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St. Johns, Michigan 48879
March 12, 1990

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C-Span
400 North Capitol Street
Suite 650
Washington, D.C. 20001

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To Whom It May Concern:

Presently I have a required government class as a senior in high school. Noticing many contradictions in the text and among my teachers, which do not agree even with my own personal beliefs, I decided to pursue further interest in the government. In doing this, I was informed of C-Span, a government awareness television station. During my first viewing on March 11, 1990, while waiting for the next program I heard the narrator say, in effect, that C-Span is a television station concerned with informing the general public of actions within our "democratic" government. Our government is not supposed to be a democracy. In the Pledge of Allegiance, citizens of the United States pledge allegiance "to the republic" for which the flag stands. Why, then, is our government so often referred to as a democracy? I understand that the words republic and democracy have in time become synonymous, but what were the definitions before the evolution of the definitions? There must have been a difference at the time of the writing of the Constitution.

Please correct me if I am wrong, but the Constitution was based on a republic in direct opposition to a democracy. A republic was developed to protect the minority, while democracy is based on majority rule. However, a majority is no standard or basis for truth. Let me illustrate: on an airplane, under a democracy, if the pilot were to be headed into dangerous territory, he would immediately take a vote--to go ahead or turn back--and the majority would rule, right or wrong! Whereas, under a republic a pilot is specially trained and has expertise knowledge of flying, and he represents the whole plane, being in control. The people have, in essence, trusted a representative to make decisions for them, since they do not have the expertise knowledge. This is exactly how the United States should operate, like a republic. Why, then, are a republic and democracy connotated similarly, while they have blatant opposite meanings.

Please contact me as soon as possible, as I am very concerned!

Sincerely,

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