SECRETARY OF THE ARMY
WASHINGTON

09 FEB 2006

MEMORANDUM FOR PRINCIPAL OFFICIALS OF HEADQUARTERS, DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY

SUBJECT: Election Year Guidance

As we enter the 2006 election year, I want to ensure that you are aware of and comply with Department of Defense and Army policies concerning use of facilities for political events and participation of personnel in political activities.

Army leaders and commanders should ensure that military personnel and Federal employees under their leadership are familiar with the laws and policies regarding their active participation in the political process. Department of Defense (DoD) Directive 1344.10 and Army Regulation (AR) 600-20, paragraph 5-3, set forth the basic guidance concerning the political activities of officers and enlisted members of the Active Army, the United States Army Reserve and the Army National Guard. The political activities of Federal employees are governed by the revised Hatch Act amendments, 5 U.S.C. § 7321 - 7325, 5 C.F.R. Part 733.

Army Regulation 360-1 outlines the policies and procedures to be followed when considering military involvement in election year activities. Installation commanders should not permit the use of installation facilities by any candidate or individual representing their interest for political assemblies, meetings, fund-raising events, press conferences, or any other activity that could be construed as political in nature.

Members of Congress, whether or not candidates for re-election, may visit Army installations to receive briefings, attend official events and receive tours. Requests from Members of Congress to visit an installation should be referred to the Office of the Chief Legislative Liaison (See AR 1-20 for reporting requirements). Candidates who are not Members of Congress may be given the same access to installations as that to which any other visitor is entitled. Prior to visiting an installation, all political candidates must be informed that while on the military installation all political activity and media events are prohibited.

Requests from candidates to film or tape campaign commercials in front of military equipment on Army installations and facilities will be denied. Army support, including troops, bands, and color guard, to political meetings, ceremonies, or similar events is prohibited. Requests for Army speakers should be evaluated carefully to preclude participation in politically oriented programs.

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I expect all Army leaders to support the Voting Assistance Program and encourage all military members and employees to vote. While active duty military members and civilian employees may participate in the political process, they are subject to restrictions that generally preclude them from engaging in any partisan political activity while on duty or in uniform.

This memorandum is not intended to provide you with exclusive or complete guidance on this area and there may be circumstances that do not clearly fall within established guidance. I expect you to exercise good judgment in handing these issues, consistent with the Army's long-standing policy against engaging in any activities that could be interpreted as associating the Army with a particular political cause or candidate. I encourage you to coordinate these situations with appropriate Major Army Commands and Department of the Army level officials as soon as possible.

Francis J. Harvey