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Law

PROHIBITION OF POLITICAL ACTIVITIES

COMPLIANCE WITH THIS PUBLICATION IS MANDATORY

OPR: USFJ/J54 (Maj John Tran)

Certified by: USFJ/J5 (COL Jeffrey S. Wiltse)

Supersedes USFJ Instruction 51-501, 30 October 2002

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PURPOSE: To prescribe policy with regard to the prohibition of U.S. Forces, Japan (USFJ) personnel, including dependents, from engaging in Japanese political activities.

SUMMARY OF CHANGES: Updated OPR information and reviewed for relevancy. Deleted paragraph 4 and shifted its wording up front into paragraphs 2 and 3 to clarify that while the Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) applies to all SOFA dependents, legal conflict occurs in dealing with SOFA personnel who are Japanese dependents. As a result, this instruction has been reworded to clarify that SOFA status members who are Japanese citizens are entitled to exercise their basic political freedoms, but may still be restricted by certain activities on U.S. installations.

- 1. Scope:** Applicable to all personnel of US Forces, Japan (USFJ) including dependents, as defined in Article I and Article XIV of the SOFA.
- 2. General.** Article XVI of the SOFA states in part: "It is the duty of members of the United States Armed Forces, the civilian component, and their dependents...to abstain...from any political activity in Japan." However, the SOFA is unclear on addressing dependents who are Japanese citizens and entitled to exercise individual freedoms within their own political system. This instruction provides guidance in accordance with this policy.
- 3. Policy.** In conformity with the prohibition of engaging in political activity in Japan as described above, all USFJ personnel, including dependents and Article XIV personnel, in Japan under the SOFA will refrain from Japanese political activities, including but not limited to, the following sub-paragraphs. The only exception to this policy applies to dependents who are Japanese citizens. This instruction does not restrict the freedom of SOFA personnel who are Japanese citizens from participating in Japanese political activities. However, U.S. installation commanders may restrict any political activity on, or using, U.S. installations. The following activities are restricted for non-Japanese citizen SOFA personnel:

- 3.1. Organizing, conducting or participating in political meetings, rallies or parades.
 - 3.2. Serving on any committee or a political party of an organization involved in political activities.
 - 3.3. Soliciting, collecting, receiving, disbursing or otherwise handling contributions made for political purposes.
 - 3.4. Distributing campaign buttons, badges or literature.
 - 3.5. Writing for publication in any news media, any article or letter soliciting votes for or against any political party, candidate or faction.
 - 3.6. Soliciting votes, transporting voters, or any other partisan activities at the polls.
 - 3.7. Lending support in any form to a candidate, political faction or political party.
 - 3.8. Influencing, or attempting to influence in any manner, directly or indirectly, the outcome of an election.
4. **Responsibilities.** Service component commanders are responsible for ensuring compliance with the above policy. They must ensure that US facilities are not used for Japanese political activities.
5. **Reference.** Article XVI of the Status of Forces Agreement between the United States and Japan.



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