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WASHINGTON D.C. 20548

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The Honorable William Proxmire
Vice Chairman, Joint Economic Committee



Dear Mr. Vice Chairman:

This is our reply to your letters of September 18, 1973, and November 15, 1973, and as supplemented by discussions with your staff. These letters and requests asked that we obtain answers to questions concerning (1) the use of military enlisted aides in the personal service of the President and the Vice President, (2) the military officers assigned to the White House, and (3) the use of stewards assigned to command and flight messes in the personal service of flag rank officers and high-level civilian officials.

Naval personnel have been assigned to White House support duties continuously since the first Presidential yacht was assigned to President Rutherford B. Hayes in 1880. In 1942, President Roosevelt established "Shangri-La" as a Presidential retreat and directed that messing facilities be provided by Navy stewards from his yacht, the "Williamsburg." The White House Staff Mess was established in 1951 and again manned by stewards detailed from the "Williamsburg."

Concurrent with the deactivation of the "Williamsburg" in 1953, the Naval Administrative Unit was formed to provide personnel required to operate and maintain the two remaining Presidential yachts and also to serve as an administrative base for the stewards detailed to the White House Staff Mess.

The Naval Administrative Unit currently has 2 officers and 91 enlisted men (53 stewards and 38 other enlisted personnel). Their only mission is the operation of the White House Staff Mess and the Presidential yacht, "Sequoia." The Department of Navy staffs the Unit as it would any installation but has no control over its operation. Operational control comes from the Office of the Military Assistant to the President.

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Your specific questions and the information we obtained is summarized below:

(1) What are the specific duties assigned and performed by the stewards detailed to the personal service of the President and Vice President?

The Office of the Military Assistant to the President (OMAP) and the Navy stated that the stewards were assigned and performed the following duties:

- Operation and maintenance of the White House Staff Mess, including food preparation and service; providing similar services

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on a reduced scale on Presidential trips to the Western White House.

- Valet service for the President at the White House; valet and food preparation and service at Camp David, aboard the "Sequoia," at the Western White House, at Key Biscayne, and on the President's foreign and domestic trips.

We interviewed several Navy stewards who had previously worked at the White House Staff Mess and were advised that stewards

- generally worked 40 to 60 hours a week, 5 to 6 days a week,
- were required to work at official dinners or functions 1 to 4 times a month and unofficial parties and functions several times a week,
- frequently prepared and served White House Staff birthday or going away parties during normal duty hours,
- were detailed during off-duty hours to prepare and serve functions at private residences, and
- had no choice but to serve at both official or unofficial functions, as this was part of their duties.

(2) Are Navy stewards employed in the President's personal service in places other than the White House, such as the President's homes at Key Biscayne and San Clemente?

OMAP and the Navy advised us that nine stewards are assigned full time to Camp David to provide valet and food service to the President and food service to staff members accompanying the President and other officials invited by the President or otherwise authorized to use Camp David (Cabinet members, foreign heads-of-state, etc.). They also clean the Presidential and guest cabins.

One steward is assigned full time at Key Biscayne with four additional stewards assigned on routine Presidential trips to Key Biscayne. This complement of stewards is augmented as required (for example, the state visit of Chancellor Brandt in December 1971 occasioned use of six stewards).

One steward is assigned full time at San Clemente. Presidential trips to San Clemente normally require 15 stewards to operate the Staff Mess facility and maintain the President's residence. The number is augmented as required. For example, the 3-day visit of General Secretary Brezhnev to San Clemente in June 1973 required 21 stewards

to provide routine services, cater an official reception, and attend to the Soviet delegation.

Some of the stewards previously assigned to the White House Staff Mess told us that stewards assigned to accompany the President on these trips do so involuntarily. As many as 75 percent of the stewards would travel with the President at times since he did not have his own servants in his homes in San Clemente and Key Biscayne. Normal working hours on these trips were 8 to 10 hours a day.

(3) When the President travels within the United States is he accompanied by Navy stewards? If so, how many and what functions do they perform in transit?

OMAP and the Navy stated that one steward accompanies the President when he travels in the United States. This steward attends to the President's luggage and personal needs, handles food preparation and service, provides necessary security to insure that all foodstuffs and related items have received proper handling regarding procurement and preparation and service to preclude the President or other members of the First Family and their guests from being harmed from food and refreshment service. Depending on the scope of the particular trip, additional stewards may be assigned as necessary to provide sufficient personnel to cater luncheons, etc., hosted by the President.

