

The statistics revealed at that exhibit by the National Footwear Manufacturers Association showed that in 3 short years, shoe imports leaped from 87,063,000 pairs worth \$118,478,000 in 1965 to 129,134,000 pairs valued at \$217,593,000 in 1967.

Thus, Mr. Chairman and gentlemen of the committee, I think you can readily see why Congressman Burke and I feel we must continue to press for effective steps in every possible area, even as the Tariff Commission study progresses, to provide urgently needed relief for the American shoe and leather industries. The legislation you are considering can be a major factor in that regard.

Mr. Chairman, I have had extensive experience with the impact of imports from overseas. I saw the fishing industry of the United States destroyed. With the shoe imports I predict the same kind of a picture for the shoe industry of the United States—imports 1 percent of domestic production in 1955, anticipated 50 percent in 1969.

Mr. Chairman, this cannot continue if we are to have a shoe industry in the United States of America.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for your kind attention.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much, Mr. Bates, for coming to the committee and giving us the benefit of your thinking on this matter. Any questions?

Mr. HERLONG. I would just like to compliment the gentleman on a very fine statement.

Mr. BATES. Thank you.

Mr. HERLONG. I appreciate it.

The CHAIRMAN. My Byrnes.

Mr. BYRNES. I too want to join in complimenting the gentleman. He has been very helpful to the committee.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Burke.

Mr. BURKE. I also wish to commend your colleague, Mr. Bates, and no one knows the shoe problem any better than Congressman Bates because he has been working with it for many, many years.

I would like to ask the Congressman if it isn't true that we in New England learned a long time ago as a result of what happened to the textile industry and the fishing industry, what can happen to other industries, and it is because of this that you take the strong stand that you do here this morning.

Mr. BATES. Yes. Thank you, Mr. Burke. I have seen it all happen in my own district, the shoes, the hats, the fish, the textiles, electronics, and the shoes are now going down the road of the fishing industry unless we do something about it. The hour is very, very late.

Mr. BURKE. Do you agree with the statement made by the head of the shoe industry here in America if imports continue at the present rate this year—I know you are acquainted with the fact that in January there was a 73-percent increase in imports over the same month of a year ago—the imports will then represent approximately 35 percent of the domestic market.

Mr. BATES. Yes, this year and it is expected probably next year, 1969, up to 50 percent. There is nothing to stop them from going that high and a lot higher. We are on the road to the destruction of the shoe industry in America unless we do something.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you again, Mr. Bates, for a very fine statement.

Mr. BATES. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.