



(-49 112)

1.44.87
36

71 201



**Joint Civilian
Orientation Conference** B-169242

Department of Defense

**BY THE COMPTROLLER GENERAL
OF THE UNITED STATES**

700632-095613

JUNE 29, 1971



COMPTROLLER GENERAL OF THE UNITED STATES
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20548

B-169242

Dear Mr. Reuss:

This is in reply to your request that the General Accounting Office (GAO) examine into certain aspects of selected Department of Defense (DOD) public affairs programs; namely, the Joint Civilian Orientation Conference, the Department of the Air Force Distinguished Visitor Program, and the Secretary of the Navy Guest Cruise Program.

In accordance with your request and discussion with our representatives on May 21, 1971, it was agreed that we would report separately on each program. This is our report on the Joint Civilian Orientation Conference. We will issue separate reports on the other two programs in the near future.

Initially, we intended to review the conferences conducted in 1969 and in 1970 to determine (1) the number of civilian guest participants, (2) the cost of each conference, (3) the type and amount of costs recovered from civilian guest participants, and (4) the method of selecting guests. We found, however, that only one conference was held in each year. Since these conferences were similar in the number of civilian guest participants and in the military installations visited, we limited our review to the 40th Conference which began with registration on April 19, 1970, in Coronado, California, and concluded on April 28, 1970, at the Pentagon in Washington, D.C.

Sixty-three civilian guests participated in the 40th Conference. Each guest arranged his own transportation from his residence to Coronado and from Washington, D.C., to his residence. Each guest also reimbursed the Government for the costs of his meals and lodging and for the costs of mementos and other miscellaneous items or personal services that he obtained. For meals, lodging, and other personal services, participants were billed a total of \$22,000.

We estimate that the costs incurred by DOD to conduct the 40th Conference, which were over and above the costs billed, amounted to about \$80,000.

B-169242

The Joint Civilian Orientation Conference Program, established in 1948, is one of many DOD public affairs programs designed to foster community relations through the participation of civilian guests. Under the program an 8- to 10-day tour of selected military installations is given to a group of civilian leaders.

The purposes of the program are to (1) inform leading business, professional, and religious representatives about the mission of DOD and about the strength and readiness of the U.S. Armed Forces and (2) encourage the conference participants to impart this information to their communities to stimulate support and interest in DOD activities.

The first Joint Civilian Orientation Conference was held in November 1948. In all, 40 conferences have been held since 1948. During the first 13 years of the program, a varying number of conferences were held each year. Since 1962, however, only one conference has been held each year.

THE 40TH JOINT CIVILIAN ORIENTATION CONFERENCE

Itinerary

The 63 conferees registered on April 19, 1970. The next day they were flown by helicopters from the Naval Air Station, North Island, California, to two Navy ships, the U.S.S. "Juneau" and the U.S.S. "Oriskany," where they watched various ship exercises and fleet demonstrations. The following day they were flown by military aircraft to Vandenberg Air Force Base, California, where they watched the launching of a MINUTEMAN II missile.

On April 22, 1970, the conferees were flown to the North American Air Defense Command, Colorado Springs, Colorado. They attended briefings on the Air Defense Command and toured the Cheyenne Mountain Complex. From Colorado Springs they were flown to Fort Hood, Texas, where they viewed day and night weapon-firing demonstrations. They participated in the firing of such weapons

B-169242

as the M-16 rifle, the M-60 and the M-50 machine guns, the M-79 grenade launcher, the 90-millimeter recoilless rifle, and the 105-millimeter tank gun. In all, they fired 18,700 rounds of ammunition. In addition, they drove combat vehicles such as the M-60 tank, the M-551 Sheridan tank, and the M-113 personnel carrier--for a total of 45 miles.

During the next 3 days, the conferees visited four military installations in North Carolina--the New River Marine Corps Air Station, Camp Lejeune, Pope Air Force Base, and Fort Bragg. While at these installations they attended numerous briefings and viewed part of the joint Army-Air Force firepower demonstration "Operation Brass Strike," an annual military training exercise. Some 6,000 military personnel and 81 aircraft usually are involved in this 3-day operation. The conferees were later flown to Washington, D.C., where the Conference ended on April 28, 1970, after meetings with high-ranking DOD officials.

Estimated costs

In a statement provided during the May 13, 1970, hearings before the Senate Committee on Appropriations, the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Public Affairs) estimated the cost of the 40th Joint Civilian Orientation Conference at about \$34,000. He stated that, of this total, \$20,000 was charged to the guest participants and \$14,000 was borne by the Government.

Our review of the costs associated with the 40th Conference showed an estimated total program cost of about \$102,000, with \$22,000 being charged to the conferees and \$80,000 to DOD, as presented below.

Costs charged to the conferees

DOD has issued administrative instructions that provide that each conferee pay for the cost of meals, rooms, and official receptions. For the 40th Conference, each conferee paid \$325 to defray these costs. Additional personal expenses incurred for such items as telephone calls and dry cleaning were also collected from the conference guests. In addition, many guests elected to purchase a \$20 photograph album of their visit.

B-169242

A breakdown of the total costs paid by the participants is presented below.

