

SEVEN SHOCKING PRESS RELEASES

(Scroll down to find next six...)

1. Navy Chaplain punished for requesting Kosher meals.

Norfolk, Virginia (www.persuade.tv) — A Navy Chaplain was relieved of duty and is facing termination of his 14 year active duty career, partly for requesting Kosher MRE's for an Orthodox Jewish Sailor.

Before their ship, USS ANZIO, left port for sea-duty, the Sailor asked the chaplain to help him arrange for Kosher meals.

“Getting permission from headquarters to procure Kosher meals was like pulling teeth, and I got bit,” said (LT) Chaplain Gordon James Klingenschmitt. He coordinated with a Rabbi chaplain and the ship's Supply Officer before requesting the Kosher rations, citing Navy regulations that direct accommodation of religious dietary requirements.

But when a senior chaplain from fleet headquarters, (CAPT) Chaplain Steve Gragg learned of the request, he contacted Klingenschmitt, directing him to come to the headquarters to justify the request in person. The senior chaplain also spoke with ANZIO's Commanding Officer, Captain James M. Carr, telling him Klingenschmitt was causing a stir. The CO became angry with Klingenschmitt, and at the advice of the senior chaplain, directed the Jewish Sailor to interview with a different Rabbi chaplain to see if the Kosher meals were really necessary.

Klingenschmitt advised against sending the young Orthodox Jewish Sailor to undergo a religious “sincerity test” with the Rabbi chaplain, who practiced a less strict form of Judaism. The Rabbi chaplain told the Sailor “sometimes in the Navy we have to compromise what we eat,” but eventually approved the Sailor's request.

The Sailor was authorized one Kosher meal per day while at sea, yet the Navy deducted his pay for three meals per day year-round. Adding insult to injury, the Navy failed to provide enough Kosher rations to last the duration of a six-week sea tour.

“When our ship went underway to Europe, the galley ran out of Kosher MRE's,” said Klingenschmitt, “so I bought him groceries with my own money at a liberty port.”

The young Sailor lost 17 pounds before ANZIO returned to America.

Following the senior chaplain's advice, the CO documented Klingenschmitt's advocacy for the Kosher meals as a performance deficiency in his mid-term evaluation, for “complaining of the lack of Kosher rations available onboard” and giving headquarters an “incorrect and

unwarranted impression of unrest or dissatisfaction within ANZIO concerning the issue.” CAPT Chaplain Bob Evans concurred.

The CO later gave Klingenschmitt an unfavorable recommendation for continuation on active duty, stating he “exceeded his authority” in asking headquarters for the meals (despite Navy instructions authorizing such requests). Chaplain Klingenschmitt was removed early from the ship, and now faces a review board that could end his active duty career after 14 years of service.

Meanwhile the Orthodox Jewish Sailor has been disciplined for wearing a yarmulke on the mess decks, saying prayers during watch, growing his sideburns, and for declining to attend routine training on the Sabbath. Although Klingenschmitt showed supervisors the regulations authorizing duty-swaps to accommodate religious obligations, the supervisors didn’t schedule it. The Sailor’s only recourse was to oftentimes pay friends \$100 to trade shifts with him to get Saturdays off.

The Orthodox Jewish Sailor finally requested a ‘best interest of the service’ discharge from the Navy on religious accommodation grounds, to move to New York and study to become a Rabbi. But after another ‘sincerity test’, the ANZIO commander and senior Rabbi chaplain gave unfavorable recommendations for his discharge, essentially directing him to practice Reform Judaism during the last year of his enlistment.

Klingenschmitt and the Sailor’s civilian Rabbi supported the Sailor’s request, which is currently with the Secretary of the Navy for review.

The Jewish Sailor agreed to let Klingenschmitt tell his story to others, but the Sailor changed his mind after discussing the matter with his chain of command, fearing he’d receive a dishonorable discharge for filing a grievance. Since Chaplain Klingenschmitt was removed from the ship, USS ANZIO took the Orthodox Jewish Sailor underway for another six days without procuring Kosher food.

NOTE: To sign a petition to help save the Chaplain’s career, please send a blank email (with just your name and U.S. State in the subject line) to savechaps@hotmail.com

2. Navy Chaplain punished for protesting ‘government-mandated church quotas.’

Norfolk, Virginia (www.persuade.tv) — A Navy chaplain was relieved of duty from USS ANZIO, and is facing termination of his 14-year active duty military career, in part because he protested to senior Navy leaders who forced scores of on-duty Sailors to attend and pretend to worship, in uniform, at a televised church service during Fleet Week publicity events in New York City.

