Mink prices declined that year approximately the same percentage all over the world as clearly demonstrated in Tariff Commission Report and prices of other furs declined equally as much and in some instances much more.

It may surprise you to learn that Alaska seals, to give you just one example, which are not imported at all, suffered a substantially greater price decline that year than did the mink fur skins. The fur market is an international market and it is now primarily a mink market. Shifting demand for minks abroad affects the domestic market just as much as do changes in demands for mink in the domestic market because over one-sixth of all domestic minks is sold to foreign buyers.

The domestic mink ranchers have concentrated to a large extent on the better quality skins, whereas the European producers, largely Scandinavians, have produced a larger proportion of commercial minks.

The Tariff Commission found that imported mink from abroad are used largely in the trimming trade, a trade in which the more expensive skins are used only to a limited extent. Generally, marketing practices in the U.S. auctions have not been adapted to the needs of the European buyers or to the needs of large U.S. buyers.

Controlled prices are maintained in the domestic auctions. This is not the case in the European auctions. In other words, the U.S. rancher decides what price he wants. If he doesn't get it he buys back his skins or holds them out of the market.

I have here a clipping from the Women's Wear Daily of June 24, 1968, which demonstrates the point. I will read the headline and the first two paragraphs of this statement.

LIMITS CURB SALE AT HUDSON BAY AUCTION, NEW YORK

High limits curbed turnover at Friday's windup of the mink sale at Hudson's Bay but, where sold, prices were "very firm" to "stronger" than May levels.

HBC's last sale of the season drew a fair representation of trimmings manufacturers and dealers. However, a good part of the offering were locally owned skins on which the sellers had placed high limits.

European skins are generally sold without any restriction in prices except in emergency conditions. In addition, U.S. ranchers insist on selling their furs dressed. European buyers prefer to buy raw skins preserving for their own labor force the dressing and processing, but the U.S. auctions offer only a few of their skins raw to European buyers who buy here.

The bulk of the ranchers produce small quantities of various colors and qualities. In the United States these quantities are largely sold in small lots for the individual rancher.

In Europe, on the other hand, these small quantities produced by individual farmers are interassorted to make up large lots of strings. All this tends to attract the world's fur buyers to the European auctions and away from U.S. auctions.

I am happy to report that the domestic mink ranchers are now beginning for the first time to examine their marketing practices to determine whether they have been serving their best interests in the past. I think here I should make a point which I have not included in my brief.

There are 32 commodities involved in the bills pending before this committee which would raise duties or import quotas on some 42 per-