(4) Are any other enlisted aides, other than Navy stewards, employed at the White House or in the personal service of the President? If so, how many and what function do they perform?

OMAP and the Navy informed us that there are 38 other enlisted personnel assigned to the Naval Administrative Unit in addition to the 53 stewards. Most of these enlisted personnel man the Presidential yacht, and several help operate the Unit. OMAP also informed us that seven other enlisted personnel are assigned to the White House: four in the Office of the Military Assistant, one in the Office of Former Counsellor Laird, and two in the Office of the Physician to the President.

We subsequently determined that, in addition to the above 98 enlisted personnel, other units support the White House, such as the U.S. Army Transportation Agency "White House" (a unit of approximately 65 enlisted personnel that drive for the White House), the "White House" Communications Agency (a triservice group), and a military photography unit. After determining these units existed we forwarded a letter to the Office of the Secretary of Defense on April 15, 1974, requesting information on these and other similar units assigned to the White House. We have not received a reply to date.

(5) What are the total annual costs to support the military enlisted aides at the White House or in the President's personal service?

The Navy reported that annual salary costs for the personnel assigned to the Naval Administrative Unit are \$870,500 for enlisted personnel and \$39,000 for the two officers assigned, totaling \$909,500. Excluded are two civilians (a GS-15 and a GS-10) assigned to the Unit. We estimate the salary costs of these two persons to be at least \$41,500. Other operating costs of the Unit and other military personnel and units assigned to support the White House were not provided to us. The cost for the Vice President's enlisted aides are shown below (question 7d).

(6) How many military officers presently on active duty or with active commissions are employed at the White House?

Fourteen military officers were assigned to the White House on November 30, 1973. The enclosure lists the name, rank, and function of each officer.

(7) Please answer the following questions with respect to the Vice President.

(a) Are Navy stewards employed in the Vice President's personal service?

OMAP and Navy stated that two Navy stewards (one E-6 and one E-5) were assigned to Vice President Agnew's residence to prepare and serve meals for him and his family and perform valet duties. In addition, they were always "on call" to serve special luncheons and coffee to high-ranking foreign visitors and other very important persons visiting the Vice President's office. Their assignments were terminated on November 10, 1973.

Two stewards have been assigned to Vice President Ford, one on December 12, 1973, and one on January 7, 1974.

(b) When the Vice President travels within the United States is he accompanied by Navy stewards? If so, how many and what functions do they perform in transit?

OMAP and the Navy stated that Navy stewards have never accompanied the Vice President on domestic trips.

(c) Are any other enlisted aides, other than Navy stewards, employed in the personal service of the Vice President?

OMAP and the Navy stated that no other enlisted aides were assigned to the Vice President.

(d) What is the total annual cost to support the military enlisted aides employed in the Vice President's personal service?

The annual cost for the two stewards assigned to the Vice President is about \$17,000. This includes salary, quarters allowance, and subsistence.

(e) How many military officers presently on active duty or with active commissions are assigned to the Office of the Vice President?

OMAP and the Navy stated that the following officers are assigned to the Office of the Vice President:

Major General John M. Dunn, USA--Assistant to the Vice President for Foreign and Military Affairs and Deputy Chief of Staff.

Colonel John K. Garland, USAF--Pilot and Air Force Aide to the Vice President.

Lieutenant Colonel Americo A. Sardo, USMC--Marine Corps Aide to the Vice President.

Commander Howard J. Kerr, USN--Deputy Assistant to the Vice President for Military Affairs.

Captain Marlyn W. Voss, MC, USN--assigned to the U. S. Naval Hospital, Bethesda, Maryland, but with additional duties as physician to the Vice President.

(8) Do Navy stewards or other enlisted aides perform personal services for persons other than the President, such as at parties, receptions, official, and unofficial functions?

We were unable to substantiate to what extent this situation exists, because the White House did not permit us to review the records of the White House Staff Mess or interview the stewards assigned to the Mess. Mr. Ron Jackson, Supervisor of the White House Staff Mess, informed us that large official functions occur one to four times a month and that unofficial smaller functions occur more frequently. He said the stewards work off-duty unofficial functions voluntarily and are paid for this work. He said this had been the policy since he had been at the White House.

