

with me Mr. Michael Frome, a former president of our society, who is distinguished as an author on both travel and conservation and especially so on our national parks and national forests.

The society has endorsed resolutions—first at its 1965 convention in Kentucky, most recently at its Turkey convention last fall—affirming the right of Americans to travel freely, both domestically and abroad.

The society remains of the firm conviction that the way to improve the so-called travel gap in the balance-of-payments deficit is to increase, rather than decrease, international travel in both directions. Reflecting this view, the board of directors recently voted to proceed with plans—formulated last year—to hold the society's 13th convention in Austria this October.

The very existence of a travel gap has been authoritatively questioned by, among others, Representative Thomas B. Curtis of your committee, in the Congressional Record. But if it must be assumed that the "gap" exists, the approaches to its diminution must be positive, hinging on the increased importation of foreign tourists to our shores under the aegis of a realistically budgeted U.S. Travel Service. A USTS worthy of America's name is but one positive step, however.

To be seriously considered, as well, are the recommendations of the President's Special Task Force on Travel. Under the direction of Ambassador Robert McKinney, the task force's various working—and I mean working—parties, on one of which I had the honor to serve, have come up with programs designed to bring us more foreign visitors now—this year.

There are, as well, a number of eminently practical proposals from private industry—the airlines' offer of cheap fares for visitors to the United States from abroad, the foreign carriers' plans to spend dollars earned from American sales in America; various proposals from Members of the Congress, including the reduction of our Armed Forces in Europe, the return home of Armed Forces dependents from Europe and elsewhere abroad, and a variety of economies in governmental expenditures abroad.

What can we look forward to if these proposals become law? Our traditional freedom to travel will have been violated with grave consequences. America would lose friends at a time when it has never needed them more. Negated would be the enlightened internationalist position which has been a cornerstone of American foreign policy for a generation. Severely crippled would be a vast international tourist-transport industry, scores of thousands of whose employees are American citizens. Perhaps most important, the doors would be open to reciprocal actions from abroad.

Already, the administration has had to suffer what one hopes it considers the embarrassment of urgent appeals from the government tourist departments of Europe, of Asia, and of the Pacific; from the national airlines of Europe, which spend billions of dollars on American aircraft; from every international agency of substance having to do with the touristic movement of peoples; even, indeed, from the two major U.S. travel industry organizations whose aim is to promote domestic tourism within the United States.