



# MILITARY RELIGIOUS FREEDOM f o u n d a t i o n

## Military Religious Freedom Foundation Newsletter

February 2, 2007


The past few months have been extremely busy for the Military Religious Freedom Foundation. From press conferences in Washington D.C., to preparing for events in Albuquerque and Los Angeles, the MRFF team continues to work diligently to protect the Constitutional religious freedoms of the honorable men and women serving in our nation's armed forces.

This issue of the MRFF newsletter is packed full of information on our work and the recent successes we've had.

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### Leading D.C. Law Firm to Advise MRFF

**WILMERHALE**  One of Washington D.C.'s largest and most prestigious law firms, WilmerHale, has committed to advise the Military Religious Freedom Foundation pro bono. The firm will counsel MRFF with respect to potential claims arising from the appearance of Pentagon officials on a Christian Embassy promotional video, recently thrust into the national spotlight by the Foundation.

John Payton will lead WilmerHale's legal team. Payton, former Corporation Counsel of the District of Columbia and DC Bar President, has been recognized as one of the premier litigators in the country.

"We are thrilled to have the backing of WilmerHale as we move forward with our efforts to ensure the religious freedoms of all military personnel," said Mikey Weinstein, MRFF's president and founder. "WilmerHale's reputation is unparalleled and we could not ask for stronger, more qualified representation."

Founded in March 2006, MRFF is committed to upholding the religious freedoms of all members of the United States armed forces. The organization has been at the forefront of all issues related to the separation of church and state in the U.S. military and recently released a compliance report calling attention to a host of Constitutional violations committed over the past year.

MRFF works to fulfill its mission by educating the public and the media, and litigating when necessary.

### Law Journal Article on MRFF

*Service Before Self? Evangelicals Flying High at the U.S. Air Force Academy.*

By Heather Cook

On October 6, 2005, Michael "Mikey" Weinstein, a second generation graduate of the United States Air Force Academy and father of a current cadet, sued the United States Air Force alleging numerous instances of evangelical Christian proselytizing and other Establishment Clause violation. While Weinstein alleges that the problem is systemic throughout the Air Force, most of the allegations underlying the lawsuit occurred at the Academy in Colorado Springs, Colorado. Not surprisingly, Colorado Springs is also home to a number of national evangelical Christian organizations including, National Association of Evangelicals, Focus on the Family, Compassion International, The Navigators, Youth with a Mission, Young Life and International Bible Society, "earning the city the tongue-in-cheek nickname 'the Protestant Vatican.'"

In response, evangelical groups have filed motions to intervene in the lawsuit in order to protect what they see as the Free Exercise rights of service members to "worship according to their conscience and lead others in authentic expressions of personal veneration to Almighty God." According to them, the Weinstein lawsuit is nothing more than "an assault on religious speech within the United States Air Force" that will have a chilling effect on constitutionally protected rights of service members.

[Read on...](#)

### Upcoming Events



**February 13, 2007 - 6:30pm  
Albuquerque Little Theater**

Join MRFF president and founder, Mikey Weinstein, for an exciting and informative evening with special guest, Joe Galloway, award-winning author and war correspondent.

To purchase tickets, please contact Trish Corrigan by phone at (505) 261-6119 or by e-mail at [trish.corrigan@gmail.com](mailto:trish.corrigan@gmail.com). All proceeds will benefit MRFF.

### A Note from MRFF's President



There's so much going on at MRFF right now we couldn't even begin to fit it all into our newsletter.

In addition to WilmerHale offering pro bono legal counsel to the Foundation, the law journal article that supports the need for our efforts, and the upcoming event in Albuquerque, MRFF has reached out to congressional leadership to ask for hearings on church-state issues in the military.

MRFF has also been corresponding on a regular basis with Air Force Academy Superintendent, Lt. Gen. John Regni, to voice our concerns over brown bag lunches held by Christian Leadership Ministries, an evangelical Christian proselytizing group, during the official duty day in Air Force Academy classrooms. Copies of the letters sent to the Lt. Gen. and subsequently received, will be available soon on the MRFF website.

As always, thank you for your unwavering support. Please continue to check the MRFF website frequently for updates.

Sincerely,

Mikey Weinstein  
MRFF President and Founder

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