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A.F.O. 3105/44

ADMIRALTY FLEET ORDER

PARLIAMENT (ELECTIONS AND MEETING) ACT, 1943. REVISED ARRANGEMENTS FOR SERVICE VOTING.

ADMIRALTY, S.W.1,

8th June, 1944.

3105.—Parliament (Elections and Meeting) Act, 1943 : Revised Arrangements for Service Voting

(N. 4613/44.—8 Jun. 1944.)

See AFO
4578/40.
See AFO 1272/40.
" " 2412/40

The Parliament (Elections and Meeting) Act, 1943, makes provision for the registration of electors for parliamentary elections initiated while the National Registration Act, 1939, is in force. This new parliamentary register will, from a date to be announced later, replace the 1939 register and the absent voters list now maintained by the R.N. Depots, R.M. Divisions, etc.

2. The new register will include a service register. British subjects who are 21 years of age or more, and are not subject to any legal incapacity, will be entitled to be placed on the service register if they are either—

- (a) members of the forces raised in the United Kingdom, or
- (b) persons engaged on war work abroad.

This A.F.O. deals with members of the forces only.

3. For this purpose the expression "member of the forces" includes a person who is a member of the armed forces of the Crown raised in the United Kingdom and exempt from registration in the national register.

Accordingly all R.N., R.M., and W.R.N.S. officers and ratings, including those on T.124X and allied agreements, are to be included provided that they possess a naval identity card and have had their civilian identity cards withdrawn or are exempt from registering in the civilian national register. Any personnel in possession of both naval and civilian identity cards will vote as civilians.

4. In order to be placed on the service register, all persons who are members of the forces as defined above must complete S.1300B (Armed Forces Declaration Card). Persons under 21 years of age should also complete the form, but they will not be placed on the register until they attain that age. The form must be attested by a commissioned officer other than the declarant. Commanding Officers are to detail an officer or officers (e.g., divisional officers) for this duty; it is not a function of the Accountant Officer as such. Such officers should also explain the object of the registration and the procedure to any men who find themselves at a loss to understand it.

5. Full instructions for the completion, attestation and despatching of S.1300B are given in a pamphlet entitled "Parliamentary Registration—The Armed Forces Declaration Card" issued under the authority of this A.F.O. A copy of this pamphlet is contained in Appendix I of this A.F.O.

6. Arrangements have already been made for supplies to the Fleet of the pamphlet mentioned in paragraph 5 above and of the Declaration Card (S.1300B), and one copy of the pamphlet will be supplied with every ten copies of the Declaration Card issued from the R.N. Store Depot, Elveden Road, Park Royal, N.W.10.

Additional copies of the declaration card if required may be obtained on request from the R.N. Store Depot, or from the local Army or R.A.F. Commands. In emergency supplies can be printed locally, but in cases where supplies are prepared locally, care must be taken to ensure that the cards conform in all respects to the standard Form S.1300B, the form of which is prescribed by statutory rules. A copy of the card is annexed to this A.F.O. as Appendix II.

7. The Act provides that, as far as circumstances permit, every person appearing to be qualified to make a service declaration shall have an effective opportunity of exercising from time to time the rights conferred upon him in relation to the making or cancellation of service declarations, appointments of a proxy, and voting by post, and shall receive such instructions and such other assistance as may be reasonably sufficient in connection with the exercise of those rights.

8. It is important, therefore, that Commanding Officers should give officers and ratings who desire to be placed on the service register every possible facility for the completion and attestation of S.1300B. Officers attesting the declaration card should have a copy of the pamphlet referred to in paragraph 5 above available for reference. A copy of the pamphlet should also be lent to anyone who desires to peruse it, and it is important that this duty should not fall on Accountant Officers only and that divisional and other officers should be instructed to assist.

In order to assist officers in explaining the new arrangements, a copy of an article issued by the Army Bureau of Current Affairs, entitled "Your Vote and how to cast it", is reprinted as Appendix III.

9. Care is to be taken that ratings on joining the R.N. or re-joining from the reserve are given facilities as described above, and arrangements should be made to hand a copy of the declaration card to them.

