



**INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF EVANGELICAL
CHAPLAIN ENDORSERS (ICECE)
209 Pine Knoll Drive, Suite B, Greenville, SC 29609
Phone 864-268-8707**

July 30, 2013

Colonel Brian P. Duffy, USAF
10471 20th St Ste 139
JBER, AK 99506

Dear Colonel Duffy:

Renowned former US Air Force Chief of Staff, General Curtis Lemay once said, *if we maintain our faith in God, love of freedom, and superior global air power, the future looks good.* General Lemay recognized the importance of air power for our nation's future, and he also recognized and unreservedly verbalized the critical importance of "faith" in God.

I write to express the astonishment and anger of the International Conference of Evangelical Chaplain Endorsers (ICECE) over published reports that you censored a chaplain's article merely because it used the term "faith". The Air Force has come a long way from the days of General Lemay whom I suspect would cringe at your lack of courage in supporting a fellow Officer Chaplain simply because he mentioned "faith" in a published article.

Your censorship of Chaplain Reyes because of the criticism of one has marginalized the "faith" of the majority of your command. The Military Religious Freedom Foundation (MRFF) representative's objection to Chaplain Reyes' article because it contains the historic quote "there are no atheists in foxholes" was not sufficient grounds for you to take such draconian action. Nowhere in Chaplain Reyes' article was there a hint of disrespect for the lack of faith of the atheist. Reyes simply related accurately the historic and heart-wrenching birth of the phrase "there are no atheists in foxholes."

Your censorship of this article approaches a violation of your oath to uphold the Constitution. "Faith" is not limited to religious people. Do you find offensive the statement of General Lemay above or the many testaments of "faith" by men such as George Washington; Abraham Lincoln; and Theodore Roosevelt; Generals Lee, Grant, Jackson, and Sheridan; Generals Pershing; Eisenhower, MacArthur, Patton and Arnold, or the many pioneers in American aviation or space?

Can you point to a regulation or statute that forbids or restricts the use of the word "faith" by a chaplain in a nonreligious or religious context? Even a casual reading of MRFF's complaint shows it is filled with inaccuracies and overlain with blatant and irrational hostility to all things religious. Can you enlighten us as to which regulations Mr. Page was referring to or by what authority he was deeming the phrase "no atheists in foxholes" to be a "bigoted, religious supremacist phrase"? On what basis or authority did you agree with Mr. Page?

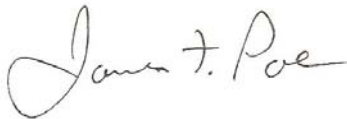
"But God forbid that I should boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ,
by whom the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world." Gal. 6:14

ICECE is at a loss to understand how an article describing the history of the phrase at issue and its use by historical leaders (as noted in the article) or how the word "faith" used in many nonreligious contexts "defiles the dignity of service members" or implies that they must have faith. This is absurd and delusional.

Your reported censorship, if true, has demonstrated the application of the "heckler's veto" which allows the fear of offense of some unidentified audience member to silence a speaker or writer. The courts have made it clear the heckler's veto is unconstitutional. The MRFF has little respect for or understanding of the constitutional values it claims to uphold, what it seeks is freedom from religion (the Christian religion in particular), not freedom of religion. This is contrary to the longstanding military history of practicing and defending the exercise of religious liberty and its associated freedom of speech. MRFF has power only because those in authority do not fully recognize, or embrace, the scope of liberty the Constitution guarantees, even in the unique setting of the military. The great need in today's military is to add to its physical courage the "moral courage" that is vital in the defense of our most cherished liberties to serve God without fear.

ICECE sincerely hopes that you will reconsider the reported censorship laid at your door and apologize not only to CH Reyes, but to the American people, especially those who wore the uniform to defend the liberty which your command's actions deny. Ensure with General Lemay that our *future looks good*.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "James F. Poe". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the typed name and title.

James F. Poe
CAPT, CHC, USN, Ret.
ICECE Chairman