“I first protested to the senior chaplains on religious equal opportunity grounds,” said (LT) Chaplain Gordon Klingenschmitt, “and I proposed inviting off-duty Sailors to an optional evangelical church, as an equally advertised alternative to the mandated televised service, which was held at a church that supports homosexuality.”

When (CAPT) Chaplain Jane Vieira received a copy of Klingenschmitt’s equal opportunity proposal, she immediately called (CAPT) Chaplain Steve Gragg directing him to “put Chaplain Klingenschmitt back in his box.” Chaplain Gragg notified the ANZIO Commander CAPT James M. Carr, and recommended Klingenschmitt’s equal opportunity proposal be documented against him as a performance deficiency.

Chaplain Vieira is ordained by the United Church of Christ denomination that promotes homosexuality theology on its web-site. Klingenschmitt belongs to an Evangelical Episcopal denomination that separated from the Episcopal Church USA in the mid-90’s, because they opposed ordination of homosexual priests. He declined to attend the televised church as a matter of conscience, and was received written punishment for proposing an alternative. “Senior chaplains abused their rank to deny evangelical Sailors an opportunity to attend a church more suited to their faith, and punished me for proposing to invite them.” said Klingenschmitt.

When the fleet couldn’t get enough volunteer Sailors to attend the televised church service, Chaplain Vieira convinced a two-star Admiral to sign an operations order establishing mandatory attendance quotas. Each small ship was ordered to send 20 Sailors to attend Sunday worship, and each large ship was ordered to send 50 Sailors.

“Two senior chaplains hijacked the Admiral’s rank to establish ‘government-mandated church quotas’ to enforce their own religion on non-volunteering Sailors,” said Chaplain Klingenschmitt. “They intentionally violated the U.S. Constitution. I have all the documentation to prove they did so with full knowledge of my protest, for which they later punished me, citing it as grounds to remove me from active duty.”

Upon learning that quotas were now ordered by the Admiral, Chaplain Klingenschmitt protested a second time directly to the ANZIO commanding officer.

The CO directed Klingenschmitt to identify Sailors to fill the quotas, and protest to headquarters later in the after-action report, which he did. Klingenschmitt recruited volunteers to attend the church service, many of whom did so only to prevent friends from being forced to attend. Other ships just ordered entire duty sections to go. After ANZIO's quota was filled, Klingenschmitt and five other Sailors attended the evangelical church instead.

Captain Carr followed Chaplains Vieira and Gragg's advice, with concurrence from another (CAPT) Chaplain Bob Evans, and documented Klingenschmitt's equal opportunity proposal against him as a performance deficiency, stating his non-support of the televised church "created an impression in the highest levels of the US Navy that ANZIO and our Religious Ministries program were in contention with Navy policy to support Fleet Week obligations." Ten months later he cited it again, to recommend Klingenschmitt be denied continuation on active duty.

"Those who try to practice their own faith, and dare to challenge senior officers for ethical and legal violations, are silenced, punished, and removed from the Navy," said Klingenschmitt. "Why should any junior chaplain be disciplined and stripped of his uniform, for privately protesting the religious abuse of his on-duty Sailors, for declining on religious grounds to attend a mandatory church that contradicts his faith, and for proposing the equal option to invite off-duty Sailors to an optional church that may better suit their faith?"

The CO and senior chaplains also cited other performance "deficiencies," to include praying publicly in 'Jesus name,' requesting Kosher meals for an Orthodox Jewish Sailor, and quoting John 3:3 and 3:36 during an optional memorial service at the base chapel.

Klingenschmitt now meets a review board that will end his active-duty career, if it follows his CO's unfavorable recommendation.

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3. Navy Chaplain punished for quoting John 3:3 and 3:36 in base chapel.

Norfolk, Va. (www.persuade.tv) — A liturgical, evangelical, Christian Navy Chaplain was relieved of duty from his ship USS ANZIO, and faces termination of his 14 year active duty career, partly due to a sermon he delivered at an optional memorial service in the base chapel.

(LT) Chaplain Gordon James Klingenschmitt honored a deceased Sailor by giving the same salvation message at his memorial service which that Sailor had embraced shortly before his untimely death from a motorcycle accident. “This was the second time I preached that exact same sermon, a simple line-by-line explanation of Romans 8,” Klingenschmitt said. “The first time I preached it, my Sailor responded by dedicating his life to Jesus Christ.”

