

Federal help could also be effectively used in establishing multilingual centers at our major airports where visitors arrive and depart and in training multilingual guides to serve foreign tourists in our cities.

Foreign agents and writers tell us that every time we get together that these are the two major needs we have to stimulate business. Now, we would like very much to get visa requirements for tourists eliminated, even though procedures have been improved in the last few years, and now one visa is all that is required for multiple entries into the United States up to 6 months at a time for a long period of validity.

Let me give, as an example, some information regarding what my own company, Open Road International, is doing to help in reducing the balance-of-payments deficit. In late 1966 we inaugurated tours to the United States for sale abroad. The results for 1967 were meager, but heartening. Ninety-eight percent of our billings were for outgoing travel, 2 percent from Canada to Europe, which repatriated a few U.S. dollars, and 2 percent for travel from abroad to the United States. Nevertheless, 86 percent of the money we spent for research and development was spent on planning and promoting American tours for foreign consumption this year.

In 1968 we are spending twice as much money advertising abroad to attract foreign visitors as we are on our outgoing programs. As I speak to you today, we are simultaneously selling the United States abroad.

Gentlemen, we are only one small company among many CTOA firms who have been and are now actively working toward a final balance of the travel imbalance. And we are sincerely anxious that our investments in time, money and effort should not be lost.

To a substantial degree our opportunity for success, and that of all those who have been working toward this same end, rests, in the final analysis, not upon our direct promotional efforts, but rather upon the good will and enthusiasm of the many thousands of individuals working at the local level in travel agencies and airline offices in countries throughout the world where we are seeking new visitors to our country.

We know that all over the world, even in countries where political considerations may divide us, even in countries with hostile governments, many millions of people have a tremendous desire to see the United States—and the income to permit it. And what they want to see is America as it is, not just national monuments, not just splendid scenery, but rather our living 20th-century culture, our supermarkets, our superhighways, and—most of all—the American people. USTS surveys show this. They want to know what we are really like, whether we are in fact what propaganda has suggested. Do we really have a total concern only for material things? How does our free enterprise society really work?

Gentlemen, the American tourist abroad has been a valuable source of humor for the cartoonist, the feature writer, the moviemaker—and not without some justification. But the overriding truth is that he has been a genuine ambassador of good will for the United States during these volatile times, who has made lasting friendships and brought a better understanding of our country to individual people overseas.