

STATEMENT OF HONORABLE JOHN E. FOGARTY, MEMBER OF CONGRESS FROM RHODE ISLAND, AT HEARING OF SPECIAL SENATE SUBCOMMITTEE INVESTIGATING THE TEXTILE INDUSTRY, PROVIDENCE, RHODE ISLAND September 19, 1958

I am not appearing here today as an expert on the textile industry, I am here as a citizen of Rhode Island who is keenly, and perhaps, painfully, aware of the fact that the welfare of this industry is vital to the economic well being of the State of Rhode Island.

as well as an elected representative
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This is not a new conviction on my part; I have held this view for many years now and have tried to do something about it. Indeed, it has shocked and angered me to find a tendency in some quarters here in Rhode Island to take the position that because the textile industry has suffered a severe and continuing contraction that we would be better off without any textile plants at all. The notion has been fostered that once textiles is gotten rid of some new industry will immediately spring up to provide jobs and prosperity. Surely by now this illusion should have been dispelled. Like any other rational person I want to see as wide a diversification of industry as possible in my state. We, in Rhode Island must

work harder and more effectively to attract so-called "growth" industries -- that is industries for whose product the demand is on the up-grade. But experience of the past twenty years here in Rhode Island--and indeed in almost all ^{New England} ~~Northern~~ textile manufacturing centers -- is that when the basic textile plants close up or textile employment diminishes, that it takes years before any significant alternative employment is established in these areas.

The impact of the textile decline in the United States has nowhere been felt more critically than in the State of Rhode Island. This, of course, is due to Rhode Island's heavy dependence on textile manufacturing for jobs. In 1947, 44% of ^{OUR} ~~the~~ manufacturing employment was in textiles. Since that time through 1956 ^{OUR} ~~the~~ textile employment has decreased by 41%. There has been further loss since 1956 and yet textile manufacturing is still Rhode Island's largest employer with approximately 31% of the manufacturing total. Rhode Island's stake in the future of the textile industry remains vital.

From my standpoint as ^{an elected} public official, as well as
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from the standpoint of a concerned private individual, the
human distress caused by the contraction or migration of an
industry, by technological changes or other causes is the
paramount consideration here. Moreover, I believe that less
attention has been devoted to this purely human phase of the
textile industry problem than to the complex economic causes
of the over-all decline.

Mr. Chairman, I respectfully but most earnestly and
insistently urge that this Subcommittee attempt to find out
what such a drastic curtailment in employment really has meant
to the men and women and their families effected by the decline
^{Formerly employed in}
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in textiles. We can make guesses as to what such an economic
catastrophe does to people, but, I submit, we should really
learn and analyze what the effect has been on these flesh
and blood individuals.

^{understand}
As I ¹ read the instructions which the Senate gave this

Subcommittee for the scope and purpose of the investigation,

you are to endeavor both to identify and clarify the reasons

why the ^{textile} industry has declined and to offer proposals for ^{their} correction. It is my conviction that if the American public

--the taxpayers as a whole -- could be shown through careful

and expert first-hand studies how families are hurt and how

our human resources are wasted and often ruined by these ups

and downs in business and industry, it would become much less

difficult to mobilize the necessary ^{legislative} actions to alleviate and

correct these conditions.

We in Rhode Island, we in New England, have had this

textile problem on our doorstep for a least two decades now.

It is painfully evident that all the effort expended by the

industry itself, by labor and by government -- state or

federal -- hasn't been enough. Your Subcommittee will need

^{as it will -}
to arouse the widest possible interest in this question ^{if}

it is to win adequate [↑] support for whatever recommendations
your studies determine must be made. Therefore, I stress
and restate my point that the human phase of this textile
problem should be given ^{your} special and particular attention
because in the long run our legislative decisions must be
shaped by our consideration for the human beings who make
^{local and national community.}
up our ~~society~~.