10. The R.N. depots are to ensure that discharges or indefinite releases should only be notified to the Central National Registration Office, Southport, Lancs, in the case of personnel proceeding on discharge or indefinite release to addresses outside the U.K. Similar action should be taken by depots, etc., in cases of final transfer to Dominion navies. The names of ratings promoted to commissioned rank and all deaths (including those from natural causes) will be notified by the Admiralty.

No notification in the case of men transferred to the Army or R.A.F. need be made, as the necessary action will be taken by those services. But the depots must report to the Central National Registration Office, Southport, particulars of men transferred from the other two services to the R.N. These particulars should include service number and rank of the man's previous service.

The names of officers and men serving under T.124 and similar agreements who become casualties will be notified to the Central National Registration Office by the Registrar-General, Shipping and Seamen.

All changes of name (including W.R.N.S. on marriage) must similarly be reported, with official numbers.

In the case of Royal Marines, the Commandants of R.M. Divisions, etc., are to notify the C.N.R.O. of all changes affecting R.M. ranks, viz., promotion to commissioned or warrant rank, and cases of discharge (except those on account of death (including natural causes), which will be reported direct by the Admiralty), transfers from the other two services, indefinite releases, etc.

A supply of special forms for notifying the C.N.R.O. will be distributed later. Pending delivery of these forms, however, the depots must arrange to notify the C.N.R.O. of all changes covered by paragraph 10 as from the date of this A.F.O. in any manner convenient.

11. In order that personnel serving at home who are on the service register shall receive notice of a pending election in sufficient time to enable them to exercise their rights to vote if they so desire, an Admiralty General Message will be issued to commands in home waters, giving the name of the constituency in which an election is pending. Ships and establishments at home should post the notification in a prominent position on notice boards.

12. Separate instructions will be issued in regard to the registration of civilian war workers abroad.

13. It is important to note that all previous electoral registrations under the arrangements detailed in K.R. & A.I., Appendix XXI, will lapse, and every person who wishes to be included in the new register of voters must make a declaration

under this A.F.O. *whether previously registered or not.* But for the present, until the date referred to in paragraph 1 above is announced (in a subsequent A.F.O.), the existing arrangements under the old system will remain in force.

14. Arrangements are being made to distribute supplies of the form of application to vote by post referred to in paragraph 18 of Appendix I, and it will be seen that in order to vote by post it is necessary to complete and post Form S.1300C. The onus of doing this is on the individual and not on the Commanding Officer.

15. Men released to the reserve for an *indefinite* period will be treated as civilians for electoral purposes and will not come under the provisions of this A.F.O.

16. Registration Officers have been instructed to send defective declaration cards to the Central National Registration Office, Southport, accompanied by a statement of their reasons for so doing. The intention is that such cards should ultimately be returned to the declarant, errors having been marked in red ink, who would then become aware that his original declaration had not become operative and would have an opportunity of making another. The procedure for the return of these defective cards will be through the R.N. Depot or R.M. Division, etc., concerned, to the man's Commanding Officer. It is essential that a new declaration card should be completed as the "Official Paid" stamp on the original declaration will have been cancelled by the postmark.

APPENDIX I

PARLIAMENTARY REGISTRATION

General Instructions

The Armed Forces Declaration Card

(S1300B)

Every person who wishes to be included in the new Register of voters must make a declaration, whether previously registered or not.

1. Section 10 of the Parliament (Elections and Meeting) Act, 1943, provides that every person appearing to be qualified to make a service declaration shall receive all reasonable instructions and assistance in the making of that declaration. It is accordingly desirable that these cards shall be filled up under the supervision of a commissioned officer, and the following instructions are issued for general guidance. The declaration must be attested by a commissioned officer other than the declarant.

2. Parts 1 and 3, and, if it is desired to appoint a proxy, Part 2 of the card are to be filled up. Nothing will be written on Part 4. All entries should be made in ink.

