Reserves

Dear:

We have received an abundance of letters from individuals in the various branches of the Armed Forces who have been recently recalled to active duty or extended, from the families of such individuals, and from other individuals having an objective interest in the present aspects of the military program.

I suppose there are few individuals, if any, who could have been recalled or extended without the imposition of hardship conditions on themselves and their dependents arising from such action, or who feel, since recall, that their services are being utilized to the fullest possible extent and in strict consonance with the terms of recall. This latter circumstance appears to be a natural result of the implementation of any defense acceleration and can be reasonably expected to be eliminated or corrected in the near future.

Let me say that the feeling here behind the unanimous approval of the Joint Resolution which provided the President with certain powers in connection with the Armed Forces was to make possible a more rapid build-up of the conventional power than would otherwise have been possible, e.g., by authorizing greater use of already-trained manpower, through extending enlistments and tours and calling up reserves. It was the intent, however, that these emergency powers be used selectively and temporarily, looking toward the development of appropriate sustaining levels in the active branches of the Armed Forces through more volunteers and the induction of more non-prior service personnel. Selective Service quotas have been increased, and the Secretary of Defense has affirmed the aim to release reservists from active duty as soon as the situation will permit. As a matter of fact, any extension of the tour beyond the twelve months authorized by the Joint Resolution of August 1, 1961, of course, would not only be in violation of the Resolution but contrary to the announced policies of the various military departments.

It does appear that inequities exist and that some questions remain to be answered, and I feel fairly certain the Congress will want to ventilate the whole matter thoroughly during the coming session.

Sincerely,

Everett McKinley Dirksen