profit plateau (1953–57 average), have now captured 11 more percentage points of the American market (1963–67 average), as determined by the Tariff Commission, and now command more than half of the mink ranchers' own market (53 percent), as determined recently by the Tariff Commission.

LETHAL COMPETITION

Mr. Chairman, the effect of this foreign competition on the domestic producer can be stated very simply—it is lethal. Figure 2, overleaf, titled "Rate of Growth of Imports Far Exceeds That of Domestic Consumption and Domestic Ranch Production Since 1959" (p. 4026), simply summarizes the economic activity described in Figure I (p. 4022).

Since the message got around after the Tariff Commission finding of 1959 that the American producer was to remain exposed to duty-free entry, imports have doubled, prices have fallen more than 33 percent, ranchers have lost 11 more percentage points of a market which they originated and built, and 56 percent of the domestic producers have been annihilated. Domestic production, far from oversupplying its own market, lags far behind the growth of domestic consumption. In recent years our principal foreign competitor, the Scandinavian bloc, has been increasing its "take" of the American market at an average annual rate of nearly 20 percent.

FOR THE SURVIVORS

In the early weeks of the 90th Congress, the National Board of Fur Farm Organizations, after searching in vain for administrative relief from excessive, duty-free imports, approached Congress through Congressman Burke of Massachusetts, who introduced H.R. 6694, requesting a simple device to help correct the situation. This bill, in effect, asks for a freezing of the status quo, allocating a 40-percent share of the American market to imports, and arresting further encroachment into what the rancher feels is his rightful domain. Future growth of the American market would thus be shared with imports in the ratio of 40–60. With further encroachment arrested, the American marketing associations would then be in a strong position to go back to surviving ranchers to raise the funds necessary to rebuild the market and to stimulate exports, which show encouraging growth potential and gold earning potential. Without such promotional funds, which must be extracted from ranchers' sales proceeds, the domestic producer's share of the American, and indeed, the world market, could only be expected to die slowly on the vine, strangled year after year by increasing quantities of cheap and inferior mink. At some point, not too distant, the ascendancy of the cheap foreign mink merchandised to a vast new army of nonprestige consumers, would itself bring about the total eclipse of mink as a prestige fur, and thus also the eclipse of the fur industry.

Mr. Chairman, I am happy to report that congressional response has been most encouraging, and we have found to date 84 cosponsoring Senators and Congressmen, involved directly with bills, and many others waiting in the wings to help in other ways. There are 58 bills pending before your committee, largely identical to the pilot bill from Mr. Burke, H.R. 6694.