

**THE BLOG**

Romney Says Nothing; Other Candidates Demand Equal Time

By Marty Kaplan

12/06/2007 10:54 am ET | Updated May 25, 2011

In the wake of Republican presidential candidate Mitt Romney's highly-anticipated and widely-covered speech not about the tenets of his Mormon faith, the campaigns of several other White House hopefuls immediately demanded equal time from the networks.

A spokesperson for Rudy Giuliani asked for an hour of prime time to enable him not to tell the American people why a lying sleazebag should be their president. Several prominent Mike Huckabee supporters have called on Oprah Winfrey to give him an extended opportunity not to explain why he pushed for the release of a convicted rapist who went on to kill at least one other woman.

Democrats also joined the fray. Senator Hillary Clinton's campaign said she was planning a major speech which will not be about the prospect of having Terry McAuliffe in Americans' faces for another four years. Senator Barack Obama said that if CNN, Fox and MSNBC would promise live coverage of his upcoming address, he would promise to not explain why finding common ground with Mitch McConnell and John Boehner is a good idea.

Political analysts were sharply divided about the wisdom of the rush to not meet rhetorical expectations. On the one hand, *Time* columnist Joe Klein praised Romney, saying that "not playing the Moroni card was the smartest way to play the Jesus card." But on the other hand, Newsweek columnist Karl Rove said that the failure of Romney's speech to live up to its "JFK moment" billing was proof that "Democrats hate America."

Asked for his reaction to the hat-tips that Romney gave in his speech to Muslims and Jews, the Reverend James Dobson commented, "Look. I don't care who he panders to. Anyone who says that secularists, doubters, atheists, agnostics, and so-called 'spiritual seekers' are the Anti-Christ is still a friend of Jesus in my book."

Spokepersons for People for the American Way, People for the Separation of Church and State, and the American Civil Liberties Union were not contacted for this article.

Follow Marty Kaplan on Twitter: www.twitter.com/martykaplan