(b)(3), (b)(6) TSGT USAF CJTF101 PAO

From: (b)(3), (b)(6) MAJ USA CJTF101 PAO
Sent: Wednesday, May 20, 2009 9:49 AM
To: (b)(3), (b)(6) CIV USA CJTF101 PAO
Subject: FW: RTQ paper on Al Jazeera bible piece (UNCLASSIFIED)
Attachments: RTQ Guidance re Al Jazeera story on Bagram chaplains - 090504.doc

Importance: High

Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Caveats: ~~FOUO~~

-----Original Message-----
From: (b)(3), (b)(6) R MAJ USA CJTF101 PAO
Sent: Monday, May 04, 2009 5:24 PM
To: (b)(3), (b)(6) MAJ USA CJTF101 TF YUKON HHC BDE PAO; (b)(3), (b)(6) USA MAJ USA TF Duke BDE PAO; (b)(3), (b)(6) LTC USA 3BCT PUBLIC AFFAIRS; (b)(3), (b)(6) 1LT USA TF WARRIOR
Cc: Bagram Media Center; BAGRAM MOC; (b)(3), (b)(6) USA LTC USA CJTF101 JFECC-IO
Subject: RTQ paper on Al Jazeera bible piece (UNCLASSIFIED)
Importance: High

Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Caveats: ~~FOUO~~

ALL:

Attached is background/RTQ on the recent Al Jazeera story, accusing Bagram chaplains of distributing Bibles to Afghans.

Please direct media queries to this office. Today's answered queries have included Reuters, AFP, and TOLO TV.

You can inform your commanders that communicators at all the higher levels are well synched, from CJTF to USFOR-A to ISAF to State Dept and OSD. MG Schloesser has also been briefed.

This has the potential to create local anger and possibly protests in some areas, even though we are jumping on it hard and early.

Please work with your IOs and get out front on CM. Talking points for TF IOs are out from CJTF-101 IO shop.

v/r
(b)(3), (b)(6)
Major, U.S. Army
Deputy Director, Public Affairs
Regional Command-East and CJTF-101
Bagram Air Field, Afghanistan

Classification: UNCLASSIFIED

(b)(3), (b)(6) **TSGT USAF CJTF101 PAO**

From: (b)(3), (b)(6) TSGT USAF CJTF101 PAO
Sent: Saturday, May 30, 2009 11:50 PM
To: CJTF101 CJ6 FOIA
Cc: (b)(3), (b)(6) LTC USA CJTF82 SJA; Bagram Media Center; (b)(3), (b)(6) USA LTC USA CJTF82ND CJ6
Subject: FOIA request regarding Pashto bibles (UNCLASSIFIED)
Attachments: FOIA request on destruction of Bibles; Combined Joint Task Force -101: FOIA request on Destruction of Pashto Bibles

Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Caveats: ~~FOUO~~

Please see FOIA requests (two emails from the same person) that came to us via CJTF101.com email submission.

Items are attached for your review/action.

v/r

<sOnNy>
TSgt (b)(3), (b)(6)
CJTF-101 Public Affairs
Bagram Air Field, Afghanistan

Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Caveats: ~~FOUO~~

(b)(3), (b)(6) **TSGT USAF CJTF101 PAO**

From: Gordon James Klingenschmitt [chaplaingate@yahoo.com]
Sent: Saturday, May 30, 2009 11:43 PM
To: Bagram Media Center
Subject: FOIA request on destruction of Bibles

Dear Bagram Media Center:

Respectfully request, under the Freedom of Information Act, copies of all internal correspondence, including emails, memoranda, or briefings given to senior base officials at Bargram, or sent off-base to higher headquarters since 1 May 09, concerning the confiscation and destruction of privately-owned Bibles of American troops, and/or any similar raw data information provided to or by the public affairs office before during or after that incident.

Specifically request the timeline of events (with specific or approximate dates if available), including the date the Bibles where confiscated (and by whom), and the date the Bibles were "later" destroyed (and by whom, and as ordered by whom), and the names of the individuals involved, and the identity of the commanding officer or chaplain who ordered the "later" destruction of the Bibles, the method by which they were destroyed, and whether the physical destruction happened before or after base officials became aware of the release of the corresponding Al-Jazeera video on 4 May 09.