But the second time he preached it, ANZIO’s Commanding Officer CAPT James M. Carr, and some of the others voluntarily attending the chapel, were offended by the Bible verses Klingenschmitt quoted, and the evangelical nature of the message.

The command pre-approved the program listing Romans 8 as the text of the chaplain’s sermon. But after hearing the message, which included references to Jesus Christ as the way of salvation, the CO (and two senior chaplains who advised him) told Klingenschmitt memorial sermons should honor the faith of the attending audience, not the faith of the deceased.

“The Naval Chaplain School has endorsed Harvard Seminary’s Unitarian Universalist theology of Pluralism as the only approved message for all military ministry. Senior chaplains abuse their rank to enforce that denomination’s views, by advising CO’s to censor the preaching of junior chaplains, to remove Jesus from the message.”

Religious Pluralism teaches that all religions are essentially the same, and all paths lead to heaven. “But John 3:3 and 3:36 are not pluralistic scriptures,” said Klingenschmitt, “so senior chaplains advised my CO to punish me for quoting them in the chapel.” John 3:3 says, “*Jesus declared, ‘I tell you the truth, no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again,’*” and John 3:36 says, “*Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God's wrath remains on him.*”

“Preaching a negative or exclusive message will eventually get you fired,” Captain Carr told Klingenschmitt when documenting his sermon as a performance deficiency. “Do you really have to preach all that ‘born again’ stuff in your sermons?” The CO later fired him, citing the vocal minority’s complaints.

“You’re not supposed to preach John 3:36 when unbelievers are present, because you might offend them,” (CAPT) Chaplain Steve Gragg told Klingenschmitt, during mandatory

counseling Klingenschmitt was ordered to attend after the sermon. When Klingenschmitt declined to attend further ‘theological sensitivity training’ his non-attendance was documented as another performance deficiency.

“We must preach as institutional-pluralistic ministers; we’re not really here to represent our denominations,” said the senior chaplain. CAPT Chaplain Bob Evans concurred.

But Title 10 US Code Section 6031 public law states: “*An officer in the Chaplain Corps may conduct public worship according to the manner and forms of the church of which he is a member.*”

Klingenschmitt explained, “Public law allows, and my civilian endorsing bishop requires, that I preach all the scriptures in church, not just the ones unbelievers like to hear. I don’t wear the ‘P’ of Pluralism on my collar, I wear the cross of Jesus Christ. Totalitarian Pluralism is a false, government-sanitized religion. It’s unconstitutional for the state to enforce the Unitarian Universalist denomination’s views upon my church, to dictate how I pray or preach, even in the military. They dishonored the faith of the deceased, they violated the Constitution, and they broke public law.”

The CO also created crew surveys to assess the crew’s perception of Klingenschmitt following the sermon. Two survey administrators (conducting two surveys six months apart) reported that 79% and 84% of respondents rated Klingenschmitt favorable or neutral saying: “The Command Chaplain cares for all denominations, regardless of faith or belief.” The chaplain hosted many interfaith discussions on the ship, inviting Muslims, Jews, Catholics, Orthodox Christians, and Wiccans to teach their faiths at his religion class.

Without waiting for the survey results, the CO gave Chaplain Klingenschmitt a letter of instruction, an administrative tool for correcting minor misconduct, citing complaints about the sermon. He later downgraded a fitness report referencing Klingenschmitt’s message, and wrote an unfavorable recommendation to deny him continuation on active duty.

Klingenschmitt will be reviewed by the continuation board as standard practice for all reserve officer chaplains completing their first Navy assignment. Klingenschmitt had previously served 11 years as an Air Force missile officer, and volunteered for demotion in rank from Air Force Major to Navy Lieutenant to become a chaplain. COs and senior chaplains write recommendation letters to the board to advise retention or dismissal of junior chaplains for “performance” reasons. Currently, over 60 chaplains are involved in a class-action lawsuit against the Navy for religious discrimination.

4. Navy Chaplain punished for praying ‘in Jesus name.’

Norfolk, Virginia (www.persuade.tv) — A liturgical, evangelical, Christian, Navy Chaplain was relieved of duty from his ship USS ANZIO and given an unfavorable recommendation for continuation on active duty after 14 years of honorable service, partly due to his commander’s objections to his prayers.

