Dear ..., 

The position asserted by the President through Vice President Nixon at the A. F. of L. Convention in St. Louis bears out what I have said in earlier letters with reference to this matter.

When the so-called Taft-Hartley statement appeared I made diligent inquiry concerning this proposal and was advised from top sources that the document which was supposed to be a message to Congress recommending nineteen modifications of the Act was in reality only a working sheet designed for the consideration of an informal committee which was considering the matter.

Let me point out that only Congress can amend the law and I am confident that no action will be taken which would repeal or emasculate the Taft-Hartley Act.

Sincerely,

Everett McKinley Dirksen
September ..., 1953

Dear ...:

In response to your letter of recent date, let me advise that throughout the first session of the 83rd Congress a very substantial number of amendments were introduced and are pending with respect to the Taft-Hartley Act. Hearings were held at some length both in the House and Senate but neither committee took any action.

Since that time a sort of working memorandum of possible changes in the Taft-Hartley Act was prepared for group discussion and somehow the intimation went abroad that this memorandum was identical with a message which the President would send to Congress after the turn of the year urging Taft-Hartley Act modifications.

My information is that this was only a working text which had been developed for purposes of comment by members of Congress, the Department of Labor, the White House staff and others and does not necessarily represent the views which the President may express on this subject. I mention that fact because this memorandum has been reprinted rather widely and has been the basis of many letters which have come to our office.

I believe the views expressed by the late Senator Taft with respect to the Taft-Hartley Act are sound, namely, that if experience dictates modifications in the Act and a convincing case is made that under such circumstances Congress should very properly consider such modifications and develop abundant testimony with respect thereto. That is about the whole story for the moment and I am very happy to have your observations.

Sincerely,

Everett McKinley Dirksen