

CHRISTIANS STIFFED BY NYC AGENCY

Yesterday, Catholic League president Bill Donohue wrote the following e-mail to New York City Department of Transportation (DOT) spokesman Seth Solomonow:

"I understand that a nativity scene was removed from St. George Ferry Terminal, but it is unclear why. If there is a policy censoring crèches, I would like to see a copy of it. The menorah, which is a religious symbol (as determined by the U.S. Supreme Court), was recently on display at this site, so it is important that equal treatment be afforded Christian symbols.

"In the mid-1990s, I had a dispute with the Long Island Rail Road about this very same issue. I am happy to report that in 1996, Thomas Prendergast, the president of the LIRR, permitted a nativity scene in the waiting room, next to the menorah. Since the MTA has no problem with displaying nativity scenes, it would seem logical that the DOT would have no problem.

"On Thursday, Dec. 16, the Catholic League will erect a life-size nativity scene in Central Park, right near the recent display of a menorah. The City's Parks Department issues us a permit every year.

"I look forward to hearing from you."

Donohue speaks to this issue today:

We know Solomonow got the e-mail—we contacted him yesterday about it and spoke to someone in his office today. But there has been no response. Could it be that the DOT has no principled reason to stiff Christians? Could it be that they cannot justify giving preferential treatment to Jews? Could it be that they cannot defend the indefensible?

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