

# RELIGIOUS RIGHTS FOR GITMO MUSLIMS?

On June 19, the McClatchy Company, which owns 30 daily newspapers, completed a five-day series on the living conditions of suspected terrorists held at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba; the reporting was based on an eight-month investigation. Needless to say, the series painted a negative picture.

Among the things that troubled McClatchy was “the Americans’ ignorance of Islamic customs and a pattern of interrupting prayers, shaving off prisoners’ beards and searching their copies of the Quran.” Now, this complaint would have struck us as legitimate if it had come from a source that was well known for its sensitivity to religious liberty issues. But this was not the case.

All of the following examples are from McClatchy outlets:

- A few months ago, a *Miami Herald* editorial opined against a proposal that would rid the Florida Constitution of its bigoted Blaine amendment provision barring public monies to religious schools.
- In 2003, in the *Star Telegram* (TX), one of its feature writers feared that if the Supreme Court allowed school vouchers to parochial schools, it would “demolish whatever is left of the wall separating church and state.”
- In April, an editorial in the *Sun-Sentinel* (FL) said that a proposed “I Believe” license plate “thoroughly demolishes the church-state wall.”
- Last year, an editorial in the *Roanoke Times* (VA) cited church and state concerns when it commented “Candidates prostrate themselves before the terrestrial thrones of Christian leaders seeking their blessings.” This same

newspaper ran an editorial in 2006 on “Christmas Bullies” fighting the “War on Christmas.”

So when it comes to Christian concerns, McClatchy shudders over the collapsing church and state wall. But when it comes to suspected Muslim terrorists, it wants to make sure their prayers aren’t interrupted. Never mind that their prayer books—and the prayer rugs they kneel on for that matter—are paid for by the American taxpayers.

McClatchy’s blatant bias against Christianity was only par for the course. For years media outlets have taken a hands off approach when it comes to criticizing Muslims, but they hold no reservations when it comes to denouncing Christianity.