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U.S. military ‘hostile’ to Christians under Obama;

morale, retention devastated

By Jacqueline Klimas

Jacqueline, before you begin I have something to say about that title. This article never mentions Obama. Nor does your article indicate that the hostility against Christians in the military began when Obama took office. That makes it appear as though your title is sensationalist Conservative Christian propaganda.

Okay, now that I've gotten that off my chest ... you may begin.

*Soon there may only be atheists in the foxholes.*

Jacqueline, if there were only Atheists, we would probably need a whole lot less foxholes.

*Christians are leaving the U.S. military or are discouraged from joining in the first place because of a “hostile work environment” that doesn’t let them express their beliefs openly, religious freedom advocates say.*

Jacqueline, let's see your evidence for those claims. How many are leaving? And how many have been discouraged?

*Michael Berry, senior counsel at the Liberty Institute, a Texas-based legal organization dedicated to defending religious liberty in America,*

Jacqueline, if you would have paid closer attention to their home page you might have read that they are not dedicated to "defending religious liberty in America" as you claim, but rather, to quote them "restore religious liberty in America."

Jacqueline, let's analyze that for a moment, shall we?

What religious liberties have been taken away from Christians in America that would need "restoring?"

Well, I can think of many religious freedoms that were once legally enjoyed by Christians that are no longer allowed; here are just a few examples:

1) Slavery (defeated by the Civil War)

2) Women remaining quiet (defeated by the 19th amendment)

3) Blasphemy (declared unconstitutional)

4) Burning women to death (murder statutes are now enforced)

5) Adultery (decriminalized)

So here's my question Jacqueline, which religious freedoms does Liberty want to restore?

*[Liberty Institute] said recent high-profile cases of military chaplains facing punishment for private counseling sessions that reflected the teachings of their religion could cause devout Americans who are qualified for military service to think twice about joining the military.*

Jacqueline, that statement assumes that "devout" Americans are qualified for military service. Berry is assuming facts not in evidence.

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_objections_(law)>

*In December, a chaplain for a Ranger training battalion received an administrative letter of concern after a soldier complained that he advocated Christianity and used the Bible during a mandatory unit suicide-prevention training session. The Military Association of Atheists and Freethinkers said the chaplain “used his official position to force his personal religious beliefs on a captive military audience” in an article the group posted on its website.*

Jacqueline, I thought you people said there were no Atheists in foxholes?

Yet you just listed an organization full of them; and you haven't even gotten to Weinstein's group yet.

*And, last month, a Navy chaplain was removed from his post and may lose his career after some sailors complained about his private counseling, in which he reportedly advocated against homosexuality and sex outside of marriage.*

Jacqueline, that may not work out so bad for the chaplain. I know of one restaurant in Indiana where he could be hired in a flash.

*In an interview with The Washington Times, Mr. Berry said “People of faith are going to stay away from the military."*

Jacqueline, and why do you think that is a bad thing?

If we could convince everyone to stay away from the military, the world would be a far better place.

*Berry said "I can’t tell you how many moms and dads I’ve spoken to who say, ‘My son or daughter wants to join the military, but in light of what you’ve described, I’m not sure I want to let them join the military anymore,’ and I don’t blame them."*

Jacqueline, here's a concept for Mr. Berry: if these kids are old enough to join the military, why don't the parents let their kids make their own decisions instead of preventing them from living their own lives?"

Oh, my mistake: I almost forgot we were talking about Fundamentalist Christian parents, where parenting means total control over every aspect of their children's lives.

*Berry added "I would have serious reservations about my own kids joining.”*

Jacqueline, having serious reservations is an improvement over "I'm not sure I want to LET THEM join."

*Douglas Lee, president of the Chaplain Alliance for Religious Liberty, whose job it is to find people who want to be chaplains and make sure they’re also qualified to serve in the military, said growing religious hostility within the military is making it harder for him to find potential recruits and for the armed forces to maintain the chaplains it does have.*

*Lee, who also served as an Army chaplain said “I know people who get out, officers and chaplains, who’ve said, ‘I can’t serve the way I want to in this environment,’” “People who’ve said, ‘Because of the religious liberty challenges I see, I think I’ll serve somewhere else.’”*

*Mr. Berry said that not being able to recruit or retain these individuals is very dangerous from a national security standpoint, because they could be the military’s next group of leaders, but will never serve because they don’t think they’re welcome.*

Jacqueline, maybe they would be more welcome if they concentrated on *helping* those in the military instead of trying to *convert* them?

*Mr. Berry said “We all used to sit around and talk about planning on spending 20 years, but at some point enough is enough.”*

*Mr. Berry said he thinks the “hostile work environment” that is forcing the most religious persons out of the military is only getting worse, and that while in the past problems were mainly in the Air Force, religious liberty issues have spread throughout all the services.*

Jacqueline, a more accurate interpretation might be that military personnel are now finding the courage to fight back against Christian proselytization and chaplains are stymied. Maybe what the military really needs to do is replace each and every chaplain with people trained in psychiatry and psychology. You know, people who could actually help those in need.

As for the hostile work environment, you should interview some military Atheists ... then you would find out what the phrase "hostile work environment" really means.

*Mr. Berry said “The problem is getting worse, not better, despite our efforts.” There is a culture of hostility toward religion in the military right now.”*

Jacqueline, that shouldn't come as a surprise as the world slowly becomes more enlightened and Ghost Worship retreats into the annals of history.

