

Mr. WESTWOOD. Certainly they are losing money. If the average ranchers costs are \$15 and the average pelt price is \$14 that certainly is, speaking in averages, a loss of a dollar a pelt.

Mr. GILBERT. I don't know where you get your figures from and I don't have any other figures to dispute yours. Actually I am just trying to arrive at an understanding of the problem, but I just can't understand this when it costs a man \$17 for an item and he is selling it for \$14 and you seem to indicate you get more for your pelt. It may be a \$14 average or a \$15 average but it may be that the cost of production of other people may be less than the \$14 and they may be making money on their product also, which they should be making.

Mr. WESTWOOD. The only thing that I can say is that when I get more than \$17 for a pelt this is all figured in the \$14 average so somebody down the street is probably getting \$8 or \$9 for his pelt. We have attempted to arrive at a national average cost of production and haven't been very successful.

We thought the Tariff Commission would come up with this figure, but if they did, they didn't publish it so we don't know what the costs are. We do know that at these prices we are losing between 500 and 1,000 ranchers per year because they can't make it.

Mr. GILBERT. What does the imported pelt sell for?

Mr. WESTWOOD. The price of the pelt imports?

Mr. GILBERT. Yes.

Mr. WESTWOOD. For which year?

Mr. GILBERT. Take 1966.

Mr. WESTWOOD. Do you have that figure, Dave?

Mr. HENDERSON. Sir, in 1955, 5,675,000 pelts imported averaged according to the Commerce Department \$12.87.

Mr. GILBERT. Per pelt?

Mr. HENDERSON. That average fell down about \$2 in 1967.

Mr. GILBERT. Why would there be a cheaper price for the imported pelt as opposed to the domestic pelt? Why would there be that difference?

Mr. HENDERSON. Let me put it this way. The average value of the domestic pelt has sold for about 50-percent more than the average value of imports and of course this is a reflection of the relative value of the two types of pelts and the quality. The price is a measure of the quality and the size and so on and so forth.

It is our fear that if too many of these inferior type pelts come into the United States they will destroy the very prestige image by reason of their price which we have created through the years.

Mr. GILBERT. You say the American product is a superior product to the foreign product.

Mr. HENDERSON. Very definitely and the figures prove this year after year.

Mr. GILBERT. Well, isn't there a difference in quality even in the American pelt? You are talking about your average.

Mr. HENDERSON. Yes.

Mr. GILBERT. Have you taken that into consideration as to the quality of the particular pelt and the price line for each pelt because a pelt that is superior in quality is naturally going to sell for more, like your product is apparently a far superior product than maybe some of your neighbors who get a lesser price for it because their pelt isn't as good as yours.