

# IS OBAMA ANTI-CHRISTMAS?

President Obama made the following remarks in a recent NPR interview:

"I've had to live through controversies like the notion that I was trying to kill Christmas. Right? Well, where'd that come from? Well, I bet, you know, well, he said Happy Holidays instead of Merry Christmas. So, that, you know, that must be evidence of him either not being a Christian or not caring about Christmas. It—it sounds funny now, but you'll have entire debates in conservative circles around that."

Bill Donohue comments as follows:

Well, you know, there is evidence of Obama not caring about Christmas, and it didn't emanate from conservative circles. Here it is.

The cover story of the July 23, 2008 edition of *People* magazine featured a picture of Barack and Michelle Obama, and their two daughters, Malia, 10, and Sasha, 7. *People* reported that "The kids receive no birthday or Christmas presents from Mom and Dad, who spend 'hundreds' on birthday slumber parties and, as Barack puts it, 'want to teach some limits.'"

On December 7, 2009, weeks before the Obamas celebrated their first Christmas in the White House, I said in a news release, "If the Obamas want to deprive their children of celebrating Christmas, that is their business. It is the business of the public to hold them accountable for the way they celebrate Christmas in the White House."

What I was referring to was a December 7, 2009 news story in the *New York Times* by Sheryl Gay Stolberg. She wrote, "When former social secretaries gave a luncheon to welcome Ms. [Desirée] Rogers earlier this year, one participant said, she surprised them by suggesting the Obamas were planning a 'non-

religious Christmas....”

“The lunch conversation inevitably turned to whether the White House would display its crèche, customarily placed in a prominent spot in the East Room,” Stolberg wrote. “Ms. Rogers, this participant said, replied that the Obamas did not intend to put the manger scene on display—a remark that drew an audible gasp from the tight-knit social secretary sisterhood. (A White House official confirmed that there had been internal discussions about making Christmas more inclusive and whether to display the crèche.)”

The person whom the Obamas chose to oversee Christmas decorations in 2009 was Simon Doonan, the head of creative services for Barneys in New York. A website, [biggovernment.com](http://biggovernment.com), posted pictures of some of the Christmas tree ornaments. They featured such religious figures as Mao Zedong, a genocidal maniac, and various drag queens. Fox News did a story on this issue as well; it aired December 22, 2009.

None of this was a mistake. The Obamas chose Doonan because of his stellar Christmas reputation.

I had a showdown with Doonan in 1994 when I protested the store’s “Hello Kitty Nativity Scene.” It was more than a spoof of the traditional nativity scene—it showed a kitten Virgin Mary posed with her legs spread wearing an undergarment that left six nipples in evidence.

On December 9, 1994, after someone called the Catholic League office to complain, I personally confronted store officials at the 61st Street and Madison Avenue store: I told them they had 45 minutes to remove the offensive crèche. They didn’t budge. Then I hit the air waves. Within hours, it was removed. Doonan called me saying he was surprised by the reaction of New Yorkers. I quickly brought him up to speed, explaining that Catholics were no longer going to tolerate this kind of intolerance.

Obama says conservatives lie when they say he is uncaring about Christmas. Yet he and his wife refuse to give their children Christmas presents; they gave serious consideration to censoring a White House crèche; they hired a man to be in charge of Christmas decorations who is known for trashing Christmas; and they displayed Christmas tree ornaments in the White House featuring pictures of mass murderers and kinky men.

Wonder who fed the idea that Obama is not exactly Christmas-friendly?