

HEADQUARTERS
UNITED STATES ARMY, BERLIN
APO 742

AEBA-GA

24 November 1963

SUBJECT: Observance of Mourning for Late President John F. Kennedy

TO: See Distribution

1. The purpose of this letter is to provide guidance to all members of this Command, including their dependents, as to our conduct, actions, and the scope of our activities during the 30 - day period of National Mourning for the late President of the United States, John F. Kennedy.
2. The period of Official National Mourning commenced 22 November and will continue to be observed through 21 December 1963. This is a solemn period in which every United States Citizen in Berlin is expected to conduct himself in such a way that he cannot fail to reflect the innermost feelings of all Americans in our hour of National sorrow. The loss of our President is not only a grave loss to all Americans but to the entire free world. This is particularly true here in Berlin where President Kennedy endeared himself in the hearts of all Berliners and stood as a symbol of freedom and friendship. Because their loss approaches our own, the eyes of all Berliners will be upon us and our conduct will be subject to careful scrutiny during this solemn period. This is no time for frivolity but rather is a period for serious reflection and moderation.
3. In observance of the mourning period this command is taking the actions listed below. These actions do not cover every case that will arise. Undoubtedly you will be confronted by numerous situations requiring value judgement on your part. In these areas the command can only provide you with broad guidelines of appropriate behavior. In cases not covered by specific instructions, you should be governed mainly by the dictates of your own conscience as well as the need for discretion, decorum and good taste. If you are in doubt as to the propriety of your actions in some specific situation you are encouraged to seek further guidance from this headquarters. Such queries should be directed to the ACofS, G-1 Berlin Brigade.
4. During the period until the time of interment of President Kennedy on 25 November the Command will observe the following: a. Secretary of Defense has directed that all DOD Personnel will observe Monday 25 November 1963 as a day of mourning. The 25th of November will be a Non-Work Day except for essential activities. All Personnel, except those whose continued presence is directed, will be excused from duty. Civilian employees (US & LN) who are not required to work will be excused without charge to leave or loss of pay.

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(2) The sponsoring of Thanksgiving Day Dinners in Unit mess halls for special German guests will proceed as planned.

(3) The catering of Thanksgiving Day Dinner to residents of Steinstuecken will be conducted on the weekend of 30 Nov - 1 Dec.

(4) Catering of Thanksgiving Day Dinners for hospitals and orphanages by NCO and EM messes and the T.A.R. School will proceed as planned.

e. Christmas Parties.

(1) No formal Christmas parties will be scheduled by units or staff divisions at clubs, recreational facilities or outside civilian establishments until noon 21 December 1963. This includes the sponsoring of Christmas parties for LWR employees.

(2) Small scale office type Christmas parties are authorized (to include LWR employees) during duty hours but these must be very moderate, dignified, and of relatively short duration.

f. AYA Activities.

(1) Normal Scouting, and Athletic Activities will continue.

(2) The AYA Snack Bar will operate as normal.

(3) Informal dancing will be permitted, however, this will be closely supervised and limited mainly to the moderate rhythm of normal ballroom dancing.

(4) Folk dancing instruction regularly scheduled for each Wednesday may continue.

(5) No special parties, dances, banquets, etc. will be held.

(6) All members of the AYA will be thoroughly oriented by the AYA Officer regarding the need for extreme moderation in all their activities during this period. Their individual responsibilities to maintain proper decorum will be carefully spelled out.

g. T.A.R. School. Moderate Christmas Parties during school hours would be considered acceptable. However, formally organized dance parties, banquets etc. should not be programmed. Normal competitive athletic activities should proceed as scheduled.

h. Group Travel to Berlin. The ACofS, G-1 will review the specific situation regarding each group scheduled for travel to Berlin during this period. Each case will be considered for further approval, on its merits, based on the size and composition of the group, purpose of trip, type activities planned, etc.

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i. Leaves and Passes. No change in existing policy.

j. Ladies Luncheons. Formal luncheons may be conducted in good taste provided they are necessary for the proper functioning of ladies organizations.

6. The following guidelines are furnished to assist individuals with regards to their personal activities during the mourning period.

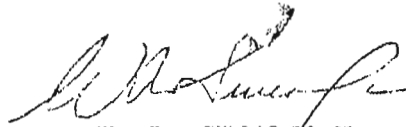
a. Private parties such as cocktail parties and pre-season Christmas parties, etc. are not considered to be in good taste during this time of official mourning for our late President. However, this does not preclude all small informal gatherings and dinners of an intimate nature.

b. With regard to dress, and personal behavior, members of this Command and their dependents should be particularly sensitive to the need to maintain the highest standards of decorum and dignity when appearing outside the geographical limits of the military community.

c. Once again, moderation should be the keynote of all your individual activities.

7. The contents of this letter will be given the widest dissemination and will be brought to the attention of all military personnel. A copy will be prominently displayed on all unit bulletin boards.

FOR THE COMMANDER:



W. R. SWEARNGAN
Lt Col, AGC
Adjutant General

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b. A combined memorial service will be held at 1100 hours on 25 November. Details of this service are being publicized separately.

c. All public entertainment will be cancelled. This includes movies, live shows and other forms of entertainment.

d. Officers, NCO and Service Clubs may remain open for meals and normal activities. All bars will remain closed. Dancing will be prohibited.

e. EM Clubs at McNair and Andrews Barracks will be closed.

f. All EES activities will be closed on Monday, 25 November except the snack bars, the Sundgauer apartments delicatessen and barber and beautyshops. However, neither the snack bar nor the delicatessen will sell beer that day. Time of opening of the above is 1300 hours.

g. The commissary and other GM activities in the Shopping Center will be closed on Monday, 25 November.

5. During the 30 - day period of National mourning the following will apply:

a. Honor ceremonies and all official entertainment will be cancelled.

b. Clubs. All Clubs (Officer, NCO, EM, Service) may resume normal daily operations except for the following:

(1) No formal parties or receptions will be sponsored. The Brigade Quarterly party originally scheduled for December is cancelled.

(2) Entertainment, music and dancing will be kept within the realm of good taste.

c. Special Service Activities.

(1) Sports facilities such as gymnasiums, swimming pools, bowling alleys, etc. will be open and normal competitive athletic activities will be resumed.

(2) Theaters will resume operation. However, there will be no live entertainment such as USO shows and soldier shows.

(3) East and West Berlin Tours will be continued.

d. Thanksgiving Activities.

(1) The Thanksgiving Day Dinner to be hosted by the Commanding General, Berlin Brigade for German guests, scheduled for the Harnack House the evening of 27 November is cancelled.