



United States Senate

Vietnam Note

August 1, 1967

Dear :

Thank you for your comments regarding Vietnam.

Already there is such a diversity of opinion. There are those who would draw a line at the demilitarized zone and do nothing more. There are those who would withdraw completely. There is still another group which counsels occupying coastal enclaves and keeping that much of a toe in the door. There are those who would mine Haiphong Harbor. There is still another group which, instead of suggesting the use of mines, proposes that we sink some of our own vessels in Haiphong Harbor and thus block the path of incoming ships. There is still another view expressed by those who believe that the conflict, if that is what it can be called, should be stepped up in every way including an escalation of bombing and an assault on every area in North Vietnam.

There may be still other viewpoints which have something to commend them and each has implications which must be first carefully spelled out before action is taken.

About the best rejoinder I can give you is to say that the military leaders who have this responsibility in Vietnam are certainly competent and in fact the best we could derive after examining our whole military complement to see who should command these operations. I believe in a firm effort while at the same time exercising prudent caution.

Sincerely,

Everett McKinley Dirksen