



MILITARY RELIGIOUS FREEDOM FOUNDATION

GOP U.S. CONGRESS MEMBERS CONTINUE UNMITIGATED ASSAULT ON MRFF AND RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

Fundamentalist Christian zealot Congress members demand meeting with Secretary of Defense to castigate MRFF.



Following a string of MRFF victories:

Twenty GOP members of the U.S. House of Representatives, led by Christian zealot Rep. Doug Collins (R-GA), wrote to Secretary of Defense Mark Esper attacking MRFF.

The Army, responding to the Congress members on behalf of Esper, STOOD BY ITS DECISIONS IN FAVOR OF MRFF.

Now, Rep. Collins, joined by his fellow fundamentalist Christian GOP representative Doug Lamborn (R-CO), have doubled down in their crusade to obliterate religious freedom of choice in the U.S. military.

MILITARY TIMES, AIR FORCE TIMES, ARMY TIMES, NAVY TIMES COVER MRFF

Top center homepage headline story

Unhappy with Pentagon's religious liberty guidance, lawmakers demand meeting with SECDEF

By: Kent Miller

Wednesday, July 15, 2020

(Excerpts from Military Times/Emphasis Added by MRFF)

A group of 20 conservative lawmakers have demanded a meeting with top Defense Department officials, judge advocates and military chaplains by July 31 "to discuss the steps that need to be taken to protect the religious freedom of our servicemembers."

The Congress members, led by Reps. Doug Collins, R-Ga., and Doug Lamborn, R-Colo., have written several letters to Defense Secretary Mark Esper in which they objected to the military's limitations on service members' attendance at worship services during the coronavirus pandemic. They are also upset with the Pentagon's response to complaints by Mikey Weinstein, president and founder of the Military Religious Freedom Foundation, regarding three recent actions by military chaplains. Weinstein argued that those actions violated the First Amendment's Establishment Clause, which prohibits the government from making any law "respecting an establishment of religion."

The lawmakers cited three recent MRFF complaints that were met with corrective actions by base commanders in two cases and an investigation in the third.

"All three of these distinct issues highlight the overwhelmingly critical imperative to emphasize to all members of the military (not just chaplains) the need to consider the lawful and appropriate time, place, and manner in which protected religious activity is exercised," Weinstein's foundation said in a response to the lawmakers' letter.

In a July 1 follow-up letter, Collins wrote that the lawmakers were "discouraged to learn that the Army is not only standing behind the decisions of commands that have restricted the religious liberty of their chaplains and servicemembers, but the Army and the Department of Defense ... are also supporting these actions and guiding commands' responses to the aggressive demands of the Military Religious Freedom Foundation and Mikey Weinstein."

Collins also wrote that the legislators were unhappy that "the Navy's recent order that seeks to keep servicemembers and chaplains from worshipping indoors while continuing to allow other gatherings signals a pervasive and dangerous misapplication and misunderstanding of Federal law.

Since the advent of the coronavirus pandemic, the military has issued policies and guidance designed to halt the spread of the virus in the military community.

In the House on Monday, Collins, an Air Force Reserve chaplain, introduced an amendment that would prohibit the secretary of defense or the service chiefs from issuing any guidance, order or regulation related to public health — in other words, the COVID-19 pandemic — that would restrict service member attendance at religious services or gatherings if similar guidance does not exist for other activities or gatherings.

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Background on the GOP's Congressional attacks on MRFF:

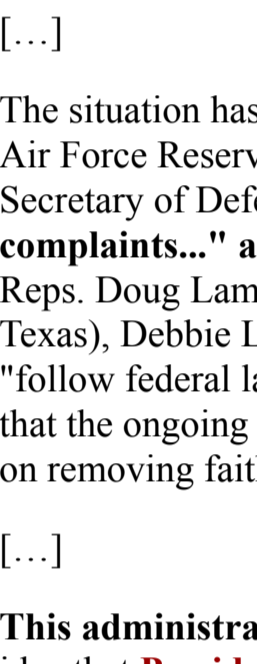
7/6/20 – National Defense Authorization Act to Include Military Training on How to Force Religion on Others

7/2/20 – U.S. Army Sides With MRFF, Incensing 20 Fundamentalist GOP U.S. Congress Members!

6/10/20 – GOP Senator Ted Cruz Condemns MRFF in Press Release and Letter to Secretary of Defense Mark Esper

5/14/20 – 20 GOP Congress Members Write to Secretary of Defense Mark Esper Condemning MRFF!

MRFF Founder and President Mikey Weinstein's Statement on Rep. Collins's Crusade Against MRFF and Military Religious Freedom



"The shameful actions and statements of Congressman Doug Collins and his fellow Republican Congressional colleagues are nothing but cold, craven, calculated and cowardly attempts to further their illegal, fundamentalist Christian, supremacy and domination agenda by dishonestly leveraging the United States military as a force multiplier, in an election year, while running roughshod over the United States Constitution, its construing federal caselaw and clear DoD Directives, Instructions and Regulations.

