Dear:

I do appreciate receiving your comments relating to a number of problems which presently confront the Congress and the country and since your communication is similar to hundreds received each week which are devoted to a discussion of numerous issues, I am sure you can realize the difficulties involved in preparing a point by point response while at the same time keeping pace with other correspondence, floor duties, and committee chores, not to mention the many tasks resulting from my position as Republican Leader in the Senate.

Therefore, if you will permit me to comment in a general way on both domestic and foreign policy, it will help to expedite matters and at the same time give you a good picture of my views and the position I expect to take as we move along in the present session.

The Kennedy Administration has now had one year in office. It certainly has had ample time to size up the mood of the country, but I can find little or nothing to indicate it has done so in either the State of the Union message or the projected budget. The cost of government is going to increase to $92.5 billion, a sum greater than was spent in three of the four World War II years. The size of government is, of course, going to grow in commensurate fashion -- as is proved by the Presidential request for a $10 billion increase in the national debt limit to the highest level in history -- which was strangely enough not even mentioned in the Presidential message.

Truly, the Administration is heading us toward the leviathan state. It does not seem to occur to the Administration that the Federal Government has already become big enough -- a colossus that touches the lives, the rights and the privileges of every American man, woman and child. This nation was founded by the foes of authoritarian government, and it will survive only through vigilance to prevent concentration of power in Washington.
In the field of foreign policy, wherever possible -- in the interest of national security and unity -- I have subscribed to the bi-partisan approach but as the late Senator Vandenberg once said, we Republicans have too often been in on crash landings without participating in the takeoffs. This was true last year in the case of Cuba. We know that many people thought we should have turned the Cuban fiasco into political capital at the time of the disaster. We thought -- and still think -- that to have done so with a new President in office would only have increased the enormous damage to American prestige.

With respect to the United Nations, when the time comes to consider the United States assessment for support of that organization this whole matter will probably receive the broadest discussion that has ever been devoted to it. I must say that the United Nations record, thus far, has not been too impressive and its operations therefore merit the keenest exploration.

As to foreign aid, the peculiar actions of other countries in the foreign field who have been recipients of American assistance and then have proceeded by their actions to further their military positions as "peace-loving" nations does require that the Congress take a long and searching look at the whole question of foreign assistance, as well as our involvement with the United Nations.

There is reason to believe, in view of the continuing protests and complaints about State Department actions -- as well as its efficiency -- that an investigation will be made by the appropriate Senate committee or subcommittee. I gather from discussions with people who have served in the Department that there is a foundation for a good many of these charges and hence it merits close congressional scrutiny.

The Administration has had one year of seasoning under its belt. I fully expect to pursue a bi-partisan course, wherever possible, but it should be made unmistakably clear that when we have sufficient grounds upon which to differ with the President in the best interests of the country, we expect to speak up without hesitation.

Sincerely,

Everett McKinley Dirksen