Part 1

3. The space marked "Service" will be completed by inserting "R.N.", "Army", "R.A.F.", "W.R.N.S.", "A.T.S.", or "W.A.A.F.", as the case may be. Nursing Services will be included under the name of the Service (i.e., R.N., Army or R.A.F.) with which they are serving. V.A.D. members employed under the Army Council will put "V.A.D. (Army)".

4. "Service No." includes the personal number, if any, of officers.

5. The date of birth should be inserted only in the case of persons who are under 21 years of age at the time of filling up the card. In all other cases the declarant should state only that he is 21 years of age or over.

Those under 21 years of age will be placed on the register when they attain that age.

6. A declarant is required to state the address at which he resides or, but for his service, would reside. This means that a declarant should as a rule give his home address; but if owing to special circumstances he is not in a position to give his home address it will be open to him to give an address at which he would be likely to be residing if he were not in the Forces, e.g., the address of a relative or friend.

7. The FULL postal address of the HOUSE must be inserted. It will not be possible to register a person who gives only the name of a town or district.

8. Before an attesting officer signs a declaration he is required to satisfy himself that all particulars of identity which can be known to him are accurate, e.g., he should check from the pay book or other official document that the declarant's number and his rank or rating are correct. Since an alien cannot vote, an attesting officer should not attest the declaration of a person whom he *knows* to be an alien, i.e., a person who does not possess British nationality either alone or with any other nationality.

9. An attesting officer if in the Royal Navy will state his ship, if in the Army he will state his regiment or corps, but *not* his unit, and if in the Royal Air Force he will state his unit.

10. A declaration may be cancelled at any time by means of a fresh Armed Forces declaration card (A.F. B2626, S1300B, R.A.F. Form 2040) declaring to another address.

Part 2

11. This part must be filled in by any declarant who desires to appoint a proxy, i.e., a person who will be given a ballot paper in order that he or she may vote on behalf of the person making the appointment. A fresh appointment must be made each time the declarant makes a new declaration, because an appointment made with an earlier declaration expires when that declaration is cancelled. A ballot paper can only be sent to an address in the United Kingdom and therefore a voter abroad cannot vote unless he has appointed a proxy.

12. If a person who has already been appointed proxy dies or becomes unable to act, another proxy may be appointed. For this purpose a fresh Armed Forces declaration card (A.F. B2626, S1300B, R.A.F. Form 2040) should be used, omitting the information as to age and postal address, and deleting the words "I hereby cancel any previous declaration made by me."

13. A proxy must be a British subject of 21 years of age or over.

14. Generally a person can only hold two proxy appointments. This limit does not apply if the person appointed is the father, mother, husband, wife, brother, sister, grandfather or grandmother of the person making the appointment. The relationship of the person appointed as proxy should be stated if it is one of the above. If not, put "none".

15. It is not essential that the declarant should name a person as second choice. It is, however, advisable for him to do so in case the person whom he selects as his first choice already holds for other people as many proxies as he is by law allowed to hold.

Part 3

16. The address on Part 3 must be inserted by the officer who is supervising the filling in of the card. Normally what is needed is the last two lines of the full postal address set out in Part 1, e.g., "Crewe, Cheshire," "Tenby, Pembrokeshire," or "Larne, Co. Antrim," but all cards bearing a *Scottish* residential address should bear *only* the word "Edinburgh" instead of a "Post Town" and "County" address.

Some towns obviously need no "County," e.g., Derby, Cambridge, etc. In these cases only the name of the town need be given. In the case of London and some other large towns, only the name of the town followed by the district numbers and/or initials is required, e.g., London, S.W.1, Birmingham, 15.

General

17. When cards have been completed they should be folded firmly along the perforated line, Parts 1 and 3 being outside, and transmitted through the normal postal channels.

Mode of voting at home

18. Persons on the Service Register who will be in the United Kingdom at the time of an election and who desire to vote by post at an election in the constituency will complete A.F. B2628, S1300C, R.A.F. Form 2574, which may be obtained from the unit orderly room or equivalent office; or, in the case of personnel on leave or otherwise detached from their units, from electoral registration officers; and forward it to the appropriate electoral registration officer in order that he may be notified of the address to which ballot papers are to be sent. The submission of this form will automatically cancel the appointment of any proxy as respects that particular election.