Only oppressive dictators and tyrants rule by decree. In a democracy, rules are generated by persuasion of the majority. Collins and his fundamentalist Christian ilk are blatantly attempting to force their illicit sectarian Christian proselytizing efforts via decree in our American armed forces and they MUST be stopped at all costs."

FAMILY RESEARCH COUNCIL ATTACKS MRFF

Fundamentalist Christian hate group Family Research Council joins forces with Rep. Collins and his Congressional cohorts to attack MRFF and military religious liberty.

In a factually deficient e-mail blast and article, Family Research Council's Tony Perkins repeats the same lies used by First Liberty Institute and members of Congress to claim that chaplains are under attack by MRFF. See factual corrections below article.

Army Off Base with Chaplain Crackdown

By: Tony Perkins

Tuesday, May 14, 2020

(Excerpts from the Family Research Council/Emphasis Added by MRFF)

Asking a chaplain to do his job without his faith is like asking an Army sergeant to go to war without a weapon. But thanks to a handful of atheist activists, that's exactly what the military's asking.

During the coronavirus crisis, chaplains everywhere have been working overtime -- including, it turns out, the U.S. Army's. From South Korea to Alabama, these spiritual leaders have been leading prayer efforts, outside church services, and generally doing their best to inspire hope. When the men and women at Camp Humphreys struggled to make sense of the tragedy, U.S. Army Colonel Moon Kim sent an email to fellow chaplains explaining that John Piper's Coronavirus and Christ gave him some insight to the pandemic and his calling. He hoped it might do the same for them.

He never endorsed the book -- he just said simply, "Hopefully, this small booklet [will] help you and your soldiers, their families, and others who you serve. Innocent enough, right? Wrong, argued the Military Religious Freedom Foundation (MRFF). Together with 22 other chaplains, MRFF president Mikey Weinstein demanded that Col. Kim be court martialed for daring to send "unsolicited" copies to "subordinate chaplains," promoting a -- gasp! -- biblical message.

But MRFF wasn't done yet. They also demanded the Army punish Lt. Colonel David McGraw, a chaplain at the U.S. Army Garrison in Stuttgart, Germany, for preaching Sunday sermons on the balcony of his apartment during the virus lockdown. "After the complaint," Fox News reports, "the services stopped."

The situation has gotten so out of hand that 19 members of Congress, led by Air Force Reserve chaplain Doug Collins, (R-Ga.) fired off a letter to Secretary of Defense Mark Esper, despairing about "multiple, unfounded complaints..." and MRFF "preying on military chaplains." Joined by Reps. Doug Lamborn (R-Colo.), Matt Gaetz (R-Fl.), Louie Gohmert (R-Texas), Debbie Lesko (R-Ariz.) and others, they demanded that the DOD "follow federal law in protecting [chaplains'] religious liberties and ensure that the ongoing pandemic is not exploited by nefarious organizations bent on removing faith from the U.S. military."

This administration has been religious freedom's biggest proponent. The idea that President Trump's own Defense Department would be undermining that effort is distasteful. It's time for military leaders to fall in line with the president's directive and give every service member fighting for freedom the opportunity to practice it.

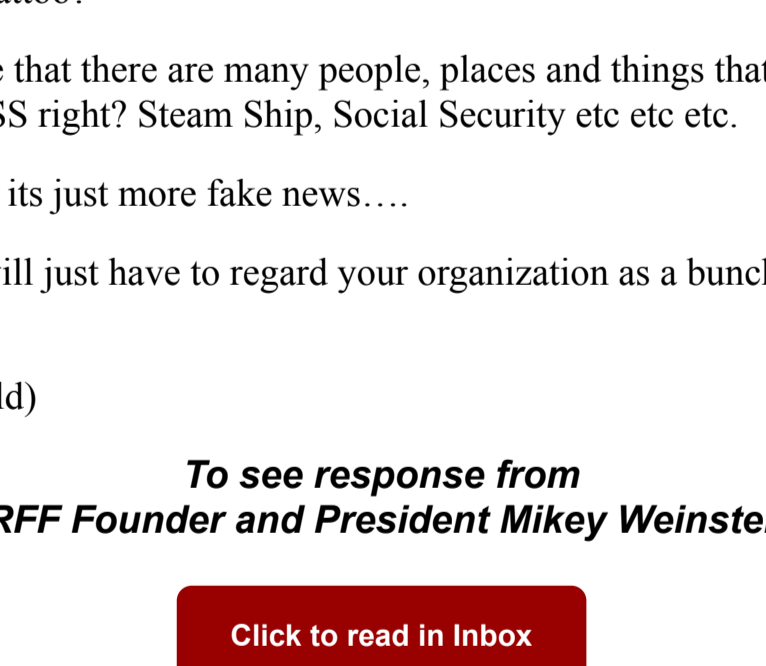
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Factual Corrections to the Above Family Research Council Article:

• MRFF is not a group of "atheist activists." 95% of MRFF's clients are CHRISTIANS.

