

**STATEMENT OF LUKE F. BECKMAN, PRESIDENT, MINSTER
CANNING CO.**

Mr. BECKMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman and I thank all of you gentlemen.

Mr. HERLONG. Thank you. Will you please identify yourself for the record and proceed in your own way.

Mr. BECKMAN. I know you have gone over your lunch hour and tried to finish the hearings.

Mr. HERLONG. We are used to that. Don't worry about that.

Mr. BECKMAN. I appreciate that very much. I have a condensed copy of what I planned in my oral testimony and with your permission I will give you that and it will be much shorter.

Mr. HERLONG. If you like, your entire statement will appear in the record.

Mr. BECKMAN. I would like to have that.

Mr. HERLONG. Without objection it will be made a part of the record.

Mr. BECKMAN. I am Luke F. Beckman, president of the Minster Canning Co., Minster, Ohio. Our firm is a small to medium size packer of canned peeled tomatoes, tomato puree, catsup, and salad mustard. In addition to my company I have been asked by 35 other tomato canners, in a total of 10 States, representing 48.4 percent of the total U.S. production last year of peeled tomatoes to speak for them at this hearing.

Tomato canners, such as myself, are experiencing difficulties in marketing our products as a result of imports of canned tomatoes and tomato products. Enactment of legislation that will increase the protection for these products, either through higher tariffs or import quotas, or both, is essential.

A number of the tomato processors have furnished me with their direct cost figures for 1967, and my written statement compares our costs and prices with the prices of imported canned tomatoes.

The direct factor cost of canning peeled tomatoes—in Ohio, Michigan, New York, and Georgia, averaged \$3.851 in 1967 for a case of six No. 10 cans. For your information a No. 10 can is very often compared to a gallon although it is a little smaller than a gallon.

That cost figure does not include overhead, selling expense, or profit. Compared with that, we have quotations from reputable food brokers, offering canned tomatoes from Spain, delivered to all east coast points, for only \$4.10 per case out of the new pack.

When I talk about new pack I mean the pack in 1968, this fall in August and September. This leaves the U.S. packer only 24.9 cents per case, only 4 cents per can, over his direct factory cost, to meet Spain's competition. That is hardly enough to pay the freight from his plant to the buyer's warehouse, much less to pay for the selling costs, overhead, profit, and something to buy replacement machinery.

I am also concerned about the rising imports of tomato paste, which is competitive with and can be substituted for tomato puree which our firm packs for remanufacturers of other products.

In the brief time which I am allowed, I can only summarize the reasons which are set forth in my statement as to why the United