

Stop the Hate
(Employment Discrimination blog post)

by Brian Mahany

Several days ago, on the anniversary of 9.11, a pastor in Florida threatened to burn a Quran. In today's news, France has banned women from wearing burqas. These events attracted international media attention and resulted in violent protests around the world. What has not been reported is the steady rise of anti-Muslim complaints filed with the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. In just 5 years, the number of complaints has more than doubled.

In 2004, the EEOC received 697 complaints alleging anti-Muslim bias. Last year? 1,490. A record high. In fact there were more complaints filed last year than in 2002, the year after the 9.11 tragedy.

The increased EEOC filings reflects the increasing intolerance towards Muslims. Mary Jo O'Neill, spokesperson for the EEOC, was more blunt. "There is a hatred, an open hatred, and a lack of tolerance of people who are Muslim," she said.

In a press release last week, the EEOC announced it was bringing charges against JBS USA, a Colorado meat packer. In a particularly disturbing case, the federal officials say that JBS managers did nothing when Muslim workers had blood and meat thrown at them by co-workers and supervisors. Company restrooms has Anti-Muslim graffiti including "Fuck Mohammed" written on walls. Muslim workers were denied a break to pray and were fired when requesting a change of time of their evening break during the Islamic holy celebration of Ramadan. Colorado and Nebraska authorities joined in the complaint against the company.

Unfortunately, this type of hatred is increasing. Employers have a legal duty to keep that hatred out of the work place. Having supervisors join in the religious taunts, as the complaint alleges, certainly gives rise to a hostile work environment.

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Brian Mahany and the law firm of Mahany & Ertl represent workers who suffer from discrimination or sexual harassment. Discrimination based on race, religion, national origin or ethnicity is illegal. From our office in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, our employment discrimination lawyers represent workers anywhere in Wisconsin. In select cases, we also represent workers in other states.

If you were fired, disciplined, denied a promotion or not hired because of any type of discrimination, contact Brian Mahany directly at (414) 704-6731 or brian@mahanylaw.com.