



Veep Pick Hailed for Orthodox Morals Ignored By Networks When He Becomes Farrakhan-Praising Pol

Holy Squish! Lieberman Goes Soft

Will the networks take the opportunity today on the occasion of Louis Farrakhan's "Million Family March" to explore vice presidential nominee Joe Lieberman's declaration that he "respects" and would meet with Farrakhan, who's called Judaism a "gutter religion"? Nearly every Lieberman conflict with Jewish groups and religious figures has been ignored.

August 7: Lieberman's first problem with fellow Jews came on CNN's *Larry King Live*. King asked: "Wouldn't most Orthodox Jews be pro-life?" Lieberman dodged: "And like everything else in Judaism, ultimately, it's up to each of us to decide what we think is right." Network coverage? Zero.

August 29: The Anti-Defamation League criticized Lieberman for mixing religion with politics. Network coverage? All the networks covered this. CBS made the complaint its lead story, as Phil Jones turned to the 'conservative Bill Bennett' to vouch for Lieberman.

September 15: Lieberman drew heavy fire from traditionalist Jews for an appearance on the *Imus in the Morning* radio show, simulcast on MSNBC. When Imus asked if there's a ban on "interracial or interreligious marriage," Lieberman said "No. There is no ban whatsoever. Certainly not on interracial. And not on interreligious." Dr. Mandrell Ganchrow, president of the Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations of America (Lieberman's on the group's Board of Directors) was flabbergasted, telling the *Jerusalem Post*: "Given that intermarriage is probably the number one problem affecting the Jews today, I don't know what went through Lieberman's mind when he said that." He said interviewers "should stop asking him about it, and he should stop talking about it." Network coverage? Zero.

September 18: At a \$4.2 million Hollywood fundraiser, Lieberman went soft on DNC donors: "We will nudge you, but will never become censors." Longtime ally Bill Bennett broke ranks with Lieberman, publicly scolding him in the *Wall Street Journal*. Network coverage? Zero.

September 21: Bennett was outraged at a joke told at the fund-raiser by comedy writer Larry David: "And like Bush, I too found Christ in my 40s. He came into my room one night. And I said, 'What, no call? You just pop in?'" Lieberman said, "I winced when I heard it. And on the other hand, that's freedom of expression." Network coverage? Zero.

October 7: Despite the protests of rabbinical groups about attending a gay-agenda fundraiser on the eve of Yom Kippur, Lieberman spoke at the annual Human Rights Campaign fundraising dinner. AP reported Lieberman "promised that a Gore administration would give gay men and lesbians federal civil rights protections for the first time." Network coverage? Zero.

While all the networks have ignored the Lieberman-Farrakhan controversy, NBC's Tim Russert put Farrakhan on *Meet the Press* yesterday. Russert asked, "Could you not help unify the country if you stood up tomorrow at the Million Family March and say, 'I regret suggesting that Jews control blacks and control black athletes and control black sports figures and black politicians?'" Farrakhan said: "I cannot, Mr. Russert." The networks should ask: can Lieberman "respect" that? — *Tim Graham*

The Fascinating Story We Ignore

"I think based upon Mr. Farrakhan's comments about Jewish Americans, and Mr. Lieberman's role as vice presidential nominee and observant Jew, it is fascinating as to why he suggested he might be willing to meet with Mr. Farrakhan. I think it's a very legitimate form of inquiry...and we'll continue to pursue it." — NBC's Tim Russert on C-SPAN's *Washington Journal* Friday.

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