Meals and lodging	\$16,000
Mementos and other miscellaneous items	<u>6,000</u>
Total	<u>\$22,000</u>

In determining the fee to be paid by each conferee, the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Public Affairs) requires each military activity to submit estimates of the costs it expects to incur in conducting its portion of the Conference. These estimates, which include charges for meals, beverages, lodging, receptions, and mementos, are based upon 75 guests' participating in the program. The estimates are revised to reflect the number of guests accepting the invitation and changes to the proposed itinerary.

DOD has established a special fund for the handling of monies received from the conference members. The fund is known as the Joint Civilian Orientation Conference Fund and is handled through a checking account maintained at a Washington, D.C., bank. It is administered by a representative of the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Administration), who collects and disburses all monies passing through the fund. The accounting procedures used to operate the fund are relatively simple and appear to provide satisfactory control.

Costs charged to the Government

As we indicated above, the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Public Affairs) stated in congressional hearings that DOD incurred costs of only \$14,000 for the 40th Conference. The costs that the Assistant Secretary referred to covered only transportation during the Conference and travel allowances for accompanying DOD staff personnel. We believe that there are other costs that should be considered as applicable to this program. We estimate that the total costs incurred by the Government for the 40th Conference were closer to \$80,000, as shown below.

B-169242

Costs reported by DOD:

Cost of military transportation	\$12,000
Cost of DOD staff travel allowances	<u>2,000</u>

Total costs reported by DOD	\$14,000
-----------------------------	----------

Other program costs computed by GAO:

Services provided by 337 military and civilian personnel	37,000
Use of combat and noncombat ground vehicles	2,000
Use of military weapons	20,000
Use of additional military aircraft, including helicopters	5,000
Printing of Joint Civilian Orientation Conference booklets	1,000
Security checks conducted on conferees	<u>1,000</u>

Total program costs computed by GAO	<u>66,000</u>
-------------------------------------	---------------

Total estimated costs	<u>\$80,000</u>
-----------------------	-----------------

In estimating the costs of military and civilian personnel services, we concentrated only on those persons who participated directly in the planning, briefing, and escorting of the conferees. In developing the above costs, we used salary and wage rates which were in effect during April and May 1970. The rates were derived from DOD directives dealing with standard rates for costing of military personnel services and from the Civil Service Commission table of civil service employee salary and wage rates.

In estimating the costs of noncombat ground vehicles, military aircraft, weapons, and combat vehicles, we used 1970 estimates provided to us by the military services. These estimates were based on the types of vehicles and aircraft used; the number of miles driven, hours flown, and ammunition rounds expended; and standard military service budget estimates for cost for each vehicle-mile driven, aircraft-hour flown, and ammunition-round expended. In all instances where

B-169242

information concerning the specific type of vehicles used was not readily determinable, we used the lowest vehicle operating cost for that class.

The cost of printing the Joint Civilian Orientation Conference booklets and the cost of DOD security checks on the conferees are DOD estimates.

In discussing the differences between our cost estimate for the 40th Joint Civilian Orientation Conference and that of the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Public Affairs), DOD officials informed us that, in their view:

1. Military and civilian personnel costs would have been incurred regardless of whether the Conference was held and therefore did not represent a true cost of the Conference.
2. Ammunition fired by the conferees was allocated to, and would have been expended as a part of, the firepower demonstration.
3. Use of military aircraft afforded the crews additional training exercises and therefore did not represent a cost of the Joint Civilian Orientation Conference.
4. Printing of the Conference booklets fell within the bounds of informational material which was utilized throughout DOD.
5. Security checks of the conferees were made solely for the benefit of DOD and therefore should not have been charged to the 40th Conference.

With respect to the above costs borne by DOD, we are not aware of any existing statute that would preclude DOD from incurring these costs or require DOD to recover the full cost of the program from the guest participants.

B-169242

Selection of participants

The Assistant Secretary of Defense (Public Affairs) is responsible for selecting guest participants for this program, subject to the final approval of the Secretary of Defense. The written policy governing the selection of participants stipulates that all nominees be considered without regard to race, religion, or political connection.

Nominations for the 40th Joint Civilian Orientation Conference were received from agencies and organizations within DOD, members of the Congress, and the Defense Orientation Conference Association--an association of previous conference participants. Although it is DOD policy not to actively solicit nominations from non-DOD organizations, we have been informed that there is no regulation prohibiting outside organizations from voluntarily submitting names of interested civic leaders for DOD's consideration.

Our review revealed that, of all non-DOD organizations, the Defense Orientation Conference Association had submitted the highest number of nominations and had had the greatest impact on the program from the standpoint of nominee participation. For example, of the 88 nominations submitted by non-DOD organizations, 72 were submitted by the Association. Of the 72 nominees, 21 participated in the 40th Conference. By way of comparison, the largest number of nominations received from a DOD organization was 28. Of these 28 nominees, only eight participated in the Conference.

We have discussed our findings with DOD officials but did not obtain written comments on this report. We plan to make no further distribution of this report unless copies are

B-169242

specifically requested, and then we shall make distribution only after your agreement has been obtained or public announcement has been made by you concerning the contents of the report.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "James B. Argets".

Comptroller General
of the United States

The Honorable Henry S. Reuss
House of Representatives