That's exactly what we are trying to say in our various import-control bills before this committee. We are saying that we, as the Secretary says, are striking "a blow against foreign protectionism." Yet, we are not suggesting a return to complete protectionism at home in retaliation. The essence of my legislation before this committee is to effectively fight foreign protectionism. I am really saying that trade ought to be encouraged and expanded, but not entirely at the expense of the American economy, particularly the American agricultural economy. I am not suggesting that the foreign producer be cut off entirely. In fact, under my proposals, he will fare fairly well, fully participating in the growth of the American market.

Mr. HERLONG. Any questions? If not, then, thank you, Mr. Langen, for sharing your views with us today.

Our colleague from Wisconsin, Mr. Vernon Thomson, is our next witness. Please proceed as you see fit, sir.

STATEMENT OF HON. VERNON THOMSON, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF WISCONSIN

Mr. THOMSON. Mr. Chairman and members of this distinguished committee, I appreciate very much the opportunity to present this statement in regard to the very serious problems facing our domestic agricultural economy as a result of current import and export policies.

I also want to express my appreciation to the committee and to you, Mr. Chairman, for devoting your time and energy to these very difficult and complex problems.

Certainly all of us who have experienced the difficulty and the complexity that seems inate in any import legislation recognize the facts of international economic and trade policy. None of us are, I believe, blind to the advantages of mutually beneficial trade with friendly nations throughout the world or to the necessity for providing a truly reciprocal market in the United States for the goods and services of our world neighbors. Yet that arrangement must truly be reciprocal if the U.S. economy in general, and our agricultural economy in particular, is going to survive and prosper.

Unfortunately in recent times the reciprocity upon which many of our trade agreements have been based has become illusory. We have seen our access to large agricultural markets in Europe shrink. Even our concessional sales have dropped.

For example let me quote from House Report No. 1297, 90th Congress, as submitted to the House on April 23, 1968, by the Committee on Agriculture when it approved H.R. 16165, a bill to extend and amend Public Law 83–480.

AGRICULTURAL EXPORTS

During 1967 commercial exports dropped $468 million below 1966. (See table 3.) The committee is concerned about this decline, and the decline in governmental sponsored exports as well, which caused our total exports to drop from $6.881 billion in 1966 to $6.386 billion in 1967. (See table 3.)

A high level of agricultural exports is an absolute necessity for the maintenance of a strong domestic farm economy. The committee, of course, hopes that this recent decline will be of a temporary nature, but feels that it is a situation which demands continuing attention by the Congress.

The appropriate table which documents this statement is as follows: