

Americans traveling abroad carry with them the torch of democracy bringing to the citizens of foreign countries an understanding of the American way of life to a greater degree than any planned propaganda.

For almost 40 years I have had my finger on the pulse on travel abroad. I have seen other governments try similar experiments, only to fail. The effect was morally degrading, and in the case of Great Britain, it only led to her costly monetary devaluation.

The proposed travel legislation would place as harshly burdensome penalties on the little person who has saved a lifetime for a trip abroad as it would on the more affluent.

CONSTRUCTIVE PROPOSALS

I am as enthusiastically in favor of balancing our flow of dollars with a balancing flow of people as I am firmly opposed to attempting to close the so-called travel gap through complicated tax legislation.

To further close the travel gap, I urge that we seek the means to make full utilization of the \$1.4 billion of nonrestrictive foreign currencies now in the Treasury for use by Americans abroad and undertake a searching review of the possibility of using the additional \$1.6 billion in counterpart funds for this same purpose.

In conclusion, may I urge that we not forge an American Iron Curtain. Let us not build an American Berlin wall. Instead, let us merchandise the United States of America in foreign lands, let us increase the flow of foreigners to America at a rate that will far exceed the percentage of increase of our own travelers going abroad.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman and members of the committee.

Mr. WATTS. Thank you very much, Mr. Olson, for your statement.

Are there any questions?

The next witness is Mr. John J. B. Miller.

Come around, Mr. Miller.

Mr. Miller, you may state your name, address, and the capacity in which you appear, for the record.

STATEMENT OF JOHN J. B. MILLER, COLLEGE PARK, MD.

Mr. MILLER. My name is John J. B. Miller. I live at 4800 Berwyn House Road, College Park, Md. I am a professional geographer, working on my doctorate and teaching at the University of Maryland. My appearance today is as a private citizen only.

Most of the comment which I have heard to date on the proposals for a tax on tourist expenditures appears to be concerned only with certain types of travelers; namely, Americans desiring to observe foreign cultures. While some tourists are expected to observe these cultures only casually, or to travel for the purpose of participating in some form of luxury, it has been recognized that others go abroad as serious students. But the tenor of the comment I have heard regards the tourist as one who goes abroad to savor a foreign, or might I say exotic, experience. My contention is that there is another very important category of overseas travelers from the United States. These are citizens or permanent residents who are going back to visit the countries of their origin.