

CBS Anchor Attacks Pete Hegseth for Calling Americans to Pray for the Troops

Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth closed a Pentagon press briefing Thursday by asking Americans to pray daily for U.S. service members involved in Operation Epic Fury, the ongoing military campaign against Iran. Within minutes, a CBS News anchor publicly criticized the remarks.

"May Almighty God continue to bless our troops in this fight, to the American people please pray for them every day on bended knee, with your family, in your schools, in your churches, in the name of Jesus Christ," Hegseth said, standing alongside military leaders at the briefing.

CBS anchor Margaret Brennan responded on social media shortly after. "The Secretary of Defense tells the American public to pray for our troops on bended knee and invoke Jesus' name," she posted, framing the comment as a controversy.



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Brennan also accused the administration of "using religious references as justification for war," responding specifically to Hegseth's characterization of the Iranian regime's strategy as "a violent, messianic Islamist ideology chasing some sort of apocalyptic endgame."

The criticism drew sharp pushback from conservatives, who noted that military leaders and presidents calling on Americans to pray during wartime is nothing new in American history.

Hegseth previously defended the Pentagon's prayer service to

reporters, asserting that the Department of War will continue to honor the tradition of “appealing to Heaven.”

“I’ve gotten some criticism for the Christian prayer service at the Pentagon yesterday. We said it very publicly, said it very proudly,” he told reporters. “Appealing to Heaven, to God, is a longstanding tradition in our military. I’m very proud of starting a monthly voluntary service at the Pentagon.”

“George Washington is on bended knee with the troops, praying for God’s providence and protection in that moment. Ministers, Christians, and people of faith across generations have prayed because of the business that we’re in, and the business of the 82nd Airborne, and we watch that 9-1-1 button for the country,” Hegseth continued. “And we appeal to God. I appeal to Jesus Christ for that protection, we’re going to speak that word and be open and willing to talk about that at the Pentagon. If they want to criticize that, they’re on the wrong side of a very important issue.”

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