19. Persons on the Service Register who have not sent in A.F. B2628, S1300C, R.A.F. Form 2574, may vote in person, but, where a proxy has been appointed, only if the proxy has not already voted. The appointment of the proxy is then cancelled as respects that particular election.

20. In no circumstances will any special leave be granted solely for the purpose of voting in person.

Appointment of proxies by Service voters at University elections

21. The Act provides that a member of the Forces who is entitled to vote at a University election may use Part 2 of the Armed Forces declaration card to appoint a proxy to vote for him at that election. Accordingly any person who states that he is a University elector and who desires to appoint a proxy for a University election should be issued with a second card for this purpose. In such cases the card will be completed as follows:—

22. Part 1 will be completed in the same manner as if the declarant were making a service declaration, except that instead of his full postal address he will insert the University constituency in which he is entitled to vote.

23. Part 2 will be completed without any variation.

24. Part 3 will be completed by the declarant, who will insert the name and postal address of the University for which he claims to be entitled to vote.

25. On completion, the declarant will transmit the card through the normal postal channels.

APPENDIX II

Armed Forces Declaration Card S.1300B

PART 2

PROXY APPOINTMENT

(If you desire to appoint a proxy to vote for you in your absence, fill in this form.)
I HEREBY CANCEL ANY PREVIOUS PROXY APPOINTMENT MADE BY
ME AND APPOINT AS MY PROXY:—

Names of First Choice.....
(BLOCK CAPITALS)

Postal Address of First Choice.....

Relationship, if any, of First Choice to Elector.....

OR IF HE OR SHE IS UNABLE OR UNWILLING TO ACT

Names of Second Choice.....
(BLOCK CAPITALS)

Postal Address of Second Choice.....

Relationship, if any, of Second Choice to Elector.....

Signed.....

PART 4

For Use by Electoral Registration Officer

Surname Service
(BLOCK CAPITALS)

Christian Names.....

Rank or Rating..... Service No.....

To Central National Registration Officer, Date of Birth
Southport, Lancs. (if under 21).....

The qualifying residence is in my registration area.

Initialled.....

Date.....

Area Code

For Electoral Registration Officer.

PART 1**ELECTORAL REGISTRATION (ARMED FORCES)**

Army Form B. 2626,
S. 1300 B.
R.A.F. Form 2040.

(If you are a British subject and declare to an address in Great Britain or Northern Ireland, these particulars are to enable you to vote, if or when you are 21 or over, at a parliamentary election for the constituency containing the address declared to.)

I HEREBY DECLARE THAT I:—

Surname..... Service

(BLOCK CAPITALS)

Christian Names.....

Service No. (if any)..... Rank or Rating.....

Am a British subject, and

*Am } 21 years of age or over.

*Am not }
*(If under 21 years of age) was born on.....

Day Month Year

and reside or but for my service would reside at:—

(Full postal address).....

I hereby cancel any previous declaration made by me.

Signed..... Date.....

Signature of Attesting Officer.....

Rank..... Ship, Regt. or Unit.....

*Cross out inapplicable words.

FOLD HERE

PART 3**ON HIS MAJESTY'S SERVICE.**

Army Form B. 2626,
S. 1300 B.
R.A.F. Form 2040.



To THE ELECTORAL REGISTRATION OFFICER

for

.....(Post Town).

(BLOCK CAPITALS)

.....(County).

(BLOCK CAPITALS)

Note.—If this card is printed locally the wording and lay-out must be adhered to exactly. The card measures 5 in. by 6 $\frac{3}{8}$ in.

APPENDIX III

YOUR VOTE, AND HOW TO CAST IT

Parliament has taken steps to ensure that the Service man and woman will be able to vote at Parliamentary elections in future. The difficulty in the past four years has been that, although men and women of 21 or more have been entitled to a vote, they are not, in fact, allowed to record a vote unless their names appear on a register of parliamentary voters. That register has previously been made by the local authority in each area, based on a canvass of the houses in their area, and no fresh register has been made since 1939.

