

In examining the imports series, cyclical variations have been minor when compared with the domestic series. Consequently, the trend of imports since 1955 is very evident, showing an increasing rate of expansion. The statistical projection of trend starting from 1968 reveals an expected 291 million pairs in 1970 and some 403 million pairs in 1975. This is based on the assumption that there will be some decline in the rate of increase of imports from year to year as they begin to saturate various footwear lines.

Mr. BURKE. Are there any other witnesses who wish to testify?

Mr. GOLDSTEIN. Do you want to wait for the questions?

STATEMENT OF A. MEYER, JR.

Mr. MEYER. Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, I am privileged to appear before your committee as president of the Tanners' Council of America, the national trade association of the leather industry. I am a tanner by vocation, and I head Gutmann & Co. of Chicago, who have been in business for 78 years. We employ 350 people in the manufacture of cattlehide upper leather for shoes. The position I express for the tanning industry is confirmed by my own experience.

The point of view we address to you can be stated very plainly. We believe the time has come for fresh thinking and action by the United States of foreign trade policy. We feel strongly that prompt steps must be taken to deal with the facts of world trade as it is. All too many of the dogmas of the past generation are no longer realistic or meaningful.

Please remember the credentials of the tanning industry. We have rarely asked for Government consideration or help. Tanners are a breed of enterprisers who believe in paddling their own canoe. They believe that the free play of markets and competition can usually solve business or economic problems. We are forced now to ask for some reasonable form of import control for the very simple reason that some 90 percent of the world does not share our business thinking or philosophy. Perhaps the millennium foreseen by Ambassador Roth may come some day, but we think it important for us to stay alive in the meantime.

Our industry converts hides and skins into leather which we sell to manufacturers of shoes, handbags, garments, gloves, and hundreds of other products. The sharp growth in the imports of foreign merchandise concerns us in two ways. First, finished goods coming into the United States deprive us of a market for leather. The U.S. shoe manufacturer who produces less, due to imports of shoes, will not buy leather from us. Second, we are concerned by leather imports which invade our remaining domestic market.

During the past 2 years we have been alarmed by the terrific growth in the volume of imported shoes because the shoe business is our biggest outlet for leather. You have heard or will hear from representatives of the shoe industry on the rate of import growth and the percentage of our market which has been captured by foreign shoes. Our past experience with other leather products rings warning bells. Believe it or not, not too many years ago all the baseball gloves used in our national pastime were manufactured in the United States from leather tanned in the United States. I estimate that more than 75 percent of the baseball gloves we now use are imported, principally from Japan. Exactly