



Written by [Dave Bohon](#) on April 25, 2013

Army Orders Removal of Bible References From Military Scopes

The U.S. Army is ordering that references to Bible verses that were etched into rifle scopes sold to the military be removed. Troops at Alaska's Fort Wainwright, near Fairbanks, were told to remove the Bible references, which the company manufacturing the scopes engraved next to the serial numbers.

The two verse references etched into the scopes are John 8:12 and II Corinthians 4:6. "Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, 'I am the light of the world; he that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life,'" reads the scripture from the Gospel of John. The verse from the apostle Paul's second epistle to the Corinthians reads: "For God, who said, 'Let light shine out of darkness,' made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of God's glory displayed in the face of Christ."

The company contracted to manufacture the scopes for the military is [Trijicon](#), based in Michigan. The company [first came under fire](#) for the practice in 2010 when atheist groups and even Muslims complained about the references on the scopes. General David Petraeus, who was overseeing U.S. military operations in Afghanistan and Iraq at the time, called the long-time tradition of the company "disturbing," and a "serious concern to me and the other commanders in Iraq and Afghanistan." A spokesman for the Pentagon added at the time that "it is not the policy of the Department of Defense to put religious references of any kind on its equipment."

The [Christian News Network](#) recalled that at the time of the original controversy, Defense Department officials "stated that they were concerned the scopes would be seen as a type of 'crusade' against other religions, such as Islam. Some groups worried that enemy combatants might get the idea that they were being purposefully targeted with 'Jesus rifles.'"

Trijicon agreed to stop including the references on scopes it manufactured under government contract and to "remove the inscription reference on all U.S. military products that are in the company's factory that have already been produced, but have yet to be shipped." It also offered to provide "modification kits to forces in the field to remove the reference on the already forward deployed optical sights." An official statement from Trijicon noted that the company had "proudly served the U.S. military for more than two decades, and our decision to offer to voluntarily remove these references is both prudent and appropriate."





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The scopes most recently found with the Bible references were likely overlooked by military personnel originally tasked with removing the verses. A [document from the U.S. Army](#) sent to military bases indicated the Bible references and where they are located on the scopes, ordering that “[i]n accordance with included instructions remove the biblical reference from the indicated area....”

An Army spokesman, Matthew Bourke, said in a written statement that “the vendor etched those inscriptions on scopes without the Army’s approval. Consequently, the modified scopes did not meet the requirement under which the contract was executed.” He added that “some of these scopes had already been fielded. Corrective measures were taken to remove inscriptions during the RESET/PRESET process in order to avoid a disruption in combat operations.”

[Fox News](#) quoted one Alaska soldier disgusted by the make-work project. “It blows my mind,” the soldier, who identified himself as a Christian, offered. “It doesn’t help the Army do its mission to take off a biblical reference.” He said that he had to comply with the order so “someone doesn’t get offended.”

Alaska’s most quotable conservative, Sarah Palin, also weighed in on the contrived controversy, Tweeting on April 23: “Who’s giving the order? Who has the guts to take responsibility for this nonsense?”

Realistically, the entire controversy may seem to some to be much ado about nothing. The scripture references look almost as if they are part of the serial numbers and are small enough to likely escape the notice of most soldiers. While this current incident is essentially a continuation of the policy the Army has been applying since 2010, it once again illustrates the nearly zealous attention to political correctness currently employed by agencies of the U.S. government.



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