The Parliament (Elections and Meeting) Act, 1943, provides for the creation of a new register. The main difference between the register under this Act and the old registers is that there is now to be a special section on the register known as the service register and men and women on the service register will be able to vote.

* * *

Procedure for registering under the Act is explained in A.F.O. 2997/44 and a pamphlet, "Parliamentary Registration. The Armed Forces Declaration Card," published under it, which you can borrow from your unit office. Briefly, the points to note are:—

- (1) Each man and woman in the Services should complete a declaration (S.1300B), in which, amongst other things, he or she will state a home address (or an address which would have been their home address but for the war), and he or she will then be registered in the constituency for that area.
- (2) If abroad or about to go abroad he should appoint a proxy, e.g., someone at home who can get to the polling station and vote for him. If at home, it may still be advisable to appoint a proxy. Ballot papers themselves can't be sent out of the U.K.
- (3) If he or she is in the U.K. and wishes to vote by post he must give an address in the U.K. to which the voting papers can be sent.
- (4) He or she can vote personally, if in the constituency on polling day. This is so even if a proxy has been appointed, provided the proxy hasn't voted first.
- (5) Nobody can vote until they are 21, but those under 21 should complete S.1300B just the same, so that they get a vote when they reach 21.
- (6) No special leave will be given merely to enable anyone to go home to vote personally.

* * *

Dates and particulars of elections will be notified, but you will be too late if you wait for an election to happen before completing the declaration. Get it completed now and the preliminaries out of the way without delay. *This applies whether you were on the old 1939 register or not.*

The Act does not come into force until the Home Secretary is satisfied that all the necessary preliminary machinery is in working order. He then appoints a day on which the Act becomes effective, and thereafter all elections will be fought on the new registers. So keep an eye on the unit notice board for any further information about parliamentary elections.

(A.F.O. 2997/44.)

YOUR VOTE AND HOW TO CAST IT

Parliament has taken steps to ensure that the interests of men and women will be able to vote at Parliamentary elections in future. The difficulty in the past was that the law did not allow a woman to vote unless she was married to a man who was entitled to vote. This position has now been changed so that a woman can vote on her own if she is over 21 years of age and has been registered as a voter in the local authority in which she lives in a register of electors. This register has been made since 1931.

The Parliamentary (Electors and Meters) Act, 1944, provides for the creation of a new register. The main difference between the register and the old register is that there is now to be a special section in the register for women. This section will be open to all women who are over 21 years of age and who are registered as voters in the local authority in which they live.

The provisions for registration under the Act is explained in A.L.O. 2387(1) and a booklet "Parliamentary Elections: The Women's Register Card" which you can borrow from your local office. Briefly, the points to note are:

- (1) Each man and woman in the register should complete a declaration in which, amongst other things, he or she will state a home address for an address which would have been their home address for the year, and he or she will then be registered in the constituency for that year. A woman who is not married should appoint a proxy, and if she is a woman who is not married and who is not in the U.K. she should be registered in the U.K. to which the voting papers can be sent.

(2) If you are over 21 years of age and you are not registered as a voter in the U.K. you should be registered in the U.K. to which the voting papers can be sent.

- (3) If you are over 21 years of age and you are not registered as a voter in the U.K. you should be registered in the U.K. to which the voting papers can be sent.
- (4) No special leave will be given merely to enable anyone to go down to vote personally.

ON HIS MAJESTY'S SERVICE

The following information of elections will be useful, but you will be best left to your own discretion to follow before completing the declaration. This applies to all elections and the provisions set out in the Act apply to all elections. The Act does not come into force until the Home Secretary is satisfied that all the necessary arrangements are in working order. He also appoints a day on which the Act becomes effective and thereafter all elections will be held on the new register. He keeps an eye on the date when the new register is published and you will be notified of the date when you should complete your declaration.

(A.L.O. 2387(1))