

Mr. MEYER. Thirteen of these 24 companies presently create and market package tours of the United States, and this marketing is in the United States and abroad.

Sixteen of the 24 are exclusively wholesale companies. Eight have retail divisions, which, like other corporations, are operated separately.

I would like to thank you gentlemen sincerely for the invitation to appear before you concerning this most vital issue, and I assure you of my association's desire to cooperate fully with you in reaching a practical and lasting solution to this problem which confronts our country.

For a number of years we have recognized the economic implications of the touristic imbalance and have been working to correct this situation. We have sponsored familiarization tours and traveled widely to attract a larger flow of visitors to the United States. These efforts have taken many forms. CTOA sponsored a "Visit U.S.A. Workshop" in Paris last March, where 12 of our member companies outlined their tours of the United States to an audience of hundreds of leading European travel agents and airline personnel from the four countries where there was an aggregate increase of about 80 percent in travel to the United States over 1966.

Now the 36-percent increase of European travelers to our country in 1967 reflects directly the results of positive sales approaches of this kind. This increase meant an additional cash inflow from Europe of at least \$65 million. Because of the aggressive steps we have taken to promote inbound tourism, we estimate that 1968 will show a further increase of \$126 million over 1967. Another example is the joint program which we have established with the American Hotel & Motel Association and Pan Am to bring 300 foreign travel agents and travel writers to the United States commencing April 24. These agents and writers will tour our country, not only New York and Washington, but California, Michigan, Colorado, Pennsylvania, New Mexico, the national parks, and see for themselves the tremendous travel product we have to offer.

After the 14- and 10-day trips that these people will be taking, all will gather on the last night, either in New York or in Los Angeles, where we will have a serious briefing and debriefing session of these agents and outline to them the tours and the hotel products available in 1968.

I would like to extend to you members of the Ways and Means Committee a cordial invitation to join with us at that time to meet these agents and listen to their comments after they have seen our country.

These examples clearly indicate the manner in which the American travel industry has already shifted its emphasis toward a closer balance between travel to and from the country. But such changes, started some years ago and now bearing fruit, can only be accomplished if they are free of the disruptive effect of sudden and drastic alterations.

Building an effective tourist market requires a number of years of hard ground-breaking effort. We are now approaching the point where a much more rapid build-up can be expected. It would be tragic indeed if, by miscalculations, the preparatory effort should be wasted and the foundations of the program destroyed.