

From: SECDEF_WASHINGTON_DC//ASDPA/DPL//@unclas1.hq.navy.mil
[mailto:SECDEF_WASHINGTON_DC//ASDPA/DPL//@unclas1.hq.navy.mil]
Sent: Wednesday, May 19, 1999 05:31 PM
Subject: P R PUBLIC AFFAIRS POLICY GUIDANCE -- ELECTION YEAR 2000

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***** ACTION: N09C/CHINFO/OLA *****

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FM: SECDEF WASHINGTON DC//ASDPA/DPL//
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Subject: PUBLIC AFFAIRS POLICY GUIDANCE -- ELECTION YEAR 2000

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02

SUBJ: Public Affairs Policy Guidance -- Election Year 2000

a. SECDEF msg 271505Z Mar 98, Public Affairs Policy Guidance --
Election Year 1998

b. DoD Directive 1344.10, Political Activities By Members Of The
Armed Forces

c. Public Law 103-94, Hatch Act Amendments

D. DoD Directive 5230.9, Clearance Of Department Of Defense
Information

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e. DoD Directive 1000.4, Federal Voting Assistance Program

F. DoD Instruction 5120.4, DoD Newspapers And Civilian Enterprise
Publications

G. DoD Instruction 1100.13, Surveys Of Department Of Defense
Personnel

H. DoD Directive 5120.20, Armed Forces Radio And Television Service
(AFRTS)

I. DoD Regulation 5120.20-R, Management And Operation Of Armed Forces
Radio And Television Service (AFRTS)

J. DoD Directive 5410.18, Community Relations

K. DoD Instruction 5410.19, Armed Forces Community Relations

L. 1998-1999 Voting Assistance Guide

M. DoD Directive 1344.13, Implementation Of The National Voter
Registration Act

1. The following public affairs policy guidance is provided to assist
commanders and public affairs officers (PAOs) in handling requests
for support of elections during the 1999-2000 election year cycle, as
defined in paragraph d. Commanders and PAOs will comply with this

guidance in the conduct of activities associated with political campaigns for elections for federal, state and local offices. This page 03 ruckjcs0650 unclas message supercedes ref a. Addressees are to ensure widest dissemination.

a. As a matter of long-standing policy, the Department of Defense does not engage in activities that could be interpreted as associating the Department with any partisan political causes, issues, or candidates. The political activities of individual military members are regulated by ref b. The political activities of civilian employees are restricted by the Hatch Act amendments, 5 U.S.C.. 7321 - 7326 (ref c). Civilian officers and employees with questions regarding the propriety of prospective political activities, or concerns about possible violations, may be directed to the Hatch Act hotline at the U.S. Office of Special Counsel, (800) 854-2824.

b. Inquiries from political campaigns should be considered as queries from the general public and should be responded to accordingly. When responding to queries from political campaign organizations, only information/material that is available to the general public is to be provided, per ref d. Additionally, there should be no attempt to explain or amplify prepared DoD or service statements or positions.

c. DoD command/internal information newspapers, both funded and page 04 ruckjcs0650 unclas civilian enterprise (CE), will support the federal voting assistance program (refs e and l) by carrying factual information about registration and voting laws, especially information on absentee voting requirements of the various states and territories. DoD newspapers will not carry campaign news, partisan discussions, cartoons, editorials, or commentaries dealing with political campaigns, candidates, or issues, per ref f. Civilian enterprise newspapers may not carry paid political advertisements or advertisements which advocate a particular position on a political issue. The above is more fully explained in ref f. No DoD newspaper or CE publication may conduct a poll, a survey, or a straw vote relating to a political campaign or partisan political issue, per refs f and g.

d. Per refs h and i, the Armed Forces Radio and Television Service (AFRTS) broadcast center will provide a free flow of balanced, non-funded, informational coverage of political campaigns provided by U.S. commercial and public networks. AFRTS outlets should make extensive use of such programming to include political analysis,

commentary, and public affairs programs in addition to hard news. great care should be shown by AFRTS outlets to maintain well-balanced coverage of political news without local comment, criticism, analysis, or interpretation of a political nature. Local programs or announcements concerning political parties, candidates or incumbents will not be broadcast during an election campaign period. The election campaign period begins with the first formal announcement of an individual's candidacy for Federal, state or local elected office, or formal status with the Federal elections commission, and ending no earlier than one week after the elections. The end date precludes the use of military installations as the site for post-election acceptance speeches, celebrations or other politically-oriented events. Information on the Federal Elections Commission may be found on the internet at www.fec.gov, or via the FEC fax information bulletin board at (202) 501-3413. Non-AFRTS military radio/television systems in CONUS, excluding cable services providing commercial programming, will not carry any partisan discussions, programs, editorials, or commentaries dealing with political campaigns, candidates, or issues. This does not preclude the above systems, i.e., AFRTS and non-AFRTS military radio/television systems, from using spot announcements encouraging armed forces personnel and their eligible family members to register and vote, either by absentee ballot or at the polls, providing these announcements have been approved by the Federal Voting Assistance Program (see section 3, below).

e. Installation commanders should not permit the use of installation facilities by any candidate (either incumbents or new office seekers), members of their staffs or their campaign representatives for: political assemblies or meetings; media events, including speeches; fund-raising social events for political candidates, parties, or causes regardless of the sponsorship; press conferences; any other activity that could be construed as political in nature.

