

HANDS OFF SANTA!

At Brandeis Elementary School in Louisville, Kentucky a teacher asked her students to make a Christmas tree out of paper; it was put on her bulletin board. But when a Jewish teacher said she was offended, she complained to the principal, Shervita West-Jordan, and got her wish. According to a news report, "She, and the teacher who complained, were bothered by the fact that the tree was made up of hands which represented all the students in the class."

Both the teacher and the principal were angry over the words, "Santa's Helpers," that were placed over the tree. "Of course, the children in her classroom that were Indian and Muslim probably did not believe in Santa Claus," Jordan said. They were not "Santa's Helpers" she insisted. She said the tree could stay but the words had to go. She suggested "Holiday Helpers" or "Winter Helpers," because that would "make it a little more inclusive."

Catholic League president Bill Donohue commented as follows:

"Instead of instructing the teacher who was offended on her need to practice tolerance, the principal rewarded her for her intolerance. That's because she's cut from the same cloth. We have entered a new day when those on the public payroll are spending their time worrying if some non-Christian kid's hands helped to make a secular symbol. Their selective interest in inclusion, which just happens to bud every December—and just for Christmas—is nothing but a ruse to disguise their bigotry.

"This smacks of the kind of totalitarian mindset that defines multiculturalism, and which has unfortunately penetrated education from K-graduate school. Instead of telling some children they can't put their hands on a Christmas tree, educators would do well to adopt a hands-off policy and let kids be kids."