December ..., 1953

Dear ...

Thank you for your good note of recent date concerning the announcement of a policy relaxing restrictions on the sale of alcoholic beverages at Army Posts.

The legal basis for new regulations concerning alcoholic beverages on Military Installations may be found in Section 6, Public Law 51, 82nd Congress; "1951 Amendments to The Universal Military Training and Service Act", (65 Stat. 86, 50 USCA 473). The regulations authorize major commanders to permit the dispensing of alcoholic beverages by the drink, and the sale of packaged alcoholic beverages by the bottle, to members of the Army (over 21 years of age) in open messes at military installations. Alcoholic beverages are not available through other sources at military installations. Pertinent provisions of the Internal Revenue laws of the United States apply to the sale of alcoholic beverages at Army installations.

Army officials have recently stated that "No legitimate basis may be envisaged for any restrictive regulations which unnecessarily discriminate against members of the Army, and which result in the denial or curtailment of privileges not prohibited other citizens by the Constitution of the United States. Members of the military establishment, like other citizens, may occasionally desire to partake of alcoholic beverages, and it is preferred to make these privileges available in establishments with an atmosphere where abstinence is encouraged, moderation enforced, and any over-indulgence punished."

For your information I was one of five members of the Senate who voted against the enactment of Public Law 51.

Sincerely,

Everett McKinley Dirksen