(LT) Chaplain Gordon Klingenschmitt concludes his prayers at public services and ceremonial events with the phrase “...we pray to you, Almighty God, and I pray in Jesus name, Amen,” as a way to include diverse faiths yet remain true to his Christian belief. This compromise was frowned upon by the Naval Chaplain School Director when Klingenschmitt attended training.

“The Naval Chaplain School now gives full government-endorsement to Harvard Seminary’s Unitarian Universalist theology,” said Klingenschmitt, who was later punished for praying ‘in Jesus name.’ “Senior chaplain instructors abuse their rank to enforce ‘Totalitarian Pluralism’ as the official religion of the U.S. Government. Their unconstitutional (but official) Naval doctrine on ‘how to pray government-sanitized prayers’ forbids equal access to the public microphone of all other ‘Democratically Diverse’ faiths, including Islam, Judaism, Catholicism, and Evangelical Christianity.”

Senior chaplain instructors at the Naval Chaplain School specifically teach that Muslim chaplains cannot pray publicly to Allah, Jewish chaplains cannot pray publicly to Jehovah, evangelical chaplains cannot pray publicly in ‘Jesus name’ and Roman Catholic chaplains cannot pray publicly ‘in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.’ All chaplains should only offer public prayers to “God” to be inclusive.

“They actually created a mandatory exercise, requiring chaplain students to compose and offer prayers while senior chaplains, complete with clipboards, evaluated the prayers,” Klingenschmitt explained. “The instructors praised everyone who prayed only to ‘God’ and counseled everyone who prayed to a specific deity.”

Course materials included a letter signed by the two-star Admiral Chief of Chaplains, who sits on junior chaplains promotion boards, discouraging public prayers ‘in Jesus name.’ Another assignment directed junior chaplains to Harvard Seminary’s website on the ‘Pluralism Project’ as the proper model for military ministry, to learn Unitarian Universalist theology, lending government-endorsement to that denomination’s views while suppressing all others.

Chaplains must have attended seminary and been endorsed and ordained by a religious organization prior to entering the Navy.

Klingenschmitt resisted instruction on ‘how to pray government-sanctioned prayers,’ on First Amendment grounds and wrote an academic paper citing Title 10 US Code Section 6031, which says “*A Chaplain shall be permitted to conduct public worship according to the manner and forms of the church of which he is a member.*” Klingenschmitt maintained prayer was an obvious act of worship, and therefore should conform to the standards of his ordaining church.

The Chaplain School Director, (CAPT) Chaplain Bert Moore, later spoke directly with USS ANZIO’s commanding officer, citing no other performance defects but Klingenschmitt’s academic paper and prayers. The Director told the CO that Klingenschmitt was an ‘immature chaplain’ (i.e. theologically) and needed ‘mentoring.’ The CO, who has no formal theological education, then began criticizing the chaplain’s public prayers. Klingenschmitt requested equal access to the ship’s microphone for representatives of all faiths to offer prayers at night (a longstanding Navy tradition), to include Muslim, Jewish and Wiccan Sailors. The CO denied the request, instead requiring his junior Christian chaplain to say only Jewish prayers.

“Senior chaplains abuse rank, and hijack the rank of commanding officers they advise, to mandate a government-approved religion, and suppress all other diverse religions,” said Chaplain Klingenschmitt. “They violate the establishment clause of the First Amendment of the Constitution (which they swore to uphold), Title 10 Section 6031, and the Chaplain Code of Ethics, which states: ‘I will, if in a supervisory position, respect the practices and beliefs of each chaplain I supervise and exercise care not to require of them any service or practice that would be in violation of the faith practices of their particular religious body.’”

The CO verbally cited the Chaplain School Director’s negative remarks against Klingenschmitt during his final out-brief when recommending Klingenschmitt be denied continuation on active duty.

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5. Navy JAG won't assign Chaplain a dedicated lawyer.

Norfolk, Virginia (www.persuade.tv) – The Navy JAG defense attorneys at Naval Station Norfolk declined to assign a dedicated lawyer to help a Navy Chaplain alleging he suffered religious discrimination by his Commanding Officer.

“We only assign dedicated lawyers to Sailors if they’ve been in jail for 10 days,” the Lieutenant JAG officer at the defense legal office told the Chaplain. “Your case isn’t that important.”

