

1047

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,  
Washington, D.C., February 14, 1968.

HON. WILBUR D. MILLS,  
Chairman, House Committee on Ways and Means,  
Longworth House Office Building,  
Washington, D.C.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. George Watts, a well-known jeweler in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, has asked me to submit to the House Committee on Ways and Means his statement on the balance of payments deficit issue.

Enclosed herewith is a copy of Mr. Watts' statement, along with accompanying information, which I hope you'll make a part of the Committee record.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

HENRY S. REUSS,  
Member of Congress.

GEORGE WATTS & SONS, INC.,  
Milwaukee, Wis., January 31, 1968.

HOUSE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE,  
Washington, D.C.

GENTLEMEN: Inasmuch as normal tourist purchasing abroad reflects badly on Americans as being greedy and materialistic and is a net dead loss to our balance of payments problems, plus a further stimulus to tourist travel at a time when a continued balance of payments deficit seriously threatens the dollar, we respectfully request that the Congress of the United States take action to reduce the present subsidy for tourists, which allows them to bring in a \$100 per capita of merchandise duty free, be withdrawn completely.

We would submit that such competition has always been grossly unfair to American retailers, as such tourists use our shops to select their patterns and then use their jet mobility and tourist exemption to purchase abroad. We would also submit that any hurt to the legitimate American retailer is a hurt to the government of the United States and local governments, as well, because imported merchandise that comes in through normal trade channels pays salaries and wages to a tremendous proportion of American citizens; and the various corporate units that assist in the importing and distribution pay taxes, of course, to all levels of American government.

Such trade that also comes through normal distribution channels is productive of long term international friendships and is not, as is tourist buying, capricious, undiscerning and non-productive.

I am attaching herewith various addenda to bear on this subject. For example, advertisements which use the tourist exemption to encourage travel; articles by columnists, who have observed tourist behavior and tourist buying abroad; and other articles that may be of interest.

[This material is in the files of the committee.]

With many thanks for your earnest consideration, I am,

Sincerely,

GEORGE WATTS.

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,  
Washington, D.C., January 25, 1968.

HON. WILBUR D. MILLS,  
Chairman, Ways and Means Committee,  
House of Representatives, Washington, D.C.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Enclosed is a letter I have received from Mr. E. S. Christoffersen, presenting his views on the curtailment of travel.

I would appreciate it if Mr. Christoffersen's letter could be made a part of the printed record of the hearings on the balance of payments proposals.

Sincerely yours,

JOHN J. McFALL,  
Member of Congress.