



Officer Calls Obama 'Usurper,' 'Imposter' President

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Military.com | by Bryant Jordan

Using words such as "imposter" and "usurper," an active-duty Army officer in Iraq has joined a California lawyer's lawsuit intended to force President Barack Obama to prove he is a legal U.S. citizen, and therefore able to legally serve as the commander in chief.

"Until Mr. Obama releases a 'vault copy' of his original birth certificate for public review, I will consider him neither my Commander in Chief nor my President, but rather, a usurper to the Office -- an impostor," 1st Lt. Scott R. Easterling states in his letter published at Defendourfreedoms.com.

An Army spokesman told Military.com today that officials are aware of Easterling's letter.

Poll: Should a Soldier serve if he doesn't think the president is legitimate?

"We are taking a look at that ourselves right now," Lt. Col. Christopher Garver said. "We are always trying to balance our ... military requirements under the Uniform Code of Military Justice versus critical freedoms that all Americans enjoy."

California dentist turned attorney Orly Taitz, who has brought the lawsuit, told Military.com Tuesday that it is her "understanding that there will not be a serious consequence to his career [for his statements], but I don't know for sure."

"I told him 'you're doing something very brave for this country, and that you can call me any time, 24/7 [for advice],' " she said. "If you're investigated by [the judge advocate general] and if there are any hearings ... and if an officer is defending you, I will provide documents totally proving it's illegitimate for [Obama] to be president."

The story was first reported in the right-leaning World Net Daily news site Feb. 24.

Taitz said she is willing to go to Iraq for Easterling's defense. Her Web site includes names and photos of congressmen and retired service members who she says are supportive of the lawsuit intended to force Obama to present documents showing he is an American citizen.

While Obama has presented a legal Hawaiian birth certificate, Taitz and others claim the state historically has permitted American parents of children born in other countries

to apply for such documents. Easterling says he wants to see a "vault copy," which is not explained in his letter but is taken to mean the original document.

In his letter, Easterling said he was a KBR contractor in Iraq in 2005 and 2006, then joined the Army when it raised the maximum enlistment age to 40. He said he attended Officer Candidate School and was commissioned a second lieutenant in August 2007.

After an assignment to Fort Knox, Ky., he was deployed to Balad. He was promoted to first lieutenant on Feb. 2.

He said in his letter that it pains him to join the lawsuit against Obama, "but as an Officer, my sworn oath to support and defend our Constitution requires this action."

"I implore all Service-members and citizens to contact their Senators and Representatives and demand that they require Mr. Obama prove his eligibility. Our Constitution and our great nation must not be allowed to be disgraced."

Attorney Mathew B. Tully of the Washington, D.C.-based firm Tully Rinckey PLLC, cautioned "that nobody's actually heard directly from this ... lieutenant. We're getting this from a third party with an axe to grind."

It has happened in the past, he said, that stories emerging from the combat theater turn out to be wholly or partially false, he said.

If true, however, Easterling, as an Army officer, "is subject to ... [provisions] against using contemptuous language toward the president." There were such incidents in the 1990s, he said, when service members were disciplined for comments made against President Clinton. In one case brought under the provisions of Article 88 of the UCMJ a major general was forced to retire for comments he made, Tully said.

Easterling also could be charged with conduct unbecoming an officer, he said.

If an officer actually believes there has been some misconduct by the president, Tully said, there are ways he could have responded.

Under Article 138, he said, any person can bring an allegation of misconduct by a commander through the chain of command, "though I don't think [it] has ever been used to allege misconduct by the president."

He may also have tried reporting his allegations under the whistleblower protection act, Tully said. But the Defense Department directive on that spells out the inspector general and the Congress as the places to take allegations, he added.

"People in the military ... have rights protecting them for reporting [alleged] misconduct, but there are strict procedures," Tully explained. "And joining a civil lawsuit and calling the president of the United States an imposter is not one of those avenues."

Tully said there already is extensive case law involving these allegations about Obama's birth and citizenship -- at least 10, he said -- that have been dismissed.

"And on TV last night I saw the chief of staff of the Army salute President Obama, so there are a lot of people who believe he is the president," Tully said.