*While problems in the past have touched all religious groups, Travis Weber, director of the Center for Religious Liberty at the Family Research Council, said he’s seen a recent uptick and pattern of Christians facing persecution for religious expression.*

Jacqueline, slave owners had the same complaint, as I recall.

*Mr. Lee blamed a lack of education among commanders about where the line is to express religion in the workplace that causes a knee-jerk reaction to any show of religion.*

Jacqueline, the problem is that Christians don't want *any* line. That's why we are seeing these problems.

*A commander recently told a gate guard on a base in Georgia that he could no longer tell someone to have a “blessed day,” for example, though further review found that wasn’t a religious imposition, he said.*

Jacqueline, so if it was found *not* to be a religious imposition, why are you including it in this article?

*In the chaplain example last month, Navy Chaplain Lt. Cmdr. Wes Modder was removed from his position counseling sailors and could be kicked out of the military for expressing his views on marriage and homosexuality in private sessions.*

Jacqueline, perfect example. Modder should have been concentrating on the difficulty being experienced by the sailors, and trying to help them, rather than pushing his anti-Jesus bigotry on them.

*Mr. Berry is representing Lt. Cmdr. Modder, who is still on active duty in Charleston, South Carolina, as the case is reviewed at a higher level.*

*Mr. Berry said this case even could set a precedent usable outside the military by establishing, as a principle, that the government can punish religious leaders based on the state’s moral disapproval of the church’s teachings, especially in matters of sex.*

Jacqueline, as I pointed out earlier, this has already happened. Sodomy is no longer illegal; nor is oral sex; nor is adultery.

Jacqueline, where have you been the last few decades?

*Mr. Berry said “If what happened to Chaplain Modder is allowed to stand, it could foretell more instances in which the government tells priests, ministers, chaplains, etc. that their views are unacceptable.”*

Jacqueline, tell Mr. Berry that their views are unacceptable on a great many things. That is why our laws have changed.

*Mr. Weber said these types of punishments affect both troops and chaplains, since chaplains will feel the need to constantly be looking over their shoulder to avoid punishment, and service members will wonder if chaplains are being honest or just saying what they can say without getting in trouble.*

*Michael Weinstein, president of the Military Religious Freedom Foundation, said that while chaplains can believe whatever their religion teaches, those who think they must act on religious teachings about sex or sexuality have no place in the military.*

*“You can continue to believe that internally, but if you have to act on that, the right thing to do is to get out of the U.S. military, because you have no right to tell a member of the military that they’re inferior because of the way they were born.”*

Jacqueline, Mikey got that one wrong. Chaplains have no right to tell military personnel that they are inferior ... for any reason.

*The military had 2,837 active-duty chaplains as of December 2014, according to numbers provided by the Defense Department. The largest group was the Southern Baptist Convention, with 437 members. More than 200 chaplains are affiliated with the Roman Catholic church, while 26 are Jewish, and just one is Hindu.*

Jacqueline, like I said, there are 2,837 well-trained psychologists and counselors just waiting for jobs where they can really make a difference. I say let's give them a chance and then compare the results. My prediction?

God will lose.

*Lt. Cmdr. Nate Christensen, spokesman for the Defense Department said “The Department of Defense respects, places a high value on and supports by policy the rights of members of the military services to observe the tenets of their respective religions or to have no religious beliefs. The mission of the chaplain corps is to provide care and the opportunity for service members, their families and other authorized personnel to exercise their constitutional right to the free exercise of religion.”*

Jacqueline, no one in the military is being denied the right to religious freedom - as long as that freedom does not encroach upon the freedom of others ... and that is where Christians are running into trouble.

*Advocates agreed that chaplains play a crucial role in allowing troops to exercise their freedom of religion, no matter what religion that is.*

*Mr. Lee said commanders have also relied on chaplains to act as combat multipliers, dealing with issues in the ranks like marriage crises or financial troubles that commanders often can’t address.*

*Mr. Weinstein, however, said he thinks the chaplain corps would work better if chaplains were totally outside the military force structure and didn’t have a military rank. In addition to posing a problem if a chaplain outranks whoever is seeking counseling, having religious leaders in the military serves as propaganda for Islamic extremist groups, who try to paint the U.S. military as the latest group of religious crusaders.*

[http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2015/apr/15/us-military-losing-christians-because-of-hostile-c/?page=all#pagebreak](http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2015/apr/15/us-military-losing-christians-because-of-hostile-c/?page=all%23pagebreak)

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THE SCIENCE SEGMENT

Neurogeneticists harness immune cells

to clear Alzheimer's-associated plaques

Alzheimer's disease is an irreversible, progressive brain disease that causes problems with memory, thinking and behavior. It affects more than 5 million Americans today, and is projected to affect more than 16 million Americans over age 65 by 2050.

Brains with Alzheimer's disease show build-up of a sticky plaque (made of a protein called beta-amyloid) that induces memory loss. When afflicted with Alzheimer's, the immune system, which typically rids the body of toxic substances, becomes imbalanced and inefficient at clearing those plaques.

Researchers used genetically modified mice to show that blocking a substance called interleukin-10 activates an immune response to clear the brain of the beta-amyloid plaques to restore memory loss and repair brain cell damage. Alzheimer's-afflicted mice in which the immune cells were activated behaved more like mice without the disease in various learning and memory tests.

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FAMOUS QUOTES

anonymous

"If religion equaled morality,

the middle east would be the safest, happiest,

most secure corner of the world,

and our prisons would be overflowing with atheists.

The reality is, the middle east is a never ending horror story

driven by religion,

and American prisons are populated by people

who overwhelmingly self-identify as Christian."