MONITORING OF INDECENT CAMPAIGN LANGUAGE ON RADIO

MONITORING OF INDECENT CAMPAIGN LANGUAGE ON RADIO –
FINDINGS FOR THE PERIOD APRIL 18-30, 2016

1.0 Introduction/ Background
Ghana’s 2008 and 2012 presidential and parliamentary elections were considered generally peaceful, but were characterised by a number of worrying developments. Significant among them were unprofessional media conduct and the increasing use of hate speeches, vilifications and inflammatory comments which often diverted focus from the discussion of issues to personality attacks and unsubstantiated allegations.

In Ghana, radio still remains the main source of news, education and entertainment for the masses. Recognising its powerful impact thus, many politicians and political parties resort to radio to reach their target audience. However, instead of using the medium to market their “different ideas and programmes for the public to choose from and decide whom to vote for,” a number of political activists use the platform to hurl insults at, and make unsubstantiated claims about their opponents instead of focusing on real issues.

Unfortunately a number of the radio stations allow the political parties and their representatives to abuse the airwaves with little or no restraint from programme hosts and presenters. The situation is often worse during electioneering periods.

Based on experiences and lessons learnt from an earlier monitoring project in 2012, the MFWA is monitoring campaign language on radio during this year’s electioneering period to contribute to issues-based, decent language campaigning and peaceful elections. The project titled, Promoting Issues-based and Decent Language Campaigning for a Peaceful, Free and Fair Elections in Ghana in 2016, is being implemented with funding support from OSIWA, STAR-Ghana and the EU (through Socioserve Ghana).

1.1 Methodology
The project is a nine-month project which involves the daily monitoring of expressions used by mainly politicians and activists on selected radio programmes. It also involves assessing and reporting on how presenters or hosts of selected programmes on target radio stations handle the various segments of their programmes and whether or not they tolerate the use of indecent campaign language on their programmes.

In all, 70 radio stations will be monitored across the country. The monitoring exercise will be carried out in three phases as shown in the table below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No of radio stations</th>
<th>Period</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>April – December 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>June – December, 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>July – December, 2016</td>
</tr>
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</table>
To ensure that the monitoring is reliable, valid, and credible the 2012 monitoring instrument was reviewed and improved by a team of experts from the University of Ghana and the Ghana Bureau of Languages. The instrument review process also involved representatives of political parties.

The revised monitoring instrument was presented at a public forum for validation by representatives of key stakeholder groups including political parties, Electoral Commission (EC), National Peace Council (NPC), the National Media Commission (NMC), the Ghana Independent Broadcasters Association (GIBA), Private Newspaper Publishers Association of Ghana (PRINPAG), Editors Forum Ghana (EFG), Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) and academia. Following the validation of the revised instrument, campaign language monitors were recruited, trained and assigned radio stations, with one monitor per station.

Using the monitoring instrument, the monitors send daily reports to the MFWA. The reports are analysed by a team of programme staff and researchers at the MFWA with a consolidated report publicised every two weeks.

The bi-weekly reports ‘name and shame’ political parties, candidates or activists who use indecent campaign language; and name the radio stations and programmes on which those expressions were used. It is also hoped that the bi-weekly reports will help the electorate to make informed voting decisions. The reports are also meant to provide credible evidence for the appropriate institutions and groups to take informed remedial actions.

2.0 Findings

This report presents findings of the first two weeks (April 18 – 30, 2016) of monitoring campaign language and expressions on 40 radio stations across Ghana. It covers the findings from the day-to-day monitoring, specific cases of indecent expressions used by political activists and other individuals, and the radio platforms on which the indecent expressions were recorded. The report concludes with a number of recommendations for stakeholders on how to improve the media landscape to contribute to issues-based campaigning and peaceful 2016 elections.

2.1 General Findings

Over the two-week monitoring period, a total of 516 programmes were monitored on the 40 radio stations. The programmes monitored included morning, midday and evening news bulletins; current affairs and political discussion programmes aired in the morning, afternoon and evening or night. Most of the indecent expressions recorded occurred on current affairs and political discussion programmes. Such programmes were mostly Akan-speaking programmes, which often run for more than three (3) hours. A little over 80 percent of the indecent expressions recorded were captured on programmes originated by the radio stations themselves and a handful from affiliate radio stations.

Generally, the programmes monitored were dominated by males. Over 95 percent of all the people (discussants, interviewees, and callers) who featured on the programmes monitored were
males. And over 95 percent of all the programmes monitored on which indecent expressions were recorded were also handled or moderated by males.

2.2 Categories of Indecent Expressions Recorded

Over the two-week monitoring period, a total of 87 indecent expressions were recorded. Five (5) different categories of indecent expressions were recorded: Insulting and Offensive Comments; Unsubstantiated Allegations; Provocative Remarks; Expressions or Comments Promoting Divisiveness; and Remarks Endorsing Violence.

Insulting and offensive comments and unsubstantiated allegations were the most commonly used indecent expressions. Specific frequencies of these and the other categories are presented in Figure 1 below:

Figure 1: Categories and Frequency of Indecent Expressions Recorded

2.3 Political Party/Group Affiliation of Individuals Who Used Indecent Expressions

The people who featured on the programmes monitored were discussants, interviewees or callers. Many of the indecent expressions recorded were made by individuals whose political party affiliation was known or identified on the programmes monitored. There were other individuals (mainly programme hosts) whose political affiliation could not be established.

Overall, affiliates/supporters of seven (7) political parties: New Patriotic Party (NPP), National Democratic Congress (NDC), Progressive People’s Party (PPP), New Labour Party (NLP), National Democratic Party (NDP), Convention People’s Party (CPP), and People’s National Convention (PNC), were captured as having used indecent expressions on radio.

Among the seven political parties, affiliates of the NPP made the highest number (27) of indecent expressions followed by affiliates of the NDC (16). Figure 2 below presents the frequency of indecent expressions made by affiliates of all the seven political parties:
**Figure 2: Frequency of Indecent Expressions by Political Party Affiliates**

Note: Individuals who used indecent expressions but their political party or group affiliation was not mentioned are not included in Figure 1 above

**Categories of Indecent Expressions Used by Political Party Affiliates**

The indecent expressions made by affiliates of the seven political parties mentioned above fall under four (4) different categories of indecent expressions: Insulting and Offensive Comments; Unsubstantiated Allegations, Provocative Remarks; and Expressions Promoting Divisiveness. The most common of these expressions used by political party affiliates were insulting and offensive comments, and unsubstantiated allegations.

Affiliates of the NPP were the ones who used these two categories of indecent expressions the most. The use of unsubstantiated allegations by affiliates of the NDC was also significant. All the four (4) expressions promoting divisiveness that were recorded in the two-week monitoring period were made by affiliates of the NDC. In Table 1 below, a breakdown of the specific expressions recorded by the seven political parties, as well as those whose affiliation was not indicated are presented:

**Table 1: Specific Categories of Indecent Expressions Recorded by Political Party Affiliates**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indecent Expressions used by Discussants</th>
<th>Political Party/Group Affiliation of those who used Indecent Expressions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NPP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insulting and offensive comments</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unsubstantiated allegations</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provocative remarks</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expressions or comments promoting divisiveness</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remarks endorsing violence</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2.4 Specific Expressions Used

Below are the names of the individuals who made the 87 indecent expressions placed under the specific categories of indecent expressions they made. The radio stations on which they used those expressions and the dates on which the expressions were made have also been indicated.

**Insulting and offensive comments**

1. Captain Smart, host of Adom FM's Morning Show, made an insulting comment during the “Fa Be Wọ So” segment of the Morning Show which was also aired on Tain FM in Nsawkaw on April 18, 2016.

2. On April 25, 2016, Captain Smart made another offensive remark on Adom FM's “Fa Be Wọ So” segment of the Morning Show which was also aired on Tain FM in Nsawkaw.

3. Captain Smart again made an offensive comment against J.K Boamah on the “Fa Be Wọ So” segment of the Adom FM Morning show which was also aired Tain FM in Nsawkaw on April 27, 2016.

4. On April 19, 2016, Akua Asabea Kropa while delivering the 6pm news (Oman Kaseb) on the Accra-based Oman FM made an offensive comment about Ministers following the President everywhere.

5. Joseph Bediako, Director of Operations of the NDP, made an insulting comment about Okudjeto Ablakwah on Kumasi-based Ashh FM's Morning Show aired on April 18, 2016.

6. Hopeson Adoye of the NPP made an insulting comment about President Mahama on Happy FM's Democracy programme aired on April 25, 2016.

7. Bernard Antwi Boasiako (also known as Chairman Wontumi), Ashanti Regional Chairman of the NPP, made an offensive comment against the President while speaking on Oman FM’s 6pm News (Oman Kaseb) of April 24, 2016.

8. Uncle Ebo of the NPP made an offensive comment about the Vice President during Happy FM's Democracy programme aired on April 18, 2016.

9. A caller whose name and political party or group affiliation were not mentioned made an offensive comment against Nana Konadu Agyemang Rawlings on Kekeli Radio's Morning Show programme aired on April 19, 2016.

10. Mugabe Massie, the host of Montie FM's Pampaso programme, made an insulting comment against Charles Nii Tagoe on the April 27, 2016 edition of the show.

11. Mugabe Massie also made two (2) insulting comments against Dr. Amoako Baah, political science lecturer at the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology on the April 28, 2016 edition of the programme.

12. Mugabe Massie again made an offensive comment against Nana Akomea, Communications Director of the NPP, on the April 28, 2016 edition of the programme.
13. Kwabena Bobie Ansah whose political party or group affiliation was not mentioned made two (2) offensive comment against Francis Ansah Banasco of the NPP on Montie FM's Pampaso programme aired on April 28, 2016.

14. Kweku Baako Jnr., editor-in-chief of the New Crusading Guide, newspaper and known member of the CPP made an insulting comment on Joy FM's News File programme of April 30, 2016 which was also aired on Justice FM in Tamale (he later apologised on the programme).

15. Ernest Owusu Bempah, Communications Director of the NDP and host of Happy FM's Democracy programme, made an insulting comment about Kwadwo Twum Boafo on the April 28, 2016 edition of the programme.

16. Timothy Awinterem of the NDC made an offensive comment against the flagbearer of the NPP, Nana Akuffo Addo, on Montie FM's Pampaso programme of April 29, 2016. The comment was also full of unsubstantiated allegations.

17. Listowel Nana Kusi Poku of the NLP made two (2) insulting and offensive comment against Nana Addo on the April 29, 2016 edition of the programme.


19. On April 27, 2018, Nana Ayew Afriyie, NPP Parliamentary candidate for Effiduase Asokore, made two (2) insulting and offensive remarks during Adom FM’s “Fa Be Wọ So” segment of the Morning Show which was also aired on Tain FM in Nsawkaw.

20. Kwabena Kwakye, host of Oman FM’s Boiling Point programme, made an offensive comment about the EC Chair on the April 28, 2016 edition of the programme.

21. Abu Ramadan of the PNC made an insulting remark about the General Secretary of the NDC, Asiedu Nketia, on Oman FM’s Boiling Point programme aired on April 28, 2016.

22. Charles Owusu, a member of the communication team of the PPP, made an offensive remark about the EC Chair during Oman FM’s Boiling Point programme aired on April 28, 2016.

23. Daasebre Dwamena, co-host (supporting the main host with the newspaper review) made two (2) insulting comments against President Mahama and Solomon Nkansah while reviewing newspapers on Kumasi-based Ashh FM’s morning show aired on April 20, 2016.

24. Daasebre Dwamena also made an offensive remark against the EC Chair on the April 27, 2016 edition of Ashh FM's Morning Show.

25. John Kumah of the NPP made an offensive remark against President Mahama on Asempa FM’s Ekosii Sen programme aired on April 26, 2016.

26. Dr Kofi Ababio whose political party or group affiliation was not mentioned made an offensive comment against Ametor Kwame on Asempa FM's Ekosii Sen programme aired on April 26, 2016.
27. George Andah, NPP Parliamentary candidate for Awutu Senya West, made an offensive comment against Dzifa Ativor on Oman FM’s National Agenda programme aired on April 27, 2016.

28. Kwabena Sarpong of the NPP made an offensive comment, which also contained divisive comments on Oman FM’s National Agenda programme aired on April 27, 2016.

29. Daasebre Dwamena, host of Ashh FM’s Midday Discussion programme, made an offensive comment against Kojo Bonsu, Kumasi Mayor, on the April 29, 2016 edition of the programme.

30. Baah Acheamfour of the NPP made a provocative remark against Nana Akuffo Addo on Kumasi-based Fox FM’s Ebobeba programme aired on April 25, 2016. The comment is reported to have led to a quarrel and the beating of Baah Acheamfour in the studios of the station.


32. Asamoah Gyamfi of the NPP made an offensive comment against Dzifa Ativor on Rainbow Radio’s Frontline programme aired on April 28, 2016.


34. Nana Ayew Afriyie, NPP Parliamentary candidate for Effiduase Asokore, made an offensive remark against Dzifa Ativor on Adom FM’s Morning Show which was also aired on Tain FM on April 27, 2016.

35. Abdul Salam of the NDC made an offensive comment against the campaign manager of the NPP during Diamond FM’s Diamond Power Drive aired on April 22, 2016.

Unsubstantiated allegations

1. Shamsudeen Ali of the NDC made an unsubstantiated allegation against Nana Akuffo Addo and the NPP on Wenchi-based Royals FM on 21st April, 2016 during the Adekyee Mu Ssm programme.

2. Charles Owusu of the PPP communications team made an unsubstantiated allegation against President Mahama in an interview on Oman FM during the station’s 6pm News (Oman Kasebɔ) aired on April 19, 2016.

3. Alhaji Binyuri-Buusheli of the NDC, on April 25, 2016 made an unsubstantiated allegation against the NPP during Tamale-based Justice FM’s “What the People Say” programme.

4. Habib Veron of the NDC made an unsubstantiated allegation about some NPP executives on April 25, 2016 during Justice FM’s Super Morning Show (discussion segment).
5. Kwabena Kwakye, host of Oman FM’s boiling point programme made an unsubstantiated allegation against Finance Minister, Seth Terkper, during the station’s Morning Show programme, National Agenda, which was aired on April 26, 2016.

6. Chairman Prince Kofi Ahotor of the NPP made an unsubstantiated allegation about a planned assassination in an interview on Oman FM’s 6pm News (Oman Kasebc) broadcast on April 24, 2016.

7. Kofi Dubai, a caller whose political or group affiliation was not mentioned made an unsubstantiated allegation about government during the Fa Be Wo So programme on Adom FM which was also aired on Tain FM on April 25, 2016.


9. Kwabena Bobie Ansah whose political affiliation was not mentioned made an unsubstantiated allegation about Nana Akuffo Addo’s Nima house on Montie FM’s Pampaso programme aired on April 20, 2016.

10. Fiifi Boafo, host of the Oman FM Morning Show, National Agenda, made an unsubstantiated allegation against Ibrahim Mahama on the April 19, 2016 edition of the show.


12. Sule Salifu of the NPP made two (2) unsubstantiated allegations against the NDC about the registration process on the Tamale-based Diamond FM’s Dagani Newspaper Review programme aired on April 29, 2016.

