My dear Senators:

In each of the Committees which concerns itself with Customs legislation, there is at the moment a bill pending which would have the effect of imposing an additional duty upon the importation of Swiss watch movements.

The bill pending in the Senate Finance Committee is S. 4457; the bill pending in the House Ways and Means Committee is H.R. 11136. I understand the provisions of these two bills are identical. Substantially, the effect would be to impose duty upon watch movements which are imported with their jewelled bearings inserted at the same rate as watch movements which are imported with all their bearings seated, whenever the jeweled bearings are inserted within 3 years after the date of importation.

This amendment to the Customs laws has been presented as a mere technical revision to a close-alleged loop hole. Actually it would be a most controversial measure. It involves among other things a wide departure from established Customs law, which has heretofore imposed duties upon manufactured articles on the basis of their condition at the time of entry and not at some subsequent time.

I address this letter to you now for the reason that the Senate Finance Committee will in the next few days be reporting to the Senate a number of non-controversial measures, and I have been informed by various constituents that an attempt may be made to attach a rider to one of these which would have the effect I have just described. Although there is at this moment no bill on the Senate calendar such to which I can register
formal objection, there may be such a bill at any time. I wish, therefore, to alert you to the possibility and to inform you of my intention to object to any effort to pass such a rider by consent.

Y.V.S.

Same ltr to Senate Finance Committee Chairman

Senator Byrd w/cc Douglas

Same ltr to Senate Policy Committee