



Richard Bogue <richbogue@worldnet.att.net> on 11/04/2001 12:10:16 AM

Please respond to rjb@richbogue.com

To: internetsprm@FEC

cc:

Subject: Citizens! I Apologize!

DEAR ROSEMARY C. SMITH, ASSISTANT GENERAL COUNSEL AND FELLOW CITIZEN,

I APOLOGIZE FOR ALLOWING MY DEEP DISTRUST OF THE CURRENT ADMINISTRATION TO LET ME COMPLETELY MISREAD PROPOSED RULE 1 ON THE USE OF THE INTERNET IN FEDERAL ELECTIONS. THE RULE CLARIFIES THAT AN INDIVIDUAL'S VOLUNTARY USE OF THEIR OWN COMPUTER AND/OR INTERNET RESOURCES WILL NOT BE TREATED AS A CONTRIBUTION OR EXPENDITURE. THIS PROPOSED RULE HAS MY SUPPORT.

IN THE VERSION DISTRIBUTED IN BRIEF FORM FOR PUBLIC COMMENT, I MISTAKENLY TOOK THE LANGUAGE TO MEAN THAT NO CONTRIBUTION OR EXPENDITURE MAY RESULT WHEN VOLUNTEERS USE THEIR OWN COMPUTER AND/OR INTERNET RESOURCES TO INFLUENCE A FEDERAL ELECTION. EXPLANATORY LANGUAGE FROM THE FULL FEDERAL REGISTER NOTICE BY THE FEDERAL ELECTION COMMISSION CLARIFIED THIS. AS SHOWN BELOW, THE PHRASE "WOULD NOT BE TREATED AS CONTRIBUTIONS OR EXPENDITURES" IS USED, RATHER THAN "STIPULATING THAT NO CONTRIBUTION OR EXPENDITURE RESULTS" WHICH, IN MY IGNORANCE OF THE FULL DOCUMENT, I TOOK TO BE A STIPULATION AGAINST CONTRIBUTIONS OR EXPENDITURES RESULTING WHEN VOLUNTEERS USE THEIR OWN COMPUTER AND/OR INTERNET RESOURCES, AS DESCRIBED IN THE REST OF THE PROPOSED RULE.

To clarify the application of the Act to campaign-related Internet activity by individuals, the Commission is proposing to add new Sec. 117.1, which would describe certain types of individual Internet activities that would not be treated as contributions or expenditures. Section 117.1(a) would contain an exception from the definition of "contribution" in Sec. 100.7(a) of the current regulations. Section 117.1(b) would contain a parallel exception from the expenditure definitions in Secs. 100.8(a) and 109.1.

IN ADDITION TO APOLOGIZING FOR USING YOUR VALUABLE TIME TO REVIEW AN IGNORANT COMMENT, I WISH ESPECIALLY TO APOLOGIZE FOR COMMUNICATING WITH THE ANGRY LANGUAGE THAT I USED. HERE'S THE ERRONEOUS MESSAGE I PREVIOUSLY SENT, SO YOU'LL KNOW WHICH ONE I WISH TO ENTIRELY KILL, RETRACT, DELETE, RESCIND, AND BURY IN MY OWN LITTLE TRASH HEAP OF SHAME.

Dear Rosemary C. Smith, Assistant General Counsel and Fellow Citizen, I would like to thank you for the opportunity to comment, prior to the December 3 deadline, on the Federal Election Commission's following proposed rule on the Use of the Internet in Federal Elections. But I can't thank you. Rule 1 is such an egregious violation of common sense and of what it means to be an American that I can only surmise, angrily I admit, that the current administration seeks to destroy democratic processes altogether. The Federal Election Commission under this administration will receive no thanks from me. Here's the Federal Election Commission's proposed Rule 1: "1. To clarify the application of the Federal Election Campaign Act (FECA) to campaign-related Internet activity by individuals, the Commission is proposing to add a new section (117.1) to the regulations, stipulating that no contribution or expenditure results where an individual, without receiving compensation, uses computer equipment, software, Internet services or Internet domain name(s) that he or she personally owns to engage in Internet activity for the purpose of influencing any election to federal

office."

In other words, AMERICANS won't be able to VOLUNTEER to solicit, raise or donate funds related to a federal election by using computers or Internet services THAT THEY OWN?

I just can't see how to misread this. It basically says: "Citizen! Stay the hell out of politics! Politics belong to paid lobbyists and their corporate masters."

Who were the 1,300 people who came up with this, the German National-Socialist Party of 1940? Or did regular Americans participate, come up with reasonable ideas, and then this abortion of liberty issued forth from a high-level official in the administration or an "important" private interest? This is waaay beyond the ken of the American experience. Why, if they'd only had computers, every one of this nation's founders, and millions of Americans who give a damn about politics, would have broken this rule.

The voluntary effort of the individual to promote political ends through peaceful means, including raising funds, virtually defines democracy. In light of the near deathgrip that major corporations, trade associations, and wealthy individuals already have on our electoral process, I guess it's not surprising to see this administration float this sordid usurpation of the individual's right to be involved in politics. But it is disgusting nonetheless.

I stridently urge the FEC to KILL RULE 1 entirely. And I eagerly encourage you to do what you can, as an American citizen, to KILL RULE 1 entirely. I have no major comment about proposed rules 2 and 3, which are about limiting the ways employers can coerce employees with regard to political elections.

Most Sincerely, Your Fellow Citizen,

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