Chaplain Gordon James Klingenschmitt faces termination of his 14-year active duty military career without retirement, after his ship’s commanding officer Captain James M. Carr relieved the chaplain of duty and transferred him ashore, for quoting Bible verses John 3:3 and John 3:36 during an optionally attended memorial service in the base chapel. Documents on his web-site (www.persuade.tv) suggest he was also disciplined for ending his prayers with the phrase “in Jesus name,” for declining to support mandatory attendance quotas to a pro-gay church, and for requesting Kosher meals to feed a hungry Jewish Sailor who later lost 17 pounds. The Navy is investigating.

Declining to represent the chaplain, the Navy defense lawyer instead gave the Chaplain a copy of the JAG manual, directing him to write his own UCMJ Article 138 equal opportunity ‘complaint of wrong’ against his former CO.

“You can bring it back to whatever lawyer’s on call for walk-ins,” he said, “but we won’t review it for legal content or legal merit, we’ll just check to see if it’s in the right format.”

When the Chaplain asked the walk-in lawyer why he wouldn’t review the complaint for legal merit, the young lawyer disclosed his personal fear of retribution by the Navy.

“My fitness reports are written by senior Navy lawyers who work for the opposing team,” the JAG Lieutenant with 3-years experience told the Chaplain. “I’d be crazy to help you file a complaint against a senior Naval officer. They’d end my career if I actually tried to help you win. I can’t get personally involved.”

The Chaplain double-checked with the lawyer's supervisor. "We're not going to help you write it," the department-head confirmed. A third JAG defense lawyer was more helpful, checking the format of the Chaplain's complaint, but she conceded the Navy's legal malpractice insurance wouldn't cover her, unless her superiors changed the local policy preventing her from establishing an ongoing attorney-client relationship with the Chaplain. "If you want somebody to actually represent you, you'll have to pay several thousand dollars to hire a private attorney in town."

"My family can't afford a private attorney," said Klingenschmitt, "since I volunteered for a demotion in rank and a pay-cut to become a Navy Chaplain."

Meanwhile Captain Carr and his boss Rear Admiral J.W. Stevenson Jr. employ a full-time, 10-year experienced JAG lawyer on their staff, fully handling the command's defense free of charge. Staff Judge Advocate LCDR Keith Gibel already wrote the Chaplain on their behalf, acknowledging receipt of the Chaplain's written request for an apology, but instead directing him to file formal charges with a court-martial convening authority.

"I offered to drop legal charges forever, in exchange for an apology," said the Chaplain, "but they refused to apologize. Instead they're daring me to challenge them in military court, without giving me a dedicated attorney, when the religious discriminators have a full-time professional JAG lawyer funded by our tax-dollars. And the Judge is my CO's boss, the same One-Star Admiral who personally directed my CO to remove me from the ship, without ever interviewing me. This is Navy justice?"

The non-profit 501c3 corporation Persuade The World Ministries has established a legal defense fund to help save the Chaplain's career. Sympathetic citizens can give a tax-deductible donation to the Chaplain's legal defense fund, by VISA or MASTERCARD online at www.persuade.tv, or designate a gift by Paypal.com to savechaps@hotmail.com, or mail check or money order to:

PTWM "Save The Chaplains," PO Box 9226, Norfolk VA 23505

6. Press release (17 Aug 05): Commanding Officer who fired Chaplain receives Navy's highest community service award for Chaplain's program.

Norfolk, VA (www.persuade.tv): The Naval Chief of Chaplains has selected and awarded the Navy's highest community service award in a small ship category, the 2004 Good Neighbor Flagship Award, to USS ANZIO and Captain James Carr, the same Commanding Officer who fired his junior chaplain who led that ship's community service program.

"Captain Carr just received this award from the Chief of Chaplains, for having the best volunteer ship in the Navy, but his duties precluded him from volunteering with us, instead he privately criticized my volunteers for not being model Sailors, and drummed many of them out of the Navy for 'discipline problems,'" said Chaplain Klingenschmitt, who organized, led, and personally attended nearly all the ship's community service events.

Klingenschmitt was relieved of duty, transferred ashore, given a downgraded fitness evaluation, and given an unfavorable recommendation for continuation on active duty, after Carr disapproved of one of his optionally-attended sermons in the base chapel.

ANZIO was also selected Navy-wide runner-up for their "adopt-a-school" mentoring program, the 2004 Personal Excellence Flagship Award.

