

Chapter 3

REMOVING BARRIERS

OBSERVATIONS

Present entry procedures for vacation and business visitors to the United States are outmoded. They serve only to project an adverse image of this Nation's willingness to receive foreign guests. They are overly defensive and bespeak an unfriendly attitude based upon feelings of suspicion.

The delays and uncertainties frequently associated with entry procedures are a special problem for tourists who make last-minute decisions to travel. This could become a major factor in 1968-69 as impulse travel is stimulated by increased efforts to attract foreign visitors to the United States.

At a time when first impressions of the United States are being formed, visitors are subjected to unnecessarily complicated and time consuming delays which almost appear designed to discourage the potential traveler. In order that the United States rid itself of this stigma, a dramatic new policy of simplified procedures must be adopted, specifically geared to the short-term visitor.

We must also press for the removal of the discriminatory restriction on duty-free allowances imposed by the Canadian Government on its residents returning from the United States—the single most important barrier to increased tourism from that country.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Existing immigration laws which authorize the Secretary of State and the Attorney General to waive the visa requirements for citizens of contiguous countries and adjacent islands should be implemented to the fullest.

2. U.S. laws and regulations should be changed for business and pleasure visitors. Legislation has been drafted which would grant the Secretary of State and the Attorney General broad authority to waive visa requirements for business and pleasure visits of up to 90 days on the basis of reciprocity or for other reasons determined by the Secretary of State to be in the national interest. Foreign visitors entering without visas would be required to hold nonrefundable round-trip tickets.