• The objection by MRFF's 22 CHRISTIAN chaplain clients to the Coronavirus and Christ book distributed by Chaplain Kim was not that it merely had a "biblical message," but that it asserted that the coronavirus was God's judgement, particularly for the "sin" of "homosexual sex."

• The "porch preaching Air Force officer Colonel David McGraw is NOT a chaplain. He is a line officer who was forcing all the other residents of his military housing area, most of whom he outranks, to listen to his worship services. 28 families, 22 of them CHRISTIAN families, came to MRFF for help. Col. McGraw is still able to hold his worship services, just in an area out of the earshot of the housing area.



"I SUPPORT YOUR MISSION"

My name is (name withheld). I just donated to the MRFF on your website. But I also wanted to commend you all on your Herculean efforts against the massive wave of hate and viscous ignorance you are standing up against.

I am currently reading Bonnie Weinstein's book... "When Christians Break Bad." I had read an article or two in the past about some instances at the Air Force Academy where the line had been crossed by commanders (or officers or lower ranking leaders) in their evangelizing efforts toward their subordinates.

But Bonnie's book is so eye-opening, angering and depressing all at the same time, that I wanted to profess my support with my hate and donation. I don't think many people have a clue about how much hate and rank stupidity is saturating our armed forces, under the sorry heading of Christianity. The letters and emails of criticism that you guys receive are truly off the charts for vileness, evil, and totally blind hypocrisy. By way of my own background, from 17 to 20 years old I was in the Marine Corps. Enlisted in 1968 to go to Vietnam, but they sent me to Okinawa instead. Oddly, I didn't care about any run-ins with any hyper evangelicals the whole time of my stint. I was pretty much an atheist during that time period and would have told them to fuck off. After my discharge, went to art school on the GI Bill and I am still a graphic designer/illustrator today at 70 years old. However, in my early twenties, I "accepted Jesus" and supposedly was born again. I am sorry, as they say, was "on fire for Jesus" for the next ten years. I read my Bible early every morning before work, prayed fervently and as I learned more about witnessing for Jesus, I tried to do that too. But the Christian examples and influences that I was exposed to, were nothing like the raging, radical, angry reich-wing political Christians I see too much of today. I am sure they were around, but I rarely encountered them I my circles. Although I came to think of myself as a Baptist, I was leery of the Baptist and Pentecostal mega-church scene and how much of it seemed canned and phony and focusing on a prosperity gospel schtick. My best Christian friends and mentors were, by comparison, loving, forgiving, tolerant, exuding a Christ-like attitude of love and tenderness. I learned from these friends and a pastor or two, that if I was going to be witnessing to anybody, it meant that I needed to be willing to befriended them, help them physically and financially if necessary, and try to be an example myself of compassionate caring about them and their family, if they had one. I also started to see on TV and in a few churches, more and more, a category of self-described Christians who were totally obvious Pharisees and harshly judgmental of others constantly (especially toward gays and anybody contemplating an abortion) and seemingly oblivious to their (and our) own sinfulness. Self-proclaimed Christians who seemed to lack any humility at all and seemed to be walking examples of the opposite of any Christ-likeness (Trump comes to mind easily). Well, after 10 years of trying my best to be the type of Christian that I kept reading about in the New Testament, one that has some works as a result of my faith (James 2:14-26) ... I finally became an agnostic. But, ironically, I still go through a thought process almost every day, wondering what would be the proper thing to do in any situation that would be like the "What Would Jesus Do" bumper sticker.

But, all of this long-winded rant is coming from an agnostic... so to be fair, I am not endorsing Christianity, but merely pointing out the difference between what the New Testament describes as a follower of Christ and what these half-wit, knuckle-draggers claim to be.

Anyway, I fully support your work and intend to donate whenever I can.

(name withheld)

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INCOMING HATE MRFF'S INBOX

"You are a f___ idiot"

You are a fucking idiot, moron, and hypocrite. You are a disgrace to ever soul that has served in our great nation. Going after a Marine Scout Sniper over a tattoo that is in no way shape or form racist. Your probably one of those crybaby white bitches that are a disgrace to our race for apologizing to people of color for something nobody alive today has took part in. I don't anyone alive today that has ever owned slaves. Then you get butt hurt over a police chief bringing up the only human to ever walk this Earth that was a perfect Jesus Christ. Really????? I take it that you're also a damn atheist. May God gave mercy on your black soul so you don't burn in HELL where you belong!!!! SEMPER FI!!!!!!!!!!!!