Information can be electronically scanned and emailed to me at chaplaingate@yahoo.com or documents may be copied and postal mailed to my address below. I am willing to pay a nominal fee for the search, copying, and shipping of the documents. With questions I may be contacted at 719-360-5132. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Chaplain Gordon James Klingenschmitt
Pray In Jesus Name Ministries
PO Box 77077
Colorado Springs, CO 80970

(b)(3), (b)(6) **TSGT USAF CJTF101 PAO**

From: (b)(3), (b)(6) CIV USA CJTF101 PAO
Sent: Wednesday, May 27, 2009 3:10 PM
To: (b)(3), (b)(6) USA LTC USA CJTF101 PAO
Cc: (b)(3), (b)(6) MAJ USA CJTF101 PAO; (b)(3), (b)(6) LTC USA CJTF82
Subject: RE: Chaplain - congressional inquiry (UNCLASSIFIED)

Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Caveats: NONE

FYI -
In this recent blog, there is a quote: Pentagon spokesman Lt. Col. Mark Wright said "The decision was made that it was a 'force protection' measure to throw them [Bibles] away, because, if they did get out, it could be perceived by Afghans that the U.S. Government or the U.S. military was trying to convert Muslims." Wright indicated troops at posts in war zones are required to burn their trash.

Is the military Supposed to Burn Bibles?
by Robert Maginnis

05/26/2009

Last May, dozens of Afghan language Bibles sent to a soldier in Afghanistan were confiscated and then destroyed by fire because the command believed the Bibles were intended to proselytize Muslims, which is a violation of military rules and Afghan law. A Pentagon spokesman said the act was a "force protection" measure to preclude Afghans from perceiving the U.S. military was trying to convert Muslims, which could lead to a violent anti-American reaction.

Two weeks ago, the year-old Bible burning incident was resurrected by three journalists who corroborated to attack evangelical Christians for using the military to advance their religious views. This episode demonstrates four disturbing phenomena: a double standard, a one way cultural and religious bias, political correctness, and the antagonizing of many of our best albeit evangelical Christian soldiers.

The Pentagon acknowledged that a filmmaker was allowed "…onto Bagram [air base, Afghanistan] last May [2008] to shoot footage of religious sessions involving troops." At one of the sessions "…a participant displayed Bibles translated into Dari and Pashto that had been sent to him by his church back home. After a discussion of how or if they should be distributed, the chaplain running the service reaffirmed General Order Number 1 [a military order prohibiting "Proselytizing of any religion, faith or practice"] and the Bibles were not distributed and were confiscated." Apparently, the chaplain burned the Bibles with the camp's daily garbage.

Fast forward to 2009 and the filmmaker, Brian Hughes, allowed Jeff Sharlet, a contributing editor of Harper's Magazine, to view his work-in-progress documentary. At the time, Sharlet was working on an article that would appear in the May 12 edition of Harper's Magazine, "Jesus killed Mohammed: The crusade for a Christian military." Sharlet includes some of Hughes' material in his article.

Sharlet's article seeks to discredit evangelical Christians serving in the military by accusing them of "a quiet coup within the armed forces" and says these believers "see

themselves not as subversives, but as spirit warriors -- 'ambassadors for Christ in uniform.'"

The article features Michael Weinstein, the president of Military Religious Freedom Foundation, a rabid anti-evangelical, who sees himself as the constitutional conscience of the military and uses lawsuits and media appearances to advance his cause. Weinstein says, "This country is facing a pervasive and pernicious pattern and practice of unconstitutional rape of the religious rights of our armed forces members." He calls this "soul rape."

Sharlet's article caught the attention of James Bay, an Al Jazeerra (AJ) reporter. Bay contacted filmmaker Hughes, who agreed to produce a broadcast segment for Al Jazeerra from his documentary film.

