

Army Disciplines Chaplain for Mentioning God

...I am not making this up

By: [streiff](#)

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I served quite a while in the Army as an infantry officer. Generally I look back on my career with deep feelings of affection for the institution that rescued me from life chopping tobacco or working in a furniture mill, but I will concede that the Army is prone to institutional stupidity. When I commanded a rifle company the Army was all hot on its urinalysis program to catch drug users. The net effect was that it encouraged the use of cocaine (only in the urine for a couple of days) and LSD (not detectable in the urine) instead of marijuana usage (detectable for as much as a month).

Now my Army [has outdone itself](#).

Traditional values groups are rallying around an Army chaplain who was rebuked by his commander for distributing information on Christianity during mandatory suicide prevention training.

Twenty nonprofit organizations dedicated to religious freedom have signed a letter to Army Secretary John McHugh, urging him to overturn action against Capt. Joseph Lawhorn, an evangelical and onetime infantryman.

His commander, Col. David Fivecoat, who heads the brigade at Fort Benning, Georgia, that molds new Rangers, issued a “letter of concern” on Thanksgiving. He took action after one soldier complained to the website MilitaryAtheists.org, which posted an article. The atheist group later said it “appreciates and commends” Col. Fivecoat.

Capt. Lawhorn had spoken and distributed one page of religious material to soldiers Nov. 20 on how his faith helped him overcome bouts of depression. Suicide in the ranks has been a major Army problem amid deployments to long wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

What Chaplain Lawhorn [did] was not proselytiz[ing]? He distributed a one page flyer to soldiers attending a mandatory suicide prevention class that on one side listed Army resources available, on the other was [his personal testimony of his struggle with depression](#) and how religion aided him.

Lawhorn says his role in the military is to bring a sense of “encouragement and hope” to soldiers from a religious or spiritual perspective. So when he received an official complaint for doing just that, Lawhorn was surprised. “When I spoke about faith in particular, and in particular my Christian faith, it was clear that I was speaking from [a] first-person account,” he says, adding: “In my particular situation, it was my faith that helped me to persevere and remain resilient in the face of depression. And I was very clear to my audience that that was one way to handle depression and thoughts of suicide, but it certainly was not the only way.”

As for the handout given at the mandatory briefing...

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<http://www.redstate.com/2015/01/05/army-disciplines-chaplain-mentioning-god/>