

January 26, 2007

The Honorable Carl Levin
Chair, Armed Services Committee
Committee
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable John McCain
Ranking Member, Armed Services
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

RE: Hearing Request

Dear Senators Levin and McCain:

Last month, our organization unveiled a video tape of interviews with a number of senior military and civilian members of the U.S. Army and the U.S. Air Force – some of whom appear in uniform, during the duty day, inside the pentagon – promoting an organization called the Christian Embassy and advocating spreading their view of Christianity throughout the armed forces. We are deeply troubled by apparently unchecked violations of the religious liberty of junior military personnel and are writing to ask that the Senate Armed Services Committee convene hearings on the circumstances surrounding the creation of the videotape promoting the Christian Embassy and its fundamentalist Christian principles, and on incidents of widespread religious proselytization in the military. Attached please find a transcript of the Christian Embassy video and a report on the pervasive religious freedom violations in the U.S. military.

The Christian Embassy video implies that military personnel, including commanders, may be attempting to change or coercively influence the religious views of subordinates in violation of stated military core values and, likely, the U.S. Constitutional guarantee of separation of church and state. We believe that Congressional oversight and inquiry into this pervasive proselytization is necessary to protect the religious liberty of our country's honorable and diverse armed forces.

The Military Religious Freedom Foundation is dedicated to ensuring that all members of the United States Armed Forces fully receive the Constitutional guarantees of religious freedom to which they and all Americans are entitled. We are poised to help in any way we can to get this important issue addressed. Please don't hesitate to let us know how we can be of service.

Sincerely,

David F. Antoon
Reza Aslan
Robert S. Dotson
Eugene R. Fidel
Pedro L. Irigonegaray

Dr. Kristen J. Leslie
John J. Michels, Jr.
Reverend MeLinda Morton
Michael L. Weinstein
Ambassador Joseph Wilson

Board of Directors and Advisory Board Members

David F. Antoon is a U.S. Air Force Academy graduate and retired Air Force colonel, awardee of the Distinguished Flying Cross and three combat Air Medals.

Reza Aslan is a distinguished scholar, media consultant and author on issues of the Islamic religion and related political matters.

Robert "Steve" Dotson is a retired Air Force Brigadier General, and recipient of the Distinguished Flying Cross. He is a former White House and Congressional national security expert and former staff to the Senate Armed Services Committee.

Eugene R. Fidel is a noted attorney and head of the Military Practice Group at Feldesman Tucker Leifer Fidell LLP.

Pedro L. Irigonegaray is a renowned attorney specializing in public interest law.

Dr. Kristen J. Leslie is an assistant professor of Pastoral Care and Counseling at Yale Divinity School and an ordained minister in the United Methodist Church.

John "Lou" Michels, Jr. is a prominent attorney, Chicago-based partner in McGuire Woods, and a former U.S. Air Force JAG and Air Force Academy graduate.

Reverend MeLinda Morton is a former United States Air Force missile launch officer, navigator, and chaplain.

Michael L. "Mikey" Weinstein is the founder and President of the Military Religious Freedom Foundation. He served for ten years on active duty in the United States Air Force as a Judge Advocate, and as the Air Force's first Chief of Telecommunications and Information Systems Procurement Law. He has been a federal prosecutor and a defense attorney, and spent more than three years serving in the Reagan Administration, in both the Office of Management and Budget and as Assistant General Counsel in the Executive Office of the President. He was also former General Counsel to H. Ross Perot and Perot Systems Corporation.

Ambassador Joseph Wilson is a former member of the United States Diplomatic Service, has held such notable positions as U.S. Ambassador to the Gabonese Republic, U.S. Ambassador to the Democratic Republic of Sao Tome and Principe, and Deputy Chief of Mission at the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad, Iraq.