Al Jazeerra is a television network headquartered in Doha, Qatar which is mostly funded by grants from the Emir of Qatar. The station is the dominant channel in the Arab world and gained worldwide attention following the September 11, 2001 attacks, when it broadcast video statements by Osama bin Laden justifying the attacks and Muslims dancing in the streets celebrating the deaths of over 3,000 Americans. It is also known for showing videos of masked terrorists beheading Western hostages in Iraq.

The AJ video based on Hughes' film from Bagram "…was irresponsible and dangerous journalism sensationalizing year-old footage of a religious service for U.S. soldiers … inferring that troops are evangelizing Afghans," said Army Colonel Gregory Julian, a U.S. military spokesman in Afghanistan. The report features the Bible study group with the Afghan language Bibles stacked on the floor and a discussion about the proselytizing prohibition. Then it shows a chaplain telling his soldier congregants they all have a responsibility "to be witnesses for Him [Christ]."

AJ reporter Bay presents the video as evidence that the U.S. Army supports proselytizing Afghans for Jesus. He states the line where evangelism ends and proselytizing begins may not be clear but concludes "distributing Bibles is seen by many as crossing that line."

AJ's website reports that some of the soldiers who appeared in the video were reprimanded.

This incident demonstrates a number of disturbing phenomena.

First, the Bibles were burned rather than returned. Pentagon spokesman Lt. Col. Mark Wright said "The decision was made that it was a 'force protection' measure to throw them [Bibles] away, because, if they did get out, it could be perceived by Afghans that the U.S. Government or the U.S. military was trying to convert Muslims." Wright indicated troops at posts in war zones are required to burn their trash.

Why desecrate the Christians' holy book? Would it not have been better to return the Bibles to the church and avoided the controversy?

There's not a chaplain or commander in the armed forces that would dare burn a stack of Korans, Islam's holy book. They would be terrified by the predictable reaction. The logical conclusion is that burning Bibles is okay because law-abiding Christians are not going to threaten to slit throats over insults to their religion. Neither will they instigate rebellion by unruly mobs as Muslim Imams and terrorist groups do.

Second, cultural and religious sensitivity is all one way. For the privilege of spending our blood and treasure in Muslim deserts, American soldiers are expected to abandon or deny their Christian teachings, crosses and Bibles.

We must remind the world that Islam is the one organized religion that repudiates freedom of religion -- that requires infidels to be sentenced to death. Those who convert from the

Muslim faith continue to be killed in every Muslim nation in the world as is demanded in the Koran.

The one-way sensitivity clearly violates our soldier's First Amendment rights. Most of our troops are Christians, and many would choose to share their good news faith even among Muslims. It is reprehensible to demoralize and alienate them while asking them to risk their lives for their country.

Third, political correctness is unbecoming to our military. None of this self-flagellation will turn off the hatred and animosity towards the "infidel" and is perceived as a sign of U.S. weakness that only encourages the enemy to press harder. This animosity has been nurtured since birth among many Muslims who were taught by their hate-filled madrassa education system.

The Pentagon's cultural sensitivities toward the Muslim culture morphed into the "force protection" argument used in this case. This is the same mentality that demands our servicewomen to sport abayas (black head to toe robes) when in Saudi Arabia. Why do we apologize for being who we are?

Finally, we have arguably the finest military in the world and yet critics say that Evangelical Christians fill our all-volunteer ranks disproportionately. What's wrong with that picture?

America is a great nation because it demonstrates Christian charity. Muzzling Christian soldiers and burning their Bibles may be what the military is ordered to do but that's unbecoming of a great nation and will not make America safer or Muslims more tolerant of us.

CIV (b)(3), (b)(6)
CJTF 101 Public Affairs
Media Operations
Bagram, Afghanistan
DSN (b)(2)High

-----Original Message-----
From: (b)(3), (b)(6) USA LTC USA CJTF101 PAO
Sent: Wednesday, May 27, 2009 2:59 PM
To: (b)(3), (b)(6) CIV USA CJTF101 PAO
Cc: (b)(3), (b)(6) MAJ USA CJTF101 PAO; (b)(3), (b)(6) LTC USA CJTF82
Subject: RE: Chaplain - congressional inquiry (UNCLASSIFIED)

Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Caveats: NONE

I was here during the entire event so if they need a statement, I can provide it.

