

New Docs Raise Questions About Timing of Order to Suspend Anti-Christian Army Training Materials

After Breitbart News reported on Thursday an official Department of Defense (DOD) document approved the anti-Christian Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC) as a trustworthy source for information on dangerous “extremist” organizations and movements, Fox News released a letter dated Oct. 18 from Secretary of the Army John M. McHugh. He begins his letter noting a string of anti-Christian presentations and says the material is “inaccurate, objectionable and otherwise inconsistent with current Army policy.”

McHugh criticized SPLC for labeling Christian ministries, public-interest groups, and other conservative organizations as extremists, adding the “groups identified in the instruction were not ‘extremist’ organizations as that term is defined in Army Regulation 600-20.”

The DOD document revealed on Thursday confirmed suspicions as to why multiple military trainers nationwide have cited traditional Christian and Tea Party groups as dangerous, and forbids military service members from supporting them or participating in their events. This official document was issued by DOD’s Defense Equal Opportunity Military Institute (DEOMI).

Now Breitbart News has exclusively obtained two additional unclassified military documents that raise additional questions. The first is a redacted letter signed Oct. 17—one day before McHugh’s letter—referencing a new “stand down” order from an Army general at Forscom (U.S. Army Forces

Command), saying that "FORSCOM has directed all Equal Opportunity (EO) training be suspended until" military trainers have received updated training to change what they are currently presenting in their briefings. So an Army general in charge of military training on extremists and dangerous movements had already issued an order before McHugh.

Breitbart News has also exclusively obtained yet another letter, this one dated Oct. 23, which makes clearer what the redacted Oct. 17 letter contained. This letter is issued by Lt. Gen. Jeffrey W. Talley-commanding general of the U.S. Army Reserve Command. This letter states:

"Commanders at all levels ... are personally responsible for ensuring that EO [Equal Opportunity] Training is consistent with [Army] policy and command needs. Identifying and obtaining references and training material are key elements in conducting effective EO training. Commanders must ensure that EO briefings are vetted with the appropriate subject matter experts prior to presentation. Effective immediately, all unit EO training, to include EO Leader Course (EOLC) training is suspended."

The letters use similar formats and the same key terms, so it is a reasonable assumption that their substance is also similar. If so, an Army commander issuing the Oct. 17 letter a single day before McHugh sent his Oct. 18 letter raises two possibilities.

McHugh was a center-right Republican congressman from New York (not a Tea Party person, but not a committed moderate, either) when President Barack Obama appointed him Secretary of the Army. One possibility is that the Oct. 17 letter made him aware of this very serious problem: that the Pentagon was officially approving material from a radical anti-Christian organization that has been linked to domestic terrorism. McHugh may have decided to elevate the "stand down" order to his level, issuing a directive to the entire Army to stop

using this material until a full review could be conducted. In other words, his Oct. 18 letter could mean McHugh did the right thing for the right reasons.

Retired Lt. Gen. Jerry Boykin-former commanding general of U.S. Army Special Operations Command and now executive vice president of the Family Research Council-is giving McHugh the benefit of the doubt, telling Breitbart News:

“The letter of 17 Oct. demonstrates that the Army sees the problem of persecution of Christians. The letter from the SecArmy on 18 Oct. shows that the Army is doing something about it. I am encouraged but we have a long way to go.”

The other possibility is when McHugh saw the general's letter, he had the political sense to know that the news media would eventually get a copy (as Breitbart News now has), and that it would be a damaging political scandal for the Obama administration to have proof that this administration is in fact using anti-Christian propaganda as training material for American soldiers. The way to head off that scandal was to immediately issue his own letter to supersede and overshadow the Oct. 17 letter, making it look like the Obama administration was proactively looking for a solution to avoid being blamed as the source of the problem.

It would be pure speculation at this point to guess which one of these possibilities explains the Oct. 18 letter, but one thing that is not speculative is that McHugh's letter amounts to the Army's admission that the military has in fact been using anti-Christian indoctrination material in training our soldiers about threats to the nation.

Congress should investigate who knew what and when, as well as why McHugh issued his letter on Oct. 18. Additionally, DEOMI materials can be used by all the branches of the military, and the Navy, Air Force, and Marine Corps might still be using anti-Christian material and are outside McHugh's jurisdiction

to prevent them from doing so. As such, Congress should also ask Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel about this and demand to know why Hagel has not reissued McHugh's order under his own name to ensure that no one in the U.S. military is using the SPLC's anti-Christian material.

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