January 29, 1968

Dear:

Thank you so much for your good letter of recent date regarding the tragic situation in Viet Nam.

I believe the most helpful indication of my position and belief that I can give you is contained in the enclosed copy of my most recent annual report to the Congress and the American people, especially in the paragraphs on pages 4 and 5 of the Report devoted to this subject.

I do hope you may feel that these deserve your attention and consideration.

Sincerely,

Everett McKinley Dirksen
February 8, 1968

Dear:

In response to your communication of recent date let me advise that I am fully prepared to do any and every honorable thing to bring this terrible struggle to a conclusion. We have indicated to Hanoi our willingness to sit down at the negotiation table if only they will give assurances in return for a cease bombing order, that they will not take advantage of that period by undertaking to infiltrate greater numbers of troops and supplies, and seek thereby to develop a military advantage for North Vietnam. Thus far, Ho Chi Minh has been reluctant to give us even this small reciprocal guarantee and it would leave us rather empty handed and at a distinct disadvantage unless such an assurance could be attained.

In any event, I shall be as helpful as I possibly can.

Sincerely,

Everett McKinley Dirksen
February 29, 1968

Dear:

Until the Administration, including our Chiefs of Staff and our Department heads modify our foreign policy with respect to Vietnam, it occurs to me that statements which may be at variance with that policy will be interpreted by the enemy as a sharp division in this country and would lend aid and comfort to the enemy.

I just received from a soldier in Vietnam a propaganda leaflet dropped by the Viet Cong asking our soldiers to refuse to fight and to get out of Vietnam. In it they quote a member of Congress. That is exactly what happens. They lift things out of context.

Sooner or later this thing must break one way or another, but I am most reluctant to weaken the prestige and position of our own country in a matter by adopting views that are contrary to what the Administration is undertaking to do, particularly when those in the Executive Branch are in possession of top secret intelligence information which does not come to the attention of Congress in many cases.

Sincerely,

Everett McKinley Dirksen