"Our Sailors deserve all the credit, for their countless volunteer hours, feeding the homeless every Friday, mentoring children every Wednesday, and their many volunteer projects overseas" said Klingenschmitt. "Not only did they serve their country full-time, but they spent their off-duty time caring for the poor. You can tell our motivation wasn't to win medals or awards."

Unconfirmed reports suggest Captain Carr will receive a personal medal, the Legion of Merit, on 19 August at a public ceremony at Naval Station Norfolk, and promotion to an important shore command, setting up his selection to Rear Admiral later this year.

Klingenschmitt, however, was denied the customary commendation medal given to most officers, despite his wartime service in Operation Iraqi Freedom, and leading the Navy's best volunteer program.

Carr also disciplined the Chaplain for requesting Kosher meals to feed a hungry Jewish Sailor who later lost 17 pounds, and because the Chaplain declined to support mandatory-attendance quotas to a pro-gay church.

Unless a Navy judge next month overturns the negative job recommendation Carr gave Klingenschmitt, the Naval Chief of Chaplains will not renew Klingenschmitt's contract, ending his career suddenly after 14 years of good fitness reports.

The Naval Chief of Chaplains, Rear Admiral Lou Iasello, has yet to comment on Klingenschmitt's case.

Email sent by Captain Carr to his XO and Chaplain Klingenschmitt criticizing volunteers for not being model Sailors (next page):

-----Original Message-----

From: Carr, James CAPT
Sent: Wednesday, December 15, 2004 10:47 AM
To: XO
Cc: CHAPS
Subject: Volunteer Award

My only reservation with the volunteer award selectees is that two of the three folks we chose to give this award to are not highly thought of in the ship.

Does not help the CO/Chaplain recruiting effort because it undermines the desire to reach for this recognition.

CO

18 of Chaplain's (under-recognized) award-winning volunteers...these Sailors directly helped ANZIO win the Navy's highest volunteerism award, serving the poor on their own off-duty time... yet each was also personally disciplined or discharged by Capt. Carr:

*SN Huey Plunkett
*FCSN Paul Cayer
*SHSN Greg Shaw
*STGSN Jake McDonald
*SKSN Greg Henderson
*SN Jason Mayle
FCSN Sky McEntire
*CTTSN Chris Badgerow
*GM3 Matt Wilkinson
*SN Jered Hodges ←←←Quoted by Ward Sanderson in Daily Press article, text below...
FC3 Joe Gonzales
*CS3 Joe Brown
*GM3 Chris Campbell
CS3 Bradley Brown
TM3 Josh Oliver
SR Nathan Rauch
*CS3 David Thompson
YN2 David Kimball

* 12 are no longer in the Navy.

Clip from Daily Press Article by Ward Sanderson, 1 May 2005 (see www.persuade.tv):

...One former Anzio sailor said Klingenschmitt had a reputation both for going to bat for sailors and for religious zeal.

"I've seen him politically hurt himself by reaching out to me and politically hurt himself by reaching out to others," said 24-year-old Jered Hodges, who received a medical discharge from the Navy in March due to depression. "The most I've heard a sailor say about him is, 'That chaplain is very religious.' But I don't think a chaplain would find that demeaning at all."

Hodges had seen Klingenschmitt for counseling but was told by a lieutenant to avoid the chaplain. "That I thought was strange," Hodges said. "I was personally reprimanded for volunteering for any program that the chaplain had."

Hodges said Klingenschmitt was the only person who would listen to him. "He tried very hard to help me with my problem," he said. "He was attacked for helping me."

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Photo of Chaplain Klingenschmitt and nine ANZIO Sailors feeding the homeless at the Union Mission (8 of these 10 were later disciplined by Capt Carr, including the Chaplain).



**“He was numbered among the transgressors... for he advocated for the transgressors.”
Isaiah 53:12**

**The Pharisees complained, “Why do you eat and drink with tax collectors and ‘sinners’?”
Jesus answered them, “It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick.”**

Luke 5:30-31

Photo of Captain Carr, Chaplain Klingenschmitt, and three ANZIO Sailors receiving 2004 Volunteer Hampton Roads local community service award from an Admiral and Civic Leader (three of the four volunteers were later disciplined by Captain Carr):



7. Press Release (12 Sep 05): **Can a Navy Chaplain Pray Publicly “In Jesus Name?”**

Marking an ironic departure from their supposed mission statement this week, the organization “Americans United for the Separation of Church and State” called for the Pentagon to punish military chaplains who refuse government censorship of their sermons and prayers.

