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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, D. C.

November 21, 1956

Dear Friends:

It is just not possible to send a personal letter, as I wish so much I could do, to each of the more than 2,000 of you who contributed financially to our campaign in the Fifth District, the more than 4,000 of you who placed our signs on your lawns (one to five times!), the dozens of you who invited your neighbors and us into your homes for coffee parties, and the hundreds of you who worked at headquarters, distributed literature, pushed doorbells, wrote letters to the editor, prepared tapes for broadcasts, volunteered to sign your names to advertisements in the paper -- et cetera, et cetera, et cetera!

This was at once the meanest campaign we have gone through together -- and the finest; the most unpleasant -- and the most deeply satisfying.

It was profoundly disturbing to observe the ruthlessness with which persons sought public office by systematically appealing to people's narrower interests as members of particular ethnic or economic groups, rather than to their larger concerns as citizens of this Republic. It was the technique of dividing, instead of uniting; of misrepresentation, instead of presentation; of charging bad faith as to one's objective wherever there is disagreement as to the right or best method of achieving the objective.

But it was thrillingly reassuring to have it proved once more that most Americans are far better people than the cynics imagine. I am sure you felt as clean and renewed as did Miriam and I when we came through with 56% of the vote -- more than in 1954 -- and especially when the multitudes rallied to the President's appeal to their highest motives of dedicated patriotism.

There is keen disappointment, of course, that the people did not also send to Congress a majority who will work with the Administration gladly instead of grudgingly. But I am confident we can develop policies and programs commanding such widespread popular support that many of the opposition party will be compelled to support them also.

We have learned a lot from this campaign. We know better what we will be up against in the future. Your alertness led you to see the threat of a blitz and you acted decisively to turn it back. In the next two years we must carry on a program of more effective education to undercut in advance such distortions as were the sole bill of fare this time.

But this letter is not to philosophize. It is to take to you, from Miriam and me, our deep gratitude and our warm personal regards. We never knew we had so many and such loyal friends. We shall try our best to merit more fully your confidence and support.

Thank you again -- and our very best wishes,

Sincerely,

Walter H. Judd