-----Original Message-----
From: (b)(3), (b)(6) CIV USA CJTF101 PAO
Sent: Wednesday, May 27, 2009 2:58 PM
To: (b)(3), (b)(6) USA LTC USA CJTF101 PAO
Cc: MAJ USA CJTF101 PAO; (b)(3), (b)(6) LTC USA CJTF82
Subject: RE: Chaplain - congressional inquiry (UNCLASSIFIED)

Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Caveats: NONE

Thanks so much ma'am. Major (b)(3), (b)(6) is expected to be back today, but I have Captain (b)(3), (b)(6) checking since he thought the Rhino was already back. Once here she can work with the Chaplain as he said he was going to be gathering some items as well.
Beth

CIV (b)(3), (b)(6)
CJTF 101 Public Affairs
Media Operations
Bagram, Afghanistan
DSN (b)(2)High

-----Original Message-----
From: (b)(3), (b)(6) USA LTC USA CJTF101 PAO
Sent: Wednesday, May 27, 2009 2:56 PM
To: (b)(3), (b)(6) CIV USA CJTF101 PAO
Cc: (b)(3), (b)(6) MAJ USA CJTF101 PAO; (b)(3), (b)(6) LTC USA CJTF82
Subject: RE: Chaplain - congressional inquiry (UNCLASSIFIED)

Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Caveats: NONE

Nope - this is it. We were expecting this. In the end they will answer that there is nothing illegal about disposing Pashto and Dari bibles and that they are dangerous to U.S. troops and in contradiction to U.S. military law regarding proselytizing.

-----Original Message-----
From: (b)(3), (b)(6) CIV USA CJTF101 PAO
Sent: Wednesday, May 27, 2009 2:50 PM
To: (b)(3), (b)(6) USA LTC USA CJTF101 PAO
Cc: (b)(3), (b)(6) MAJ USA CJTF101 PAO
Subject: Chaplain - congressional inquiry (UNCLASSIFIED)

Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Caveats: ~~FOUO~~

The Chaplain just stopped by to say that ISFOR-A Seat 1 received a Congressional Inquiry in regard to the Bibles being destroyed.
I know Major (b)(3), (b)(6) might have some additional responses online, but besides the attached, is there anything else you can think of answer wise that we've provided as a response. We haven't heard from Major (b)(3), (b)(6), so I am not sure when she'll be back, but The Chaplain says the 29th is our deadline.

CIV (b)(3), (b)(6)
CJTF 101 Public Affairs
Media Operations
Bagram, Afghanistan
DSN (b)(2)High

Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Caveats: ~~FOUO~~

Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Caveats: NONE

(b)(3), (b)(6) **TSGT USAF CJTF101 PAO**

From: Schloesser, Jeffrey J MG USA CJTF101 CG
Sent: Thursday, May 07, 2009 7:46 AM
To: (b)(3), (b)(6) MAJ USA CJTF101 PAO; McConville, James C BG USA CJTF101 DCG-S; Milley, Mark A BG USA CJTF101 DCG-O; (b)(3), (b)(6) USA CJTF101 CMD GRP Foreign Policy Advisor
Cc: (b)(3), (b)(6) COL USA CJTF101 COS; (b)(3), (b)(6) CPT MIL USA FORSCOM; (b)(3), (b)(6) LTC USA CJTF101 SJA
Subject: RE: Congressional/CSA inquiry into bible issue (UNCLASSIFIED)

Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Caveats: ~~FOUO~~

Classification: UNCLASSIFIED

Good job (b)(3), (b)(6)

-----Original Message-----
From: (b)(3), (b)(6) MAJ USA CJTF101 PAO
Sent: Thursday, May 07, 2009 6:28 AM
To: Schloesser, Jeffrey J MG USA CJTF101 CG
Cc: (b)(3), (b)(6) COL USA CJTF101 COS; (b)(3), (b)(6) CPT MIL USA FORSCOM
Subject: Congressional/CSA inquiry into bible issue (UNCLASSIFIED)

Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Caveats: ~~FOUO~~

Sir,
For your awareness. RFI was completed 0345L today. DA 3/5/7 ACTO said not to expect any phone calls or emails to you on this topic, unless MG Huggins has a follow-on question. A hard copy of this exsum will be waiting in your box as soon as command group opens. CoS, Chaplain, and IO have been cc'ed.

v/r
MAJ (b)(3), (b)(6)
PAO

-----Original Message-----
From: (b)(3), (b)(6) MAJ USA CJTF101 PAO
Sent: Thursday, May 07, 2009 5:08 AM
To: (b)(3), (b)(6) USA LTC USA CJTF101 JFECC-IO
Cc: (b)(3), (b)(6) USA LTC USA CJTF101 CHAPLAIN; (b)(3), (b)(6) COL USA (b)(3), (b)(6)
Subject: HOT: Congressional/CSA inquiry into bible issue (UNCLASSIFIED)

Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Caveats: ~~FOUO~~

All,
IO's night watch officer (LT (3), (b)) woke me up at 0250L to let me know that a Congressman from Texas (Rep. John Carter) was apparently upset that the Pashto/Dari Bibles had been destroyed last year. I came into the office immediately to respond to the flash RFI and prepare a heads-up for our command group.

Rep. Carter asked CSA to look into why the Pashto/Dari Bibles were destroyed, saying "fairness is paramount." He also wanted to know if it was policy to destroy Bibles (there is

no policy on that, of course). Via CSA staff channels, the action eventually landed on the desks of LTG Thurmond (Army G3) and then MG Huggins (G3/5/7) for an answer. Their action officer called the JOC last night and we got the call, which LT (b)(3), (b)(initially answered.

ACTO insisted on an immediate response, so LT (b)(3), (b)(provided our original RTQ paper on the matter (attached) and I then offered the information they wanted, which was:

- Who brought in the Bibles? (Answer: SSG (b)(3), (b)(6) , USA)
- How were the Bibles disposed of? (Answer: As per CH (b)(3), (b)(6) recollection, they were discarded in the trash by an unnamed 1SG at the conclusion of the bible study led by (b)(3), (b)(6))

I gave the ACTO some context points for insight, explaining that while I couldn't speak for CH (b)(3), (b)(6) exact thought process at the time, it's likely that he realized the translated Bibles had no other purpose but to convert Afghans, which presents a huge problem for our forces because:

1) It's a violation of G.O. 1, as well as a death penalty offense under Afghan law.
2) It's a force protection threat, due to the fury that non-Muslim religious conversion materials generate among Afghans, which leads to violence and directly places service members' lives in danger.
3) It's an incendiary propaganda weapon for the enemy to use against us.

I suggested that if the chaplain had tried to return the Bibles back to the church that sent them to SSG (b)(3), (b)(, it is foreseeable that the church would find another means to get the translated Bibles back into Afghanistan, still presenting a threat to service members. (We know that this is happening with NGOs here; we get Afghan media inquiries on Bibles being handed out with NGO aid). Therefore, permanent removal of Muslim conversion materials from circulation was an understandable response by CH (b)(3), (b)(6) under legal and force protection circumstances.

The ACTO absolutely concurred on all points, and said he would draft a summary for MG Huggins. He stated that MG Schloesser should not expect any higher inquiries on this, unless MG Huggins had follow-up questions, which he would not expect because we had given him detailed answers and full context in a timely manner.

Bottom line: The force protection and illegality explanations should effectively counter charges of Bible desecration, given that these Pashto/Dari Bible translations were not made or sent for use by Christians, but for the conversion of Muslims, as SSG (b)(3), (b)(clearly indicated in the Al Jazeera video.

v/r

(b)(3), (b)(6)

Major, U.S. Army
Deputy Director, Public Affairs
Regional Command-East and CJTF-101
Bagram Air Field, Afghanistan

Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Caveats: ~~FOUO~~

Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Caveats: ~~FOUO~~