(name withheld)

To see responses from MRFF Founder and President Mikey Weinstein and MRFF Board Member John Compere:

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"Religious freedom"

Worship as you please. Isn't that what the we are guaranteed but that's not good enough for you guys. One day every knee will bow and acknowledge God. Then you will know if you're right or wrong about all the mischief you're trying to cause. If I'm wrong about Jesus Christ being the son of our Devine Creator, that freely gave His life for our sins, died on the cross and came back to life again three days later and then ascended to heaven what have I to lose? But then again if I'm right and you're wrong then you will suffer for sure.

Good hunting.

(name withheld)

To see responses from MRFF Founder and President Mikey Weinstein, MRFF Board Members Mike Farrel and Marty France, and MRFF Board Member John Compere:

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"Smalls tattoo"

Why would you be so ignorant. If you are just seeking money damages fuck your organization. Yes its similar but its not the same thing and does not mean the same and to make a big crybaby stink about it shows that you dont care about the races coming together you prosper when there is hate. Religious freedom foundation is a lousy name too attack a member of the armed forces that served his time and continues to serve is ludicrous. Your organization will end up in the limelight for your clearly and intentionally misleading name. In short fuck your organization

(name withheld)

To see responses from MRFF Board Member John Compere and MRFF Advisory Board Member Marty France:

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"Scout Sniper Tattoo"

Just a question and an observation. Are you folks really going after a Marine because of a tattoo?

You are aware that there are many people, places and things that use the abbreviation SS right? Steam Ship, Social Security etc etc etc.

Please tell me its just more fake news...

Otherwise I will just have to regard your organization as a bunch of Sad Sacks

(name withheld)

To see response from MRFF Founder and President Mikey Weinstein:

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"Tattoo"

Don't you narrow minded people have anything better to do than harass a decorated veteran, and police officer, about his tattoos? Yes. As a WW2 History buff, I have been to the concentration camps in Germany and Poland. Yes it's sad. You are jumping to conclusions, have you talked to Nat? I am sure his heart is pure.

Why don't yous get a life. Help out our homeless vets, and those that are struggling with PTSD. And threatening a Chief of Police! What a waste of time, money and resources.

(name withheld)

To see response from MRFF Board Member John Compere:

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"Walla Walla tattoo issue"

Sir,

I am a US Army veteran as well as a former employee of the DoD. I sincerely doubt you will read any further than this, however I am going to put my thoughts out there anyway. You sued and denounced the US military for "proseclytizing" against you for being Jewish and how it's your first amendment right to be. I am amazed at your single sightedness as to how it applies. So I lay here thinking about it, you've gone after Christians that say Jews are going to hell for killing Christ (I disagree) but you don't believe that a tattoo is a person's right? So this officer, in his youth with an advanced ground combat unit foolishly chose the Nazi SS design for sniper scout you feel it's your right to force him to change it, how does that work? I have a dragon on my shoulder to represent the US Tank corps but hard line radical Christian will tell you that the Dragon is an image of Satan should they have the right to force me to change or alter it? I don't understand why you feel the Constitution protects your right to be Jewish but no one else's right because it offends you. If you have read this far perhaps you can enlighten me how you have come to this conclusion.

(name withheld)

To see response from MRFF Board Member John Compere:

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"MRFF DEMAND, PROTEST, AND THREAT OF LAWSUIT LEAD WALLA WALLA POLICE OFFICER TO ALTER NAZI "SS" TATTOO "

Attacking a Military veteran and police officer over a Scout Sniper Tattoo is sinking to the Lowest of Lows. This Marine earned this place as a Scout Sniper and his tattoo clearly isn't about white supremacy. Try hard not to offend, try harder not to be offended. MILITARY Religious Freedom Foundation my ass. Good Day Sir.

SEMPER FIDELIS

To see response from MRFF Board Member John Compere:

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"Threat of legal action"

I have recently read your mission statement and find that as a veteran these statements are great.

However, your threat of legal action against a law enforcement officer in Walla Walla is just beyond me. I would recommend that if you want support from military members, you should stick to your mission statement. A tattoo is not within your mission statement for action, in fact it almost proves that the officer shouldn't be punished for HIS constitutional rights. You have no right to "review" the revised tattoo, God is our judge not man. This officer will answer to his Higher Authority, but he doesn't need to answer to you. May God Bless America and the constitutional rights if ALL people, not just the ones you believe should be protected.

(name withheld)

To see responses from MRFF Founder and President Mikey Weinstein and MRFF Board Member John Compere:

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MRFF Information/Contact: (505) 250-7727

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