Americans United spokesman Rob Boston, commenting on new Air Force guidelines that encourage chaplains to pray “non-sectarian” prayers, openly declared his disappointment that government punishments weren’t enforced upon the chaplains, saying: **“A section on the uses of ‘non-sectarian’ prayer is vague, and the document spells out no sanctions for those who violate it.”**¹

Navy Chaplain Gordon James Klingenschmitt, whose career is now in jeopardy, partly because he resisted government pressure and claimed a right to pray “in Jesus name,” responded: “Prayer is a very personal act of worship, and the government has no lawful authority to invade a chaplain’s conscience, nor force me to pray to a different god, nor punish me for refusing to pray ‘government-sanitized’ prayers. Nor can they discriminate by religious content, to punish religious diversity, nor exclude certain faiths from the public microphone. If they allow Non-Christian chaplains to pray at public ceremonies, they must allow Christian chaplains too.”

The Naval Chief of Chaplains, Two-star Admiral Lou Iasello, essentially agreed, publicly reversing his predecessor’s 1998 Navy policy² that pressured Chaplains to pray non-sectarian prayers, by telling the Washington Post: **“We don't direct how a person's going to pray. Because everyone's own denomination or faith group has certain directives or certain ways of doing things, and we would never -- it's that whole separation-of-church-and-state thing -- we would never want to direct institutionally that a person could or couldn't do something.”**³

The Naval Chaplain School hasn’t yet implemented this new guidance from Chaplain Iasello, still teaching in mandatory “pluralism” lectures⁴ to all junior chaplains they should pray only to “God” and say “Amen” without including sectarian endings such as “in Jesus name.”

The Deputy Chief of Chaplains, One-star Admiral Robert Burt, concurred with Iasello’s new Navy policy on national television, recently telling The 700 Club: **“There is no prohibition on praying in the name of Jesus. We just ask our chaplains to use the wisdom God has blessed them with.”**⁵

But the new Air Force guidelines, which Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld hints will soon be mandated across all services, seem opposed to sectarian prayers: **“Consistent with long-standing military tradition, a brief nonsectarian prayer may be included in non-routine military ceremonies or events of special importance, such as a change-of-command, promotion ceremonies or significant celebrations, where the purpose of the prayer is to add a heightened sense of seriousness or solemnity, not to advance specific religious beliefs.”**⁶

Retired Navy Chaplain Rabbi Arnold Resnicoff, hired by the Air Force to write their new guidelines, once compared Christian prayers ending with the phrase “in Jesus name” to the equivalent of anti-Semitic racism: **“Neither life nor prayer is that simple. Once we know that an action or a word hurts a neighbor, it is not a question of right and wrong alone...When someone explains to me that an offense is the ‘Christian’ thing to do, it is**

¹ “Air Force Action: New Religion Guidelines Issued” Rob Boston, Americans United Blog, 31 Aug 05, http://blog.au.org/2005/08/air_force_actio.html

² 1998 Navy Prayer Policy available at: <http://persuade.tv/againstgoliath/AppendixNAdmiralDirectsPrayers.pdf>

³ RADM Louis Iasello, “Military Wrestles With Disharmony Among Chaplains” Alan Cooperman, Washington Post, 30 Aug 05, pages A01 and A04.

⁴ Naval Chaplain School lectures at: <http://persuade.tv/againstgoliath/AppendixJTotalitarianPluralismLectures.pdf>

⁵ RDML Robert Burt, “Military Chaplains: In Harm’s Way” Lee Webb, The 700 Club, CBN News, 8 Aug 05

⁶ <http://www.af.mil/library/guidelines.pdf>

the same as a white man offending a black and then offering the weak apology that he had done the 'white' thing." ⁷

Chaplain Klingenschmitt responds: "Rabbi Resnicoff's words are deeply hurtful. And I'm disappointed the Air Force would now let him enforce his faith upon all Christian Chaplains, using government power to censor, forbid, or punish our Christian prayers, in clear violation of the First Amendment and Title 10 of Federal Law. Please understand, I pray 'in Jesus name,' not to offend those who choose to be easily offended, but because I love God, and I simply want to obey Christ's teaching on how I must pray, as law allows, and my conscience dictates."

Jesus said in John 16:23, "Whatever you ask the Father in My name He will give you," and in John 14:6, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me."

US Code, Title 10 Section 6031 says: "An officer in the Chaplain Corps may conduct public worship according to the manner and forms of the church of which he is a member."

