

taxes, and this is almost clear profit to an area, since the traveler is not a major tax consumer.

To further the flow of travel dollars to the United States, NATO, in 1953, recognized the long overdue need to establish our country as a host nation to foreign visitors. To implement action, NATO launched the now well known "Visit U.S.A." program.

In 1961, we supported the creation of the U.S. Travel Service, which Government agency has had prime responsibility for promotion of travel to the United States, but has been sadly under-financed.

In 1963, at the request of the late President Kennedy, NATO established the "See the U.S.A." campaign which has now evolved into the "Discover America" program. NATO supports the "Discover America" program wholeheartedly.

In 1965, Congress passed a joint resolution calling upon the President to issue a proclamation urging our citizens and those of other lands to travel in these United States. In part, the purpose of this effort was to deal with our troublesome balance-of-payments deficit. Congress extended this resolution in subsequent years.

IMBALANCE IN OUR TRAVEL ACCOUNT AND PROPOSED TRAVEL TAX

NATO recognizes and is concerned with the present dollar crisis. Certainly none of us wants to stand in the way of constructive efforts to improve our Nation's dollar position. But NATO submits that the travel industry is being made a whipping boy in this present serious balance-of-payments situation.

NATO has historically been a leader in supporting the principle of unrestricted worldwide travel. We, therefore, are opposed to the proposed travel tax to inhibit travel to nations outside the Western Hemisphere.

We suggest that statistics used by the administration are being misinterpreted to blame the tourist for the dollar gap caused by other Government spending and by the war in Vietnam.

We believe that any restrictions, negative and discriminatory in nature, not only violate Americans' inalienable right to freedom of travel, but also could have dire consequences through the imposition of retaliatory measures by other countries.

Such restrictions, if imposed, would reduce the amount spent in the United States by tourists from overseas, and more importantly, by importers of those countries who would not then have the money to buy goods from the United States.

Additionally, American industries leaning heavily on export—such as aircraft manufacturers—would suffer immediately—not only the prime aircraft builders, but the electronic industries spread throughout the United States and which support the basic aircraft industry.

NATO believes there is an imbalance in promotion of the United States abroad as compared with the total of what other governments are spending on advertising and promotion to attract our people to their respective travel areas. For example, Spain's total travel budget in 1966 amounted to over \$12 million compared to \$3 million for the U.S. Travel Service.