Hunger is not confined to the underdeveloped countries of South America, Africa, and Asia, but as was shown in the CBS documentary of several weeks ago, it is prevalent even in this, the richest country in the world. Kwashiorkor, a disease of malnutrition which I witnessed in trips to Peru and Mexico ten years ago, is present even now in several areas of the United States.

Food from the ocean can help eliminate this blight. But to tap these resources, and to develop the ocean food technology of the future, we must retain a viable commercial fishing industry. Help is needed if this industry, which has contributed so much to the Nation's past, is to survive and contribute to the future.

Mr. BURKE. You will stay here for the questioning, Congressman?

Mr. KEITH. Yes.

Mr. BURKE. Mr. James D. Ackert will be the leading witness.

Is it the intention of all you gentlemen to testify together? Are you all on the same side?

STATEMENT OF JAMES D. ACKERT, DOMESTIC PRODUCERS
ASSOCIATION OF NEW ENGLAND

Mr. ACKERT. I will be the only witness, Congressman, to speak for my local area, and then Mr. Nickerson will be speaking for New Bedford.