(1) Installation commanders are advised not to allow their installation facilities to be used for polling or voting sites. locating polling or voting places on a military installation may result in conduct which could inadvertently violate one or more of the following statutory prohibitions, among others: 18 U.S.C. (504, 592, 593, 596, 602, 603, 606, 607, 608). More information on these and other statutes may be found on the internet at www.house.gov.

(2) Members of Congress, whether or not candidates for re-election to national office, may visit military installations to receive

briefings, tours and/or informational materials. If the candidate is
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currently a Government official and his/her duties require a visit to
an installation for related official duties, the response to the
request for the visit will include a reminder that the candidate may
not use the visit as a campaign vehicle. Other candidates for
national office who are not current Members of Congress or serving
governmental officials may be given the same access to installations
as any other unofficial visitor. Service chiefs of legislative
liaison should be consulted for special instructions/advice if there
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is any doubt on how to handle a specific request.

(3) Candidates, either incumbents or new office seekers, for local
and/or state offices may be given the same access to installations as
any other visitor.

(4) In all cases, commanders will inform candidates that while on a
military installation, all political activities and media events are
prohibited, including on-post/base media coverage of the candidate's
visit. (note: if the candidate has been invited to a military
installation as part of an official installation activity which
includes media coverage of that activity, the candidate may be
allowed to appear on camera and in photos as an official participant;
however, candidates will not be allowed to make statements or respond
to queries while on the installation.) If asked for the rationale for
this decision, the following guidance is approved for use: quote:
"Department of Defense policy has for many years prohibited the use
of military installations for any activity that could be construed as
political in nature, including news media coverage of any portion
of a political candidate's activities while on a military
installation regardless of the purpose of the visit." End quote. An
exception to this rule permits news media coverage of certain
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portions of visits to military installations by the President, Vice
President, and the Speaker of the House as explained in the following
paragraph.

(5) During an election year, media coverage of the arrival/departure
via military aircraft on a DoD installation of any elected officials
is not authorized if their itinerary includes political campaigning
in the local community, with the exceptions of the President, the
Vice President, and the Speaker of the House. If the President, the
Vice President, or the Speaker of the House fly into a military
installation aboard a military aircraft to campaign for a candidate
in the local community, media may be allowed a photo opportunity on

the military installation for the express purpose of covering the arrival or departure of these officials. The supported candidate may not be present during these photo opportunities. PAOs at installations anticipating a politically oriented visit by the President, Vice President, or the Speaker of the House should contact teams advancing such visits to ensure all concerned are aware of the provisions of this message, and especially this paragraph.

f. DoD policy prohibits armed forces involvement in political events, except for the provision of a joint armed forces color guard for the opening ceremonies at the national conventions of the Republican, Democratic, and other political parties formally recognized by the Federal Elections Commission. All other requests for community relations support (including bands, color guards, personnel and speakers) to political meetings, ceremonies, and like events, whether on the installation or in the civilian community, will be denied. Commanders will decline requests for support to any event with the potential for identification or apparent association with any partisan candidate or cause.

g. Speeches, articles, and public comment by military personnel in their capacity as service representatives must not contain material that may be construed as political in nature. Refs j and k pertain. the established review procedures for speeches and articles for publication by military personnel must be followed. Refs b, d, and f pertain.

h. Campaign literature may be distributed on military installations only as authorized by service regulations. Active duty military personnel are prohibited from distributing such materials.

i. Requests from politicians to tape or film campaign commercials in front of military equipment (i.e., ships, tanks, aircraft, etc.) On military property owned or leased by the Government will be denied. However, taping/filming from outside these areas, using them as a background cannot be refused as they are outside Government property. the only exception to this is if the taping/filming conflicts with operational security.

j. DoD employees, including Active Duty personnel, Reserve Component personnel on active duty, and civilian employees, are required to adhere to policy outlined in refs b and c on individual participation in political activities. These policies address a wide range of

activities, including speeches, political polls, ballots, straw votes, campaign efforts and solicitation of support for candidates.

2. DoD employees and their family members are encouraged to vote. voting assistance officers will be provided at every level of command. The OSD Director of the Federal Voting Assistance Program is located at the DoD Voting Information Center, Office of Secretary of Defense, Washington Headquarters Services, 1155 Defense Pentagon, Washington, DC 20301-1155. The Center's telephone number is commercial (800) 438-8683, (703) 588-1584/dsn 425-1584, fax (703) 588-0108/DSN 425-0108, e-mail (all lower case) vote@fvap.gov. The program's web site is www.fvap.gov. Publication of the 2000-2001 page 06 ruckjcs0651 unclas edition of the Voting Assistance Guide is expected in October 1999.

3. Cognizant commands are advised to review ref m that applies to recruitment offices of the armed forces in carrying out applicable provisions of the Voter Registration Act.

4. Any policy questions or situations not covered by the foregoing guidance should be immediately brought to the attention of OASD(PA):DPL, LT Gai, commercial (703) 697-9845/DSN 227-9845 for resolution. Questions on media activities should be referred to Mr. Glenn Flood, OASD(PA):DDI, commercial (703) 695-6294/DSN 225-6294. Questions on community relations activities should be referred to Ms. Celia Hoke, OASD(PA):DPCR, commercial (703) 695-2733/DSN 225-2733.

5. Any disputes, unresolved issues or potential problems with Federal-level political candidates should be brought to the attention of OASD(PA), Mr. James Desler, Principal Deputy, commercial (703) 697-0713/DSN 227-0713, for resolution. If a dispute has been settled at the local level, please advise Mr. Desler of the nature of the dispute and the resolution so that questions may be answered at the OSD or national level, if they arise.

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