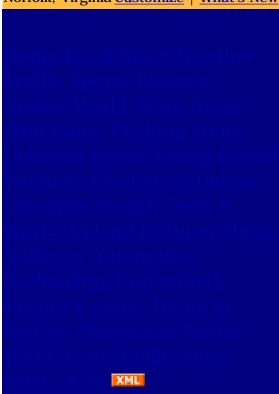
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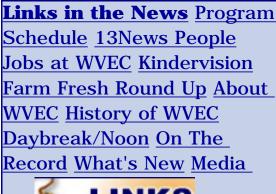


Navy chaplain continues fight to pray in Jesus' name

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06:00 PM EST on Thursday, March 30, 2006







Reported by:
Mike Gooding

A Navy chaplain was in front of the White House Thursday, claiming he's being denied his constitutional right to pray the way he sees fit.

Lt. Gordon Klingenschmitt, wearing a Navy dress blue uniform, led the protest with a series of prayers. He declined to speak and left that to supporters, including former Alabama

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**Supreme Court justice Roy Moore.** 

They claim new Department of Defense rules forbid military chaplains from publicly invoking the name of Jesus Christ.

Klingenschmitt has threatened to sue the government for discrimination. He's talked about before.

"I don't see any other way
to protect a chaplain's first
amendment right to
compose his own prayers
and pray according to his
own diverse faith. They
won't let us pray in Jesus'
name and I think we ought
to be able to do that," he
said in February interview
at the WVEC-TV studios.

Navy spokesman Lieutenant William Marks on Thursday provided a February 21 set of instructions from Navy Secretary Donald Winter.

It says, in part, "Every religious ministry professional must be willing to function in a pluralistic environment in the military where diverse religious traditions exist side by side with tolerance and respect.

"Chaplains will not be compelled to participate in religious activities inconsistent with their beliefs."

Moore sees it differently.

"We've got to recognize that the law does not forbid our chaplains in the military -- in the Air Force, in the Navy -- from praying in the name of Jesus. Indeed, it contradicts our entire history and our law and it should be stopped."

A Navy spokesman at the Pentagon told 13News it's unclear whether Klingenschmitt broke Navy rules by appearing in uniform. Regulations state Navy personnel can't appear in uniform at protests or demonstrations.

Kligenschmitt did neither today. He was there, but all he did was pray.

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