The pressure for Christian ministers to stop speaking 'the J word' dates back to the First Century. Acts 4:17-21 records the Pharisees conspiring, "'...to stop this thing from spreading any further among the people, we must warn these men to speak no longer to anyone in this name.' Then they called them in again and commanded them not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus. But Peter and John replied, 'Judge for yourselves whether it is right in God's sight to obey you rather than God. For we cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard.' After further threats they let them go. They could not decide how to punish them, because all the people were praising God..."

The US Supreme Court has already ruled that government censorship (or even guidance) of the content of any chaplain's prayers clearly violates the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment. Their 1991 majority decision *Lee vs. Weisman* states:

"The government may not establish an official or civic religion as a means of avoiding the establishment of a religion with more specific creeds...The State's role did not end with the decision to include a prayer and with the choice of clergyman. Principal Lee provided Rabbi Gutterman with a copy of the "Guidelines for Civic Occasions" and advised him that his prayers should be nonsectarian. Through these means, the principal directed and controlled the content of the prayers. Even if the only sanction for ignoring the instructions were that the rabbi would not be invited back, we think no religious representative who valued his or her continued reputation and effectiveness in the community would incur the State's displeasure in this regard. It is a cornerstone principle of our Establishment Clause jurisprudence that it is no part of the business of government to compose official prayers for any group of the American people to recite as a part of a religious program carried on by government, Engel v. Vitale, (1962), and that is what the school officials attempted to do."

"I find it ironic," said Klingenschmitt, "that both the US Air Force and Americans United for the Separation of Church and State now call for the government to censor the content of a chaplain's prayers, when the Supreme Court already forbid that."

Americans United also recommended the government censor and punish Chaplain Klingenschmitt's sermons...

A front-page article in The Washington Post reported about Klingenschmitt:

⁷ Arnold Resnicoff, "Prayers That Hurt," *Military Chaplains Review*, Winter 1987, see http://www.resnicoff.net/PRAVERS_THAT_HURT.pdf

"In July 2004, he was reprimanded for a sermon at the memorial service of a sailor who died in a motorcycle accident. The sailor, Klingenschmitt said in a recent interview, was a Catholic, 'and I had led him to a born-again experience before he died.'

In the sermon, he said, he emphasized that the sailor was certainly in heaven and 'mentioned in passing' that according to John 3:36, those who do not accept Jesus are doomed for eternity.

'My sermon was in the base chapel, it was optional attendance, and it was by invitation. If we can't quote certain scriptures in the base chapel when people are invited to church, where can we quote them?' he said. 'Don't paint me as a person who's going around forcing my faith on people. I've never done that.'

In March, Klingenschmitt's commander recommended against extending his tour in the Navy, writing that he has 'demonstrated recurring confusion concerning a chaplain's role within a military organization.'⁸

But Rob Boston of Americans United stated about Klingenschmitt's sermon:

"Amazingly, Klingenschmitt insists he did nothing wrong...A chaplain must be prepared to offer any religious service requested, or find someone who can. Clearly, some evangelicals are unwilling to do this and instead see their taxpayer-financed positions as launching pads for evangelism⁹

"I wear a cross on my uniform," responded Klingenschmitt. "Is anybody surprised that sometimes I preach the gospel from the pulpit, during my optionally-attended chapel services? Shall we now deny our Sailors their right to a Christian burial, and a memorial that honors the same faith they personally believed? I find it oxymoronic that Americans United for Separation of Church and State now commends the government's efforts to punish a chaplain for quoting the Bible in the chapel. Perhaps their real mission isn't to separate the church from the state, but to abolish the church with government power! The Pentagon has no business following these people's *unlawful* advice, nor can they enforce a civic religion upon their chaplains."

A Navy judge will determine next month, whether to save Klingenschmitt's career. ☺

Call the White House at 202-456-1414 or email at president@whitehouse.gov and urge the president to issue an Executive Order protecting the constitutional right of military chaplains and other members of the military to pray according to their faith.

⁸ "Military Wrestles With Disharmony Among Chaplains" Alan Cooperman, Washington Post, 30 Aug 05, pages A01 and A04.

⁹ Rob Boston, "Evangelicals On The Rise: Military Chaplaincy Tilting Heavily To One Side," Americans United Web-Blog, 13 Jul 05, http://blog.au.org/2005/07/evangelicals_on.html