I take it for granted that this subcommittee under
the able guidance of Senator John Pastore and his associates
will do as thorough a job as is possible on the technical
and economic aspects of the textile problem. In passing
let me suggest that this subcommittee ^{may} ~~will~~ find it necessary
to continue its work over a period of at least a couple of
years if it is to do ~~anything like~~ a complete job of research
and then to frame the legislation that will be ~~seen to be~~
necessary. I have not been able to study and absorb the entire

testimony offered at the initial hearings in Washington this
past July. It is clear to me that in those ~~brief~~ sessions
^{however,}
^{this}
~~your~~ subcommittee was able to accumulate a most impressive
body of expert testimony. I strongly recommend that all
responsible citizens of Rhode Island and New England -- and
everywhere else for that matter -- obtain the printed copies
of these hearings and attempt to familiarize themselves with
as much of this data as possible.

I have tried to keep track of the textile situation
through the reports, ^{various} ~~etc.~~, made by the New England Governors
Textile Commission. This Commission has been doing ~~such~~ ex-
cellent work, almost without staff, ^{that} I ~~am wondering~~ ^{believe that} whether
additional ^{governmental} resources should ~~not~~ be made available to this
group which is representative of the three major interests
involved -- the public, the manufacturers and the workers.
^{I suggest}
~~It may be~~ that a similar tri-partite body ~~should~~ be set up

This would include the middle Atlantic + South Eastern areas of our country.

~~to take~~ in all States where textiles are produced. Possibly, even those states which produce the raw cotton and wool which is later processed in the factories should ~~be included~~ in such a set-up.

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I am sure this subcommittee will give this and many other such suggestions full consideration. What I want to urge upon my fellow New Englanders is that we cease quibbling about this textile problem -- that we stop wringing our hands and start some concrete activities aimed first at saving whatever industry is left and gradually rebuilding for the future; in those areas where we ascertain that the industry has ~~gone~~ for good, that we set about securing alternative types of enterprise. But to achieve any appreciable redevelopment of former textile areas (and what I say of textiles in this connection would apply, I am sure, to distressed coal areas, rail areas or any other hurt by plant migration or industry shrinkage),

departed

we will in my considered judgment require federal legislation along the lines of the Area Redevelopment bill passed by the Congress this year but vetoed by the President.

Distressed

which was

Textiles is not the only industry in the United States which has problems; but it is certain that textiles is the biggest and most wide-spread problem of its kind now before us as a nation. The Congress will necessarily have to play a major role in bringing about recovery in textiles. The Administrative agencies --- which up to now have consistently and persistently tried to brush off and ignore the textile problem -- must face up to the facts and gear themselves to do a real job of providing all kinds of technical assistance and whatever else is needed. In the long run, however, the manufacturers themselves have to carry the major share of this load; the employees through unions of their own choosing must be given every opportunity of sharing the task. The lack of

industrial

genuine collective bargaining in wide areas of the textile industry -- happily this is not true of our own section -- is one of the factors that will make recovery more difficult. Finally, the public as a whole must play a part. We, who do not ourselves work in textiles, must resolutely insist that this large scale economic and social problem be dealt with ^{on a national level} so that whole regions shall not be handicapped by the failings of one large and essential industry. It is up to us, members of the public at large, to be prepared to help out wherever we can to get this enormous job of rehabilitation and recovery under way. The needs of the community as a whole, the national interest, requires that this textile problem be solved and as rapidly as possible.

IN conclusion, let me say, that I believe that the Small Business Administration, could do much more than it now does to help the small textile manufacturer both in financing and in reserve - set aside - in order to preserve a continuity of competitive enterprise in this industry. There has been too much concentration of economic power in large industrial enterprises in this field to the disadvantage of our national economic health. Text considerations may have made this possible and I am sure that this Committee will hear more about this problem as your hearings progress. In my view, every consideration ought to be given to help those small business organizations that are so important to our regional and national prosperity.