

It will take for an average coat 50 skins to make this coat so you multiply that and it comes up quite high.

Mr. BROYHILL. Mr. Chairman, I am confused enough, so I yield the floor.

Mr. BYRNES. Mr. Chairman, I think we should make the record clear here. In the processing of this fur to be made into a garment there is a tremendous amount of labor cost in this letting out process. It is too bad you don't have a sample here of how that has to be cut in quarter-inch strips and then all sewed back together again. That is the item.

It isn't the rancher that is getting the biggest amount out of these \$2,000 and \$3,000 mink coats. It is attributable to the costs cutting, sewing, stripping and all the rest of it.

Mr. WESTWOOD. There are several miles of thread used to sew one average mink garment. There is a lot of labor in the slicing and sewing and shaping of a garment and I would think as I talk here that probably three times the cost at these prices would be closer than twice. If you have a \$15 pelt and \$15 per skin manufacturer cost you have a double there without any markup or anything so probably three times the cost would be a justifiable cost and then this is in general terms.

This is a little out of my field but I think it gets at somewhere the answer to your question.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Conable.

Mr. CONABLE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Is there a world oversupply of mink pelts at the present time, or is it just in this country?

Mr. HENDERSON. Is this directed to me?

Mr. CONABLE. Yes; directed to you, sir.

Mr. HENDERSON. It depends, Mr. Conable, on how you look at it. Some people say there is an oversupply and some people say there is an underconsumption. Certainly the supply has a great deal to do with the price; and, as we have tried to show here today, the present prices in the American market are below our cost of production.

In that sense there is an oversupply of mink in the United States.

Mr. CONABLE. Are the same factors true with respect to other furs, or is this an exclusive problem of mink?

Mr. HENDERSON. Since mink is overwhelmingly the most popular fur it tends to dominate the whole fur industry today and when prices are depressed in the mink industry prices tend to be depressed in all of the other categories of fur.

We found this especially true in the last 2 years, but it could be subject to variations.

Mr. CONABLE. I would have thought that labor would not be a major problem in the production of mink furs, having gone through some very efficient mink farms in my area, and I wonder why it is possible for European mink farms to undersell our own farms. Perhaps the difference is in the cost of food that you have to give the minks. Perhaps it is in the cost of the land on which the farm is located.

There must be many other factors besides labor; are there not?

Mr. HENDERSON. May I rise to that?

Mr. CONABLE. Yes. I am asking you, sir.

Mr. HENDERSON. I appreciate it. Thank you. It is reputed that our competitors—I am speaking largely of the four Scandinavian countries now—have about 17,000 mink ranchers in those four small countries. Bear in mind we only have 3,200 left in the United States. But