

How could this come about in the "land of opportunity" and what is the "establishment"?

OPPORTUNITY

Mink ranchers, like millions of their compatriots, living and dead, have seized upon a natural resource of this great country, and by imagination and determination have molded from their labor a significant contribution to the cultural life of the world. If we are permitted to mention in this vein the unique and sometimes gigantic American contributions to the life of the 20th century, such as movies, in social penetration, mass production, in economic upheaval, and jazz for individual artistic achievement, it is hardly far fetched to list among these the rise of mink, and particularly natural colored mink, to a summit position in the world's oldest industry, the fashion complex. For there are literally hundreds of millions of women the world over today who sigh about, and have violent opinions for or against mink.

Thirty years ago this was not the case. In those days mink, trapped out of the forests of North America, reached the fur market in very small, irregular quantities, and remained a fashion curiosity until the imagination and genius of the American rancher, through anguished experimentation and prodigious investment of labor and capital, pushed it to the top of the heap in the hearts of fashion-conscious women of the world.

THE ESTABLISHMENT

This dramatic success story is not without its gloomier side. As the hearts of women opened to the new fur and color pouring forth from American agriculture, foreign producers, probing the soft spots in the vast markets of the land of "milk and honey," were quick to imitate the ranching methods developed in the United States, and imports, beginning with a trickle, began their ominous invasion of the American rancher's own market, until today imports from 20-odd nations are said by the Tariff Commission to have emboweled 53 percent of domestic consumption.

How could this rapid displacement of the American rancher have taken place?

It is very easy to find a scapegoat. Remember that undressed mink pelts were pinned to a duty-free status under the provisions of the Tariff Act of 1930. Their duty-free status has been continuously bound since 1936. It should interest the committee to know that never, in all these years, was the producer ever consulted about this, nor has Washington ever given the slightest indication that it might be reviewed or changed. Considering the fact that many products of American industry and agriculture have, in fact, "enjoyed" a measure of protection during those years through tariffs and/or quotas (and still do), the American rancher can hardly be blamed for viewing the duty-free status of mink pelts as a measure of unfair discrimination, arbitrarily arrived at and arbitrarily maintained. This is the establishment.

EXTRAVAGANT HOSPITALITY

In those pellmell efforts to break down the barriers of international trade, the establishment, perhaps unwittingly, exposed the American rancher through duty-free entry to the American market to a foreign