

LEGAL LETTER

If You Don't Vote Don't Complain

1964 is a big year for the voter, climaxing with the election of the President November 3 in the general election.

Many people aboard Bennington are eligible to vote and the means are available. Under the Federal Voting Assistance Act of 1955 (Public Law 296), a program was established to help persons vote in primary or general elections by absentee ballot when their duty or service requires them to be away from their legal voting place at election time. Specifically mentioned are members of the Armed Forces on active duty and their spouses and dependents.

A special application form is printed and distributed by the government for use of persons covered under the act. This is the Federal Post Card Application for Absentee Ballot, commonly referred to as the FPACA. These cards are available at the Legal Office.

Eligibility requirements for voting are usually determined by age and residence limitations which vary from state to state. In most states voters must be at least 21 years of age, although some states have lowered the age to 18.

Residence requirements are usually confusing for military personnel who are constantly on the move.

For voting purposes, the legal residence of members of the Armed Forces is generally the state from which they entered military service. This home state remains as the only State in which a person in the Armed Forces has the legal right to vote unless certain conditions are met. Almost all States except Texas will permit persons in the Armed Forces to acquire a new voting residence within their jurisdiction. When this is accomplished, voting rights in the old State of residence are lost.

Service personnel desiring to acquire a new voting residence must meet the new State's legal requirements. They must have lived within the state for the required length of time, normally not exclusively on military property, and presently must intend to make the new State their permanent home when they retire from active duty or are released from active service. Time in service counts in meeting the total residence requirements. For example, if a State requires a minimum of two years and a person lives in a State for one year and is overseas the next year, he will have fulfilled the two year residence requirement.

The law usually holds that the voting residence of the wife is the same as that of her husband. If there are any questions pertaining to voting residence, contact the Legal Office.

Many states permit registration by absentee process and some will register a qualified voter when they accept a voted absentee ballot. In others, a voter must be registered before applying for a ballot. Procedures vary from state to state, but the Legal Office has up-to-date information for each state. The few states who had a poll tax will have registration procedures this year as the poll tax was abolished by the adoption of a Constitutional amendment in February.

Some states have already held their primary elections and many more are coming up in the next few months. Drop by the Legal Office at your earliest convenience and check up on your eligibility and elections coming up.

The last Navy ship sunk by a Japanese suicide plane was the USS CALLAGHAN, hit off Okinawa 28 August 1945.



E&T Notes

I'm voting in the coming election...how about you? Don't show your lack of maturity by neglecting this simple task. I sometimes wonder why it is that almost all youngsters can't wait to be able to vote, but when they become "mentally mature and able bodied adults", they are afflicted with a strange disease called "I'm too lazy." If you are curious about this thing called voting, see your Division Officer.

Congratulations to all those who are being advanced this month. Those of you who were only fortunate enough to get put on the quota list should not despair. Maybe a miracle will happen and somebody will give the Navy some more money to make possible the deserved advancements.

Not enough people seem to be interested in college courses, and USAFI college courses or correspondence courses ordered from colleges through USAFI are the best offered. Take advantage of these whether you are officer or enlisted.