13. An individual whose name and political party or group affiliation were not mentioned made an allegation against the NPP about the registration process also on Diamond FM’s Dagani Newspaper Review programme aired on April 29, 2016.

14. Bernard Antwi Boasiako (Chairman Wontumi), Ashanti Regional Chairman of the NPP, made an unsubstantiated allegation about the registration process in an interview on Top FM’s Ghana Dwumadie programme aired on April 28, 2016.

15. Ade Coker, Greater Accra Regional Chairman of the NDC, made an unsubstantiated allegation about the registration process in Ablekuma West in an interview on Top FM’s Ghana Dwumadie programme aired on April 28, 2016.

16. Ursula Owusu, NPP MP for Ablekuma West, made an unsubstantiated allegation against Dr. Alfred Oko Vanderpuije, Mayor of Accra, also on the registration process in an interview on Top FM’s Ghana Dwumadie programme aired on April 28, 2016.

17. George Lawson, Deputy General Secretary of the NDC, made an unsubstantiated allegation about the registration process also in an interview on Top FM’s Midday News broadcast on April 27, 2016.


21. Mugabe Massie, host of Montie FM’s Pampaso programme made **two (2)** unsubstantiated allegations against Nana Akuffo Addo, the NPP and the UP tradition on the April 29, 2016 edition of the programme.

22. Koku Anyidoho of the NDC made an unsubstantiated claims about the NPP on Radio Gold’s Gold Power Drive on April 19, 2016.

23. Hon. Henry Kwabena Kokofu, NPP MP for Bantama, made an unsubstantiated allegation on Hello FM’s Akokc Abcn Morning show programme which was broadcast on April 30, 2016.

24. Ursula Owusu, NPP MP for Ablekuma West, made an unsubstantiated allegation against Ade Coker and Dr. Alfred Oko Vanderpuije, Accra Mayor, about the registration exercise in Ablekuma West on Oman FM’s Morning Show, National Agenda, aired on April 29, 2016.

25. Pious Adzide of the NPP made **two (2)** unsubstantiated allegations against the NDC concerning the registration exercise on Oman FM’s Boiling Point programme aired on April 28, 2016.

26. Simak Shiraz of the NPP made an unsubstantiated allegation against Dzifa Ativor, former Minister of Transport, on North Star FM’s Evening Discussion programme aired on April 28, 2016.

27. John Kumah of the NPP made an unsubstantiated allegation against President Mahama during the Asempe FM afternoon programme titled, Ekosii Sen which was aired on April 26, 2016.


29. Chairman Peter Mensah of the NPP made an unsubstantiated allegation against the NDC concerning the registration process on Techiman-based Classic FM’s Morning Show, Kokroko, aired on April 28, 2016.

30. Sam Pyne, Ashanti Regional Secretary of the NPP, made **two (2)** unsubstantiated allegations against the President and government officials on Hello FM’s Akokc Abc programmed aired on April 23, 2016.
Divine Nkrumah, National Youth Organizer of PPP, made an unsubstantiated allegation against the EC on Rainbow Radio’s Frontline programme aired on April 28, 2016.

**Provocative remarks**
1. George Boating of the NDC made a provocative remark about Ministers during Oman FM’s Boiling Point programme which was aired on April 2016.


4. Timothy Awinterem of the NDC made a provocative remark against the NPP on Montie FM’s Pampaso programme of April 29, 2016.

5. Henry Kwabena Kokofu, NPP MP for Bantama, made a provocative remark on Hello FM’s Akoke Aben Morning Show programme which was broadcast on April 30, 2016.

6. Fuseini Donkor, District Chief Executive of Sekyere Afram Plains and a member of the NDC, made a provocative comment against the NPP during Hello FM’s Akoke Aben morning show programme which was broadcast on April 23, 2016.

**Expressions or comments promoting divisiveness**
1. Nicodemus Dery of the NDC made a divisive comment on April 18, 2016 during the Bong Bi a Yiri programme on Wa-based Radio Progress.