Stewards that had been previously assigned to the White House Staff Mess advised us that stewards are assigned to work these unofficial functions and that it is not voluntary. We were informed that stewards received no extra pay for working at unofficial parties, although one steward said he understands they are now paid for outside unofficial work. They also said that unofficial functions take place several times a week. Also, from documents furnished us by your staff, it is evident these unofficial functions are common occurrences.

(9) In your opinion, is the assignment of Navy stewards or other enlisted aides to the personal service of the President and Vice President authorized by the law? If so, what is the legal justification for such assignments? Answer the same question with respect to the officers.

There is no specific statutory authority for assigning enlisted personnel to the personal service of the President and Vice President, nor is there a specific statutory prohibition; but Navy personnel have been assigned to White House support duties continuously since 1880. The Navy stated to us that the legal basis for its Presidential support programs, including those grouped under the Naval Administrative Unit assigned to the White House, derives from article II, section 2 of the Constitution, which makes the President "Commander-in-Chief of the Navy of the United States." The Navy further stated that it is the President's constitutional prerogative to direct the Navy to provide support and the Navy's responsibility to provide such support when directed to do so. We must agree that the designation of the President as Commander-in-Chief of the Army and Navy of the United States necessarily implies broad powers to prescribe the duties of all military personnel.

We believe that provisions of law (10 U.S.C. 7579, 70A Stat. 470) and implementing regulations and Secretary of the Navy instructions (U.S. Nav. Regs., art. 0847(3); 1306.2A, Apr. 3, 1972) restricted the authority of the Secretary of the Navy to assign enlisted aides to selected naval officers in public quarters or in officers' messes only. There is, however, no indication that the Congress intended to impose these limitations on the authority of the President as well.

The Vice President holds no comparable command authority over the Armed Forces and could not order the Navy to assign enlisted aides in his own right. The President, however, in the exercise of his broad powers over the military forces, could detail enough aides to serve the Vice President if he felt it would serve a legitimate public purpose.

However, the Office of the Secretary of Defense informed us that the two stewards currently assigned to the Vice President are not a part of the Naval Administrative Unit but were assigned from the Department of Navy Staff Offices.

The White House and the Department of Defense did not provide enough information for us to comment on the propriety of the duties actually performed by military officers for the President and Vice President. Again, the President, by virtue of his position as Commander-in-Chief, has broad powers to prescribe the duties of a military officer. Although we know of no statute that specifically provides for the assignment of military officers to a Vice President, in view of the potential for the Vice President to become President or Acting President and of his statutory duty as a member of the National Security Council dealing with military matters (50 U.S.C. 402), it would appear reasonable for the President to detail military officers to assist the Vice President in performing his public duties.

(10) In your opinion, does the law authorize stewards or other enlisted aides assigned to the personal service of the President and Vice President to perform personal services outside the official residence of the President and Vice President or for persons other than the President and Vice President?

The term "official residence" has not been defined in legislation or regulations and could reasonably be interpreted to include any residence occupied by the President or Vice President at a given period of time. If the duties performed by the aides are otherwise permissible as being services required to assist them in carrying out their official duties or in support of their public positions and ranks, the fact that they are performed outside the White House is immaterial. (Unlike a naval officer subject to the orders of the Secretary of the Navy, the President is not bound by the provisions of 10 U.S.C. 7579 to use enlisted aides only in "public quarters"--provided by the Government or in officers' messes.)

There is no question that enlisted aides can prepare food and otherwise serve members of the President's family, White House staff members, or persons visiting him officially or otherwise in his home.

This is a privilege military officers on shore billet have long enjoyed. Similarly, if the Vice President receives such aides on detail from the President, he could use them to serve his family or guests.

Whether the President could detail an enlisted aide to serve on the staff of someone other than his own or the Vice President's would have to be decided on the merits of the specific case. A temporary detail to provide services for a visiting foreign delegation on a state visit

while quartered at the President's residence would appear to be permissible. A similar detail to serve in the private home of a personal friend might not be. Abuses in the use of the authority to detail enlisted personnel for personal services would be a matter for the Congress to consider.

(11) Can you determine the number of Navy stewards or other enlisted aides assigned to the personal service of the President and Vice President during each of the previous three Administrations (Johnson, Kennedy, and Eisenhower)? Answer the same question with respect to the officers.

