

BLOOMBERG, SIKHS, MUSLIMS AND CATHOLICS

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg's duplicity in handling the 9/11 memorial ceremonies scheduled for Sunday:

Last week, Mayor Bloomberg signed into law [click [here](#)] the "Workplace Religious Freedom Act," a bill designed to award new rights to Sikhs and Muslims. But when it comes to showing sensitivity to Catholics, the mayor shows nothing but contempt.

Until Bloomberg signed the law, employers were required to make "reasonable accommodations" for the religious observances of their employees, a condition that could be overridden if the exceptions imposed minimal difficulties in the workplace, or added expenses. The new law raises the bar, mandating that employers prove that such accommodations would constitute a "significant difficulty or expense."

What prompted the new law was pressure from Sikh and Muslim workers employed by the Metropolitan Transit Authority (MTA): they are required, like everyone else, to display an MTA logo on their headgear, which in their case means it must be shown on their religious headwear. Also, Sikhs complained that they cannot work for the New York Police Department unless they remove their turbans. The new law now makes it easier for Sikhs and Muslims to sue the City of New York, claiming religious discrimination.

What is astounding about all of this is the blatant disparity in treatment: when it comes to Catholics—who comprised the vast majority of First Responders—they are told they have no place at the 9/11 memorial ceremonies. And when it comes to priests, as well as the clergy of all faiths, they are also

told to take a hike.

We have one request, Mr. Mayor: start treating Catholics the way you do Sikhs and Muslims. That means repealing the 9/11 gag rule.

Contact Bloomberg's Press Secretary, Stu Loeser: sloeser@cityhall.nyc.gov

PIERS MORGAN BAITs SANTORUM

Last night on CNN, Piers Morgan asked presidential candidate Rick Santorum about his views on gay marriage. Santorum said he favored the traditional understanding of marriage, citing his allegiance to the teachings of the Catholic Church; both men are Catholic. Santorum said he also accepts the Church's teachings on homosexuality, which regards such behavior as sinful. When asked how he would respond if he learned that one of his sons were gay, the former Pennsylvania senator said he would love him "unconditionally."

Morgan then asked, "I guess one of the reasons it's troubling and difficult for people to come out is because of the level of bigotry that's out there against them. I have to say that your views you espoused on this issue are bordering on bigotry, aren't they?"

Catholic League president Bill Donohue responds as follows:

Despite the obvious Catholic-baiting, Rick Santorum was eloquent in his exchange with Piers Morgan. The discussion proved once more the gap that exists between the thoroughly secular values of our cultural elites and the Judeo-Christian ethos shared by most Americans.

Most Americans, like most people on earth, reject gay marriage. Moreover, not a single world religion accepts this alternative lifestyle as being on a par with marriage, traditionally defined. And throughout history, in eastern as well as western civilization, the very idea that two men can get married would have been seen as bizarre, if not delirious. But Piers thinks "we're in a modern world," so things should change. Well, from the flash gangs in Philadelphia to the barbarism in the Middle East, there are plenty of reasons to wonder how modern we are.

If this is what we've come down to—cultural elites branding every person who holds to the traditional understanding of marriage as a bigot—then it's a clear indication that the elites are incapable of rational discourse.

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