



Written by [R. Cort Kirkwood](#) on April 28, 2011

Military Atheists Want Chaplains

[The New York Times](#) reports that the [Military Association of Atheists and Freethinkers](#), along with the [Military Atheists and Secular Humanists](#) have emerged from the dark shadows of non-recognition to demand that the military treat them like any other religious group, even though they claim that religion is hoey.

[According to](#) the *Times*, the non-believers want "to win official acceptance in the military," for "such recognition would make it easier for them to raise money and meet on military bases." As well, then chaplains would distribute atheist propaganda and "advocate for them with commanders."



Problem is, real chaplains are, rightly, a little confused. "Do atheists belong to a 'faith group,' a requirement for a chaplain candidate?" [the Times asked](#) by proxy. "Can they provide support to religious troops of all faiths, a fundamental responsibility for chaplains?"

[The Times quoted](#) Jason Torpy, "a former Army captain who is president of the Military Association of Atheists and Freethinkers," who says atheist "chaplains would do everything religious chaplains do, including counsel troops and help them follow their faiths. But just as a Protestant chaplain would not preside over a Catholic service, a humanist might not lead a religious ceremony, though he might help organize it."

Torpy wants to meet with the military's top chaplains, who apparently aren't sure whether to meet with a man who believes in nothing.

According to the Defense Department, the *Times* reports, a mere 9,400 of the its 1.4 million members, or 0.67 percent, are "non-believers." But 70 percent are professing Christians. After revealing that statistic, [the Times unbosomed](#) this statement of incredulity: Christians "are even more dominant among the chaplain corps: about 90 percent of the 3,045 active duty chaplains are Christians, most of them Protestants."

It would only make sense that most chaplains are Christian in a military whose members are mostly Christian.

Shades of Wicca

The military atheists are reminiscent of another group that received military recognition: witches and warlocks. In February 2010, the [Air Force Academy created](#) a campus "worship circle" for pagans to practice witchcraft.

Apparently, the academy's chaplains backed the pagan idolatry. [Said the](#) Air Force sergeant behind the pagan worship circle, "The chaplain's office has been 100-percent supportive."

As for the military atheists, [the Times quotes](#) Torpy thusly to explain why the military's freethinkers and



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non-believers need a chaplain: "Humanism fills the same role for atheists that Christianity does for Christians and Judaism does for Jews. It answers questions of ultimate concern; it directs our values."

Torpy did not explain what "values" he is talking about.



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