tax dollar, to listen to informative programs, and to follow radio, TV and press coverage of Congressional doings. Read the editorials in your newspaper. Discuss important issues with your friends. Then you'll be able to form an intelligent opinion of your own.

## How to Make Yourself Heard

Once you've made up your mind about a certain issue, you've got to act on it. If you and your friends are the only ones who know your personal opinions, your Congressmen can't help you. They can't read your mind. You've got to tell them how you feel about it.

So, the next step is to sit down and write to your Senators and Representative. Naturally, you want your contacts with your Congressmen to be most effective, whether you are for or against a piece of legislation or asking for their help on some problem. Here are a few tips that will help you to make yourself heard:

- Keep your letter simple, clear and to the point. Write as you would talk to him in person. Explain what you would like done. Tell him how you think it would affect your state, your community, your family. Make sure you give all necessary information, and be sure of your facts.
- If you are expressing your views on some issue or proposed bill, you can write to your Representative, your two Senators, and the chairman of the committees that hold the hearings on the bill and draft the legislation. You can get the names of the committee chairmen from your local newspaper office.
- Don't try to get a favor done through a friend or by some other round-about tactic. If you want help from your Congressmen, go to them directly.
- Don't threaten to vote against them or promise a campaign contribution as a means of getting what you want in the way of action.
- Don't feel insulted if you receive form letters in answer to letters you write your Congressmen, particularly about some matter currently before Congress. Sometimes members get hundreds of letters in a single day when there is a "hot" issue in the news. If they didn't use form letters, they couldn't possibly answer all their mail.

Finally, Congressmen get lots of criticism, few pats on the back. So once in a while let them know if you think they are doing a good job. Words of encouragement are greatly appreciated by them, just as they are by anyone else.