2. Koku Anyidoho, a Deputy General Secretary of the NDC, made a divisive comment on Accra-based Radio Gold’s Gold Power Drive aired on April 19, 2016.

3. Abdul Salam of the NDC made two (2) divisive comments during Diamond FM’s programme titled, Diamond Power Drive, aired on April 29, 2016.

**Remarks Endorsing Violence**
1. Mugabe Massie, host of Montie FM’s Pampaso programme made a remark endorsing violence on the April 29, 2016 edition of the programme when discussing an alleged bussing of people to Dome Kwabenya.

2. Daasebre Dwamena of Ashh FM made a remark endorsing violence on the station’s Morning Show aired on April 22, 2016.

As a policy, the MFWA does not publish the indecent expressions people make since it amounts to rebroadcasting those remarks. The specific expressions made by people cited in our reports are, however, available at the MFWA for verification by those cited.

**2.5 Radio stations and incidence of indecent expressions**
Monitoring on the 40 radio stations over the two-week period has shown that generally, a number of radio stations and moderators are doing their best to stick to the ethics of the journalism profession. Some of them caution those who feature on their programmes to desist from inflammatory language. Others also make attempts to let those who make unsavoury
remarks retract. Although not all of them succeeded in getting this done, the effort is commendable.

On the other hand, programme hosts or presenters either used indecent expressions themselves or tolerated the use of indecent expressions on their networks. Out of the 33 indecent expressions made by individuals whose political party or group affiliation could not be established, 29 were made by presenters and moderators. The two remarks endorsing violence recorded over the monitoring period were both made by programme hosts. Mugabe Massie of Montie FM based in Accra, Captain Smart of Accra-based Adom FM, Daasebre Dwamena of Kumasi-based Ashh FM and Kwabena Kwakye of Oman FM in Accra were the main culprits in that regard.

Out of the 40 stations monitored, 18 recorded indecent expressions. Accra-based Montie FM recorded the highest number of indecent expressions followed by Accra-based Oman FM. The breakdown of the stations and the number of indecent expressions recorded on each is presented in Table 2 below:

Table 2: Radio Stations that Recorded Indecent Expressions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Radio Stations</th>
<th>Frequency of Indecent Expressions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Montie FM</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oman FM</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adom FM**</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diamond FM</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ashh FM</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hello FM</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Top FM</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asempa FM</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Happy FM</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radio Gold</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rainbow Radio</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radio Justice</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classic FM</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fox FM</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joy FM*</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kekeli Radio</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Star FM</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radio Progress</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Royals FM</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>87</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**All the seven (7) indecent expressions recorded on Adom FM were also recorded on Nsawkaw-based Tain FM.**

* The indecent expression recorded on Accra-based Joy FM was also recorded on Radio Justice in Tamale.
3.0 Conclusion and Recommendations

Findings from the two-week (April 18-30, 2016) monitoring exercise show and confirm that the use of abusive language is very prevalent on radio programmes across the country. Notable among the findings is the worrying issue of presenters and moderators who are expected to restrain their panellists from using unsavoury expressions being the abusers themselves.

Following the findings of the first two weeks of monitoring expressions used on radio, the MFWA makes the following recommendations:

- Leaders of the various political parties should encourage their representatives and affiliates to focus on issues-based discussions and desist from using indecent or abusive expressions.

- Radio stations, especially presenters/ moderators should handle their programmes with professionalism by desisting from using indecent expressions and insisting on the use of decent expressions by persons who appear on their programmes.

- The National Media Commission (NMC), the Ghana Independent Broadcasters Association (GIBA) and the Ghana Journalists Association (GJA) are encouraged to use these findings and subsequent ones to inform remedial actions and processes.

- The electorate are encouraged to follow and consider the findings from the bi-weekly monitoring reports to know which political parties are discussing the issues that are of concern to them and those attacking personalities so as to help inform and guide their voting decisions.

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