

Navy Charges Protesting Chaplain

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The Navy is bringing charges against an evangelical Christian chaplain who wore his uniform during a protest in front of the White House.

Lt. Gordon J. Klingenschmitt attended a March 30 news conference on Lafayette Square with former Alabama chief justice Roy S. Moore, evangelist Rob Schenck and conservative radio commentator Rick Scarborough to call attention to what they said are restrictions on military chaplains who pray in Jesus's name.

Klingenschmitt said he received a letter yesterday from Capt. Lloyd Pyle, commanding officer of Norfolk Naval Station, summoning him to a captain's mast, an administrative hearing that could result in a reprimand. He said he has not decided whether to accept the summons or to insist on his right to a court-martial.

Pyle's letter said the chaplain violated Navy regulations by "wrongfully wearing his uniform while attending and participating in a news conference in support of personal views on political and religious issues."

Klingenschmitt called the charge "an attack against my religion" and "a reprisal in violation of the Whistleblower Protection Act."

-- Alan Cooperman