

In Bush years, Pentagon reports quoted Bible: GQ publishes covers of confidential documents

News in the [June 16, 2009](#) issue

The Pentagon included Bible verses on the covers of confidential reports at the start of the Iraq war, featuring photos of soldiers and quotes about putting on “the full armor of God” and seeking divine help, according to *GQ* magazine.

The magazine’s Web site features images of covers of the “Worldwide Intelligence Update” from 2003. One report, with a photo of a tank, quotes Ephesians 6:13, which begins, “There fore put on the full armor of God.”

Another, with a photo of now-deceased Iraqi president Saddam Hussein, quotes 1 Peter 2:15: “It is God’s will that by doing good you should silence the ignorant talk of foolish men.”

GQ writer Robert Draper said the cover sheets were created by Major General Glen Shaffer, a director of intelligence who reported to both Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld and Joint Chiefs of Staff chair Richard Myers.

“When colleagues complained to Shaffer that including a religious message with an intelligence briefing seemed inappropriate, Shaffer politely informed them that the practice would continue, because ‘my seniors’—JCS chairman Richard Myers, Rumsfeld, and the commander in chief himself—appreciated the cover pages,” Draper wrote.

The Associated Press reported that the Pentagon said May 18 that Bible verses are no longer included on the covers of daily intelligence briefings.

Robert Parham, executive director of the Baptist Center for Ethics, wrote in a column May 18 that the report provides “a painful reminder that a crusade mentality coursed through the veins of the Pentagon.” Baptist minister C. Welton Gaddy, president of the Interfaith Alliance, called the use of the Bible verses “offensive

morally and sacrilegious spiritually.”

Family Research Council president Tony Perkins defended the practice May 19, saying that there is historical precedence for presidents relying on faith, such as Abraham Lincoln quoting the Bible in his second inaugural address and Franklin Roosevelt praying over the radio waves during World War II. “We’re removing God from everything,” Perkins said. “I wonder what it would have been like if Abraham Lincoln had backed off of his emphasis on scripture [and] where this nation would be,” Perkins said. *-Religion News Service*