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Press Release - Muskie Calls Nixon Veto Threat 'Premature'

Edmund S. Muskie

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MUSKIE

Maine

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FOR RELEASE

IMMEDIATELY
JULY 22, 1970

MUSKIE CALLS NIXON VETO THREAT 'PREMATURE'

Recent press reports have quoted the President as saying he would veto legislation setting mandatory quotas on any imports except textiles.

Since the bill has not even been reported, his statement is premature. It appears that he has not had an opportunity to study the facts surrounding the need for the legislation.

The proposed measures would establish mandatory quotas on two commodities, textiles and shoes. By singling out the textile industry as needing help, it seems that the President is still pursuing his "southern strategy."

I cannot understand how he can ignore the impact of foreign imports on the footwear industry.

In 1969, 72 shoe plants closed in the United States, forcing 14,000 persons out of work. In the first quarter of 1970, we have already seen 17 plant closings affecting nearly 3400 people. These plant closings and lay-offs are a direct result of unfair foreign competition. Today 28% of the U. S. shoe market is made up of foreign imports. Ten years ago, imports occupied only 3 1/2% of our domestic market.

The President should understand the significance of these facts before making a decision on the proposed legislation.
