

RELIGIOUS RIGHTS FOR GITMO MUSLIMS?

The McClatchy Company, which owns 30 daily newspapers, just 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. It painted a negative picture.

Catholic League president Bill Donohue took issue with the series:

“Among the things that troubles McClatchy is ‘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 strike us as legitimate if it were coming from a source that was known for its sensitivity to religious liberty issues. But such is not the case. All of the following 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. Five years earlier, in the *Star Telegram*, one of its feature writers feared that if the Supreme Court allowed vouchers, it would ‘demolish whatever is left of the wall separating church and state.’

“In April, an editorial in the *Sun-Sentinel* said that a proposed ‘I Believe’ license plate ‘thoroughly demolishes the church-state wall.’ Last year, an editorial in the *Roanoke Times* cited church and state concerns when it commented that ‘Candidates prostrate themselves before the terrestrial thrones of Christian leaders seeking their blessings.’ This same newspaper ran an editorial in 2006 on ‘Christian Bullies’ fighting the ‘War on Christmas.’ In the same year, the *Buffalo*

News called the Catholic League 'fascist' for fighting back.

"So when it comes to Christians, McClatchy trembles over the collapsing church and state wall. But when it comes to suspected Muslim terrorists, it wants to make sure their prayers aren't uninterrupted. Never mind that their prayer books—and the prayer rugs they kneel on—are paid for by the American taxpayers. Just don't interrupt them!"