

CATHOLICS BACK EVANGELICAL USAFA SPEAKER

The United States Air Force Academy (USAFA) has invited retired Marine 1st Lt. Clebe McClary to speak at the National Prayer Luncheon on February 10. McClary is a Vietnam War Decorated Veteran and a known evangelical inspirational speaker.

Mikey Weinstein, the head of the Military Religious Freedom Foundation, has asked the Superintendent of the USAFA, Lt. Gen. Michael C. Gould, to rescind the invitation to McClary: he objects to the invited speaker's alleged "non-inclusive religious 'message' of fundamentalist Christian triumphalism, exceptionalism and supremacy." Now Weinstein is saying "Gould needs to go."

Catholic League president Bill Donohue addressed this issue today:

In 2005, a report was released on the state of religious liberty at the USAFA; it concluded that there was no "overt religious discrimination." But this didn't stop Mikey Weinstein from alleging that evangelical Protestants were given preferential treatment. Barry Lynn of Americans United for Separation of Church and State took Weinstein's side.

After reading the report, I wrote that it was telling that "not one Roman Catholic complained" about religious discrimination. Catholics, who are 30 percent of the student body, might feel the pinch of "heavy-handed proselytizing efforts," I said, yet there were no complaints. In other words, this was a drummed-up effort to malign evangelicals.

This is what is going on again. Marine 1st Lt. McClary is an American hero who takes his religion seriously. No one is required to attend the luncheon and no cadet is going to be

stigmatized who doesn't agree with him. Weinstein knows this to be true but his agenda is driving him to demonize McClary. Now he wants Gould fired. The Catholic League is proud to stand by both men. What's at stake is religious liberty.

Show your support by contacting USAFA's public affairs department:

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