



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS, XVIII AIRBORNE CORPS AND FORT BRAGG
2175 REILLY ROAD, STOP A
FORT BRAGG, NC 28310-5000

REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF:

September 22, 2010

Office of the Staff Judge Advocate

Annie Laurie Gaylor
Freedom From Religion Foundation
P.O. Box 750
Madison, Wisconsin 53701

Dear Ms. Gaylor:

Miam

Thank you for your letter of September 21, 2010 indicating your concern with the Rock the Fort event that will occur on Fort Bragg, North Carolina on September 25, 2010. I appreciate these concerns and do not take them lightly when determining whether it would be appropriate to permit events such as this to occur on Fort Bragg.

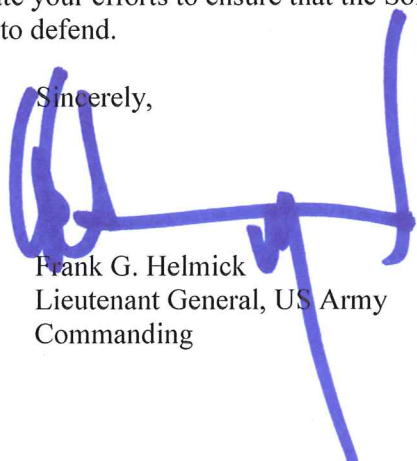
When I decided to allow this event to occur on Fort Bragg, I did so based on my analysis of the very provisions that you cite in your letter. As you likely know, to determine that it would be permissible to provide logistical support to this event, I determined that the support would neither interfere with official duties nor detract from readiness; that it served a legitimate DoD public affairs interest, military training interest, or community relations interest; that the event was appropriate for association with DoD; that the event was of interest and benefit to the community or DoD; that we would be willing and able to provide the same support to comparable events sponsored by similar non-Federal entities; that the support was not barred by statute or regulation; and that admission to the event was free.

As you rightly assert that this event is tailored to the interests of a particular faith, I have taken steps to ensure that no Soldier in my command is pressured in any way to attend this event. This event will occur during an off-duty time for the majority of the Soldiers on this Installation, and they are free to attend the event if they so desire. No one in this command should feel pressured to attend.

It is a well settled issue of Constitutional Law that it is permissible for the military to have a Chaplain's Corps and for that Corps to offer events of a religious nature to Soldiers on Installations such as Fort Bragg. I simply have to ensure that the opportunities to do so are not tilted in any way to a particular faith, and that the opportunities open to one faith are open to all faiths. I believe that this Installation's support for the Rock the Fort event does not cross this line, and am willing to provide similar support to comparable events sponsored by similar non-Federal entities that address the needs of the Soldiers on this Installation.

Thank you again for your letter. I appreciate your efforts to ensure that the Soldiers of Fort Bragg enjoy the very rights that they fight and serve to defend.

Sincerely,


9/22/10

Frank G. Helmick
Lieutenant General, US Army
Commanding