OMAP provided the following information to us.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Military personnel assigned to naval administrative unit</u>	
	<u>Officers</u>	<u>Enlisted</u>
<u>KENNEDY</u>		
<u>2-28-63</u>	3	51
<u>JOHNSON</u>		
<u>3-11-65</u>	3	47
<u>12-30-65</u>	3	63
<u>NIXON</u>		
<u>2-29-68</u>	3	39
<u>3-13-69</u>	2	44
<u>3-20-69</u>	2	45
<u>2-26-70</u>	2	78
<u>3-26-70</u>	2	76
<u>2-10-71</u>	2	67
<u>5- 5-72</u>	2	97

Information on the number of enlisted aides and officers assigned to (1) the personal service of Presidents Kennedy (prior to February 1963) and Eisenhower and (2) the Vice Presidents of the three Administrations was not available according to OMAP.

(12) I have been informed that Navy stewards ostensibly assigned to stations, such as mess halls, kitchens and the like, actually perform personal services for certain officers and high-level civilian officials at their homes and offices. Please determine whether this information is correct and if it is provide whatever details you can gather.

As yet, we have not gathered information with which to respond to this question. We will deal with this matter during the review you requested in your letter of March 11, 1974.

(13) It has been alleged that Mr. Ron Jackson, Supervisor of the White House Staff Mess drives a Government vehicle to and from work.

As we were not allowed access to the records of the White House Staff Mess we were unable to examine the vehicle log to confirm this allegation. However, in a discussion with Mr. Jackson he stated that the vehicle was assigned to the White House Staff Mess and not to him personally. He did advise us that he often drives the vehicle to and from his residence and work.

(14) It has been alleged that the White House Staff Mess procures food and liquor at military commissaries to serve at the Staff Mess and at unofficial functions.

Mr. Ron Jackson, Supervisor of the White House Staff Mess stated that food supplies for the mess are purchased from local District of Columbia dealers and the military commissaries but that liquor is purchased from local dealers because it is cheaper. In our discussions with stewards previously assigned to the Staff Mess, we were informed that food supplies came from the military commissary.

The regulations of the Department of Defense and all three military services prohibit the resale or giving away of food purchased at military commissaries. Regulation 1330.17, "Armed Services Commissary Store Regulation," dated October 29, 1971, states in paragraph 1.109 that:

"Authorized personnel will not sell or give away commissary purchases to individuals or groups not entitled to commissary store privileges. * * * Violations of this restriction by individuals subject to military law may result in disciplinary action under the Uniform Code of Military Justice, in addition to the loss of commissary store privileges. Violation by authorized persons not subject to military law will provide a basis for suspension of commissary store privileges for a specific period or permanent revocation of commissary store privileges in addition to such disciplinary measures as may be taken in accordance with civil service or other pertinent regulations/agreements."

Much of the above information was provided to us by the White House through the Departments of Defense and Navy. Because of our unsatisfactory working arrangements with the White House on this assignment, we were unable to verify the accuracy of the data provided.

Sincerely yours,



Comptroller General
of the United States

Enclosure

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MILITARY OFFICERS EMPLOYED AT THE WHITE HOUSEAS OF NOVEMBER 30, 1973

Major General Brent Scowcroft, USAF
Deputy Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs

Major General Walter R. Tkach, USAF
Physician to the President

Brigadier General Richard L. Lawson, USAF
Military Assistant to the President

Rear Admiral William M. Lukash, MC, USN
Assistant Physician to the President

Colonel Chester L. Ward, USA
Assistant Physician to the President

Colonel Dana G. Mead, USA
Associate Director, Domestic Council

Lieutenant Colonel William L. Golden, USA
Army Aide to the President

Lieutenant Colonel John V. Brennan, USMC
Marine Corps Aide to the President

Lieutenant Commander T. Stephen Todd, USN
Naval Aide to the President

Lieutenant Christopher Alberts, USNR
Staff Assistant to the Military Assistant to the President

Captain Mary A. Goree, USAF
Staff Nurse, Office of the Physician to the President

Major George A. Joulwan, USA
Aide to General Haig

ENCLOSURE

Major Robert C. McFarlane, USMC
Staff Assistant, National Security Council

Lieutenant Colonel Jack Walker, USA
Aide to Counsellor Laird

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