

As the owner of a multiple-branch retail travel agency employing ten persons besides myself, I protest any inference that travel outside the Western Hemisphere is somehow unpatriotic. From my reading of such highly esteemed papers as the Wall Street Journal, The New York Times, The Washington Post, The Chicago Daily News, Fortune Magazine, Saturday Review, Business Week, U.S. News and World Report, I can find no responsible opinion to the effect that inhibiting the freedom of the American people to travel will solve our balance-of-payments problem. Quite the contrary; I am sure you are aware of the repercussions that will result if this great United States should demean itself and its citizens by an attempt to curtail the freedom of its people to travel.

Please know that I do not speak from a purely selfish economic motive as we sell travel to commercial accounts, to U.S. and other Western Hemisphere destinations; furthermore, there are many people who will travel in spite of the tax, and we will survive—although certainly not without financial hardship to all employees.

My protest is as a thinking citizen who feels the few freedoms we have left need to be preserved at all costs (else why are we fighting in Vietnam for others' freedom?), and who feels that the travel industry is sorely needed in this war-torn world. If ever we are to stop killing and learn to live together on this planet, one of the main forces to this end is the traveling and intermingling of the peoples of the world in friendship, rather than for the purpose of bearing arms against each other.

Please think very strongly about the many alternative measures possible to stop the outflow of dollars, i.e., the reduction of government spending abroad, the return of troops from Europe, the encouragement of travelers to our shores through the United States Travel Service. The peace and understanding which is so desperately needed in the world is served through the tourist industry and for this value alone we believe, rather than being discouraged, it should be encouraged in all its facets.

Respectfully yours,

(Mrs.) BETTY LOU WALLACE, *President.*

TRAVEL NEAR & FAR, INC.,
New York, N.Y., February 23, 1968.

Hon. WILBUR D. MILLS,
Chairman, Committee on Ways and Means,
Washington, D.C.

DEAR SIR: I wish to register my opposition to the proposed travel taxes, both in principle and in practice. A more negative, discriminatory and ill-conceived proposal would be difficult to imagine.

The right of the individual to travel abroad has never before been questioned by an American government. This tax is deliberately designed to prevent the exercise of what has heretofore been acknowledged as a basic liberty of the citizen, the right to leave and return to the country. Previous attempts to discourage or prohibit actions of the individual which are not intrinsically immoral or anti-social have always led to upright and honest citizens evading the law.

Americans have always been great travellers and are known around the world for this. Generations of citizens have gone to Europe to acquaint themselves with the cultural benefits of that area and to become more well-rounded and better American citizens, better able to understand foreign nations and their ways. That this greatest method of creating better understanding between peoples should be in danger in this country is wrong. We have always criticized Communist and other totalitarian countries for their restrictions on the free exit of their citizens, yet now our own government wishes to discourage Americans in the same pursuit. The reason for doing this is not important when the result is the same.

The United States has a favorable balance of trade, although there are fluctuations in this balance from year to year. The figures derived from tourism and travel ought not to be segregated from the whole any more than any other product or service. To tax tourism and travel is discriminatory to the industry and to the people who avail themselves of its services. The balance is adverse to us in other areas of trade such as whiskey, coffee, etc.

The proposed tax is doubly bad in that it fails to discriminate between those countries which cooperate with the United States in our balance of payments problems and those which do not. For instance, no difference is made if a person travels to Martinique or to Jamaica. Yet the former is a department of metro-