

own small way (but multiplied by the hundreds of and thousands of others doing it, too), I have done more for this country, in the long run, than a visit of a President, a Senator, or a bureaucrat.

In my travels, I unfortunately, often saw the ugly American—the man who should have stayed in Kansas if he wanted Kansas comfort, of the elderly rich woman who traveled via criticism, of the government official on a fact finding mission, who in three weeks couldn't perceive and appreciate what I did in three days. In Japan, an elderly grandmother looked at me and said, "You know, you are like Japanese. You sure you're an American?"

Through our traveling, by our becoming part of the Liberian, or Turkish, or Indonesian, by being what was good and simple, we helped in a deeper way, perhaps, than through our teaching in the secondary schools, or at our well baby clinics or blood banks.

The local U.S. AID official who had misgivings about eating the local food, because it was different, wondered why he wasn't accepted. In the same manner, a social welfare worker in the States wonders at her rejection in a migrant worker camp in San Joaquin County, even though she is dressed "for church", and the "clients" look as if they have spent a day in the fields (which they have).

In other words, we are winning more friends, building more lasting bridges, and creating a better climate through contact with our youth, our peace corps volunteers, and other voluntary agencies. They may travel on a shoe string, but they quickly get to the heart of the matter.

To the rich, to the established, what is a hundred dollar tax? He'll go anyway—often to the best hotel, the tourist meccas—and see little. But what about the student, the Peace Corps volunteer, etc? That one hundred dollars could mean the difference between his going and not going.

By Americans spending abroad, they are in the long run saving their country money. For instance, the tourist buys crafts in Dahomey, West Africa. Increasingly, there is a demand for goods, and a cooperative is founded. Soon, a national tourist center is constructed. It is profitable. The people within the cooperative and center are no longer in a subsistence situation, and government money can be re-allocated. As the government is able to re-allocate and pay for its own development, the contributing nation spends less.

In the two and one half years I lived in Liberia, the amount of hardware and food stuffs available in the hinterland stores quadrupled in amount and in variety. Why? Because the volunteer, government official, the AID advisor were there to buy. As he bought more, the price lowered some, and more of the general population could buy. Whole new markets were started. Many students were able to attend school, for instance, because they had employment on a part time basis. The small amount of money I paid some of my students for services is not even enough to speak about, but without that money, many Daniels, Jacksons, and Donahs wouldn't be in school today. Isn't this—a need and growth of consumer goods and higher school enrollment part of the development and goal of a society? Is it not detrimental to our policy in the United States to help the developing nations, if we put a tax on visits by Americans to the very places where the American dollar is most needed?

Is it not better to encourage the spending of money in this country through tax exemptions on internal vacations? Is it not better to re-allocate here at home? Is it not better in the long run to bring the Viet Nam war to an end?

Since returning to the States, I have worked with an OEO migrant education program in California. I have seen enough waste, ignorance, faulty planning, and misallocation—all of which is more important, than a need to tax foreign travel. I question the intelligence of letting domestic spending pass with so little scrutiny.

When laws, such as a tax on travel come along, I feel this country slip back, become isolationist, as if the outside goes away when we close our eyes. Having lived abroad and served as a volunteer, served in poverty programs here, etc., I, unlike President Johnson, cannot close my eyes to real issues. There is no easy way out, of course. This does not mean that we attempt anything.

Sincerely,

MISS GLORIA SALTZMAN,
Tracy, Calif.