

INFORMATION PAPER

ANJA

29 FEBRUARY 2008

SUBJECT: Political Activity of Military Members (DoD Directive 1344.10)

1. Spirit and intent of Directive prohibits any activity that may be viewed as directly or indirectly associating DoD with partisan politics. "Some activities not expressly prohibited may be contrary to the spirit and intent of . . . this Directive In determining whether an activity violates the traditional concept that Service members should not engage in partisan political activities, rules of reason and common sense shall apply. Any activity that may be viewed as associating the Department of Defense . . . or any component . . . directly or indirectly with a partisan political activity shall be avoided." DoDD 1344.10, para E3.4.

2. **Permitted political activities.** Limited "private citizen" standard. A military member may:

- a. Register, vote and express personal opinions;
- b. Encourage other military members to exercise voting rights;
- c. Join a political club, and attend political meetings and rallies as a spectator when not in uniform;
- d. Make monetary contributions to a political organization;
- e. Sign petitions for specific legislative action or place candidate's name on the ballot;
- f. Write letters to the editor expressing personal views (so long as not part of organized letter writing campaign);
- g. Place bumper stickers on private vehicles.

3. Personal participation in local nonpartisan political activities is allowed, so long as:

- a. Not in uniform.
- b. No use of Government property or resources.
- c. No interference with duty.
- d. No implied Government position or involvement.

4. **Prohibited political activities.** A military member may not:

- a. Use official authority to influence or interfere;
- b. Be a candidate for, hold, or exercise functions of a civil office,

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- c. Participate in partisan political campaigns, speeches, articles, TV/radio discussions;
 - d. Serve in official capacity/sponsor a partisan political club;
 - e. Conduct political opinion survey;
 - f. Use contemptuous words against certain civilian leaders (10 U.S.C. 888) (applies to commissioned officers only)
 - g. March or ride in partisan parades;
 - h. Participate in organized effort to transport voters to polls;
 - i. Promote political dinners or fundraising events;
 - j. Attend partisan events as official representative of Armed Forces;
 - k. Display large signs/banners/posters on private vehicles.
5. POC is Mike Egan, (202) 685-4949, michael.egan@jfhqncr.northcom.mil.

