Dear:

I am grateful for your expression of interest in the pending farm legislation and want to assure you that I shall leave nothing undone in aiding to contrive a remedy for the problem that is at once sound and durable.

I am quite sensible of the sharp differences of opinion on a good many provisions in the bill. I have endeavored to think the problem through and the remarks which I made on the Floor of the Senate on Tuesday, February 21, represent my convictions in seeking to provide relief particularly for the corn, hog and soybean producers in Illinois and the Middle West.

As I pointed out in these remarks, our chief problem has been competition from cheap feeds produced on diverted acres, and the one hope for the future is to get back to base acreage and some semblance of control over diverted acres. This approach would give the soil back a real chance to become workable without unduly penalizing our farm producers and particularly the small and modest farmers.

This whole matter will have the best attention.

Sincerely,

Everett McKinley Dirksen
Dear:

I appreciate your note and your suggestions with reference to the pending farm legislation.

It has been the purpose of the Senate Committee on Agriculture to devise for Senate action a Bill designed to do two basic things, among others. First, it is directed to the problem of bringing about a better and continuing balance between production and consumption by setting up an acreage reserve and a conservation reserve under which farm producers would be paid for taking acreage out of cultivation.

Second, it is designed to speed up the disposal of the overhanging surpluses by removing some of the present restrictions and also make the surpluses available to farmers as payment for acreage reductions.

The Bill will carry other provisions also, but its principal purpose is to get production and consumption on a better and sounder basis and to move the depressing surpluses so that price levels can improve.

Scores of plans and suggestions for meeting the present problem have been examined, and I shall give careful consideration to any reasonable proposal to put our agricultural economy on a sound economic basis.

Sincerely,

Everett McKinley Dirksen
Dear:

I appreciate your comments on the new farm bill on which the Senate Committee on Agriculture has completed action and reported to the Floor for early action. I have made a reasonable examination of this measure and can see a number of weaknesses. In fact, members of the Committee which prepared the bill also appreciate the defects in the bill.

This, however, is quite certain. Every problem, every proposal and every possible inequity has had Committee consideration. Special attention has been given and is, in fact, being given now to the possible inequitable impact of the soil bank requirements on the small farmer, the degree of compliance which might be expected, the support levels established for basic commodities, and other items with which the Committee was concerned.

I know that some amendments are being presently prepared in the hope that these will make it a more acceptable program with the least number of inequities in it. All this is to say that the suggestions which you make are having consideration, and I hope that when our labors are concluded on this measure it will be a forward step toward the solution of this problem which has been with us so long.

Sincerely,

Everett McKinley Dirksen
Dear:

In response to your telegram let me say that when the amendment relating to cargo preference moves on to action be assured that it will have very careful attention.

Sincerely,

Everett McKinley Dirksen
Dear:

The President's veto was an excellent summation of the issue involved in the farm bill. Moreover, his plea for immediate administrative action under the provisions of existing law and his demand on Congress for soil bank legislation should prove extremely helpful.

I agree with him that the bill as it stood was certainly self-defeating. I do appreciate your expression of interest.

Sincerely,

Everett McKinley Dirksen