

# CHRISTMAS FOES ON THE RUN; PUSHBACK IS EVIDENT

There was a time when the Christmas haters were on the offensive, but now the pushback is in full gear. Our side is showing increasing resolve, and becoming more creative, even when we lose a legal battle.

The Catholic League threw down the gauntlet when Oregon's Hillsboro School District censored Santa—not just Jesus—from any public display. Employees were told not to decorate their doors with religious figures or symbols, even going so far as to ban Santa.

The school district said it was responding to complaints made over the years by school employees saying that Christmas decorations made them feel “uncomfortable.” We decided it was time to make these school officials feel “uncomfortable.”

We bombarded the Portland media with a news release by Bill Donohue that told it like it is. “After telling employees to ‘refrain’ from using Santa to decorate their doors—in the name of being ‘respectful and sensitive to diverse perspectives and beliefs’—school officials then lied to the community, saying, ‘We [are] NOT banning Santa.’ But that is exactly what they did.”

It didn't take long before Donohue received an apology from the Hillsboro School District, saying it was all a misunderstanding. Santa was back, and “Christmas-related decorations” were allowed to be displayed.

Another victory was notched when a Texas judge overruled a school district that had banned a poster depicting a scene from “A Charlie Brown Christmas.” The Christmas haters said it had a Christian message, and had to be censored.

A Christmas hater in Knightstown, Indiana, filed a federal lawsuit to get town officials to remove a cross from atop their Christmas tree. The victory was marred when townspeople responded by putting crosses everywhere—they adorned businesses, yards, parks—places where crosses were never seen.

The most active Christmas haters this season were the ACLU, Freedom from Religion Foundation (FFRF), American Atheists, and the Satanic Temple. The ACLU filed suit over religious symbols on public property; FFRF erected anti-Christmas displays next to nativity scenes; American Atheists paid for billboards mocking Christmas; and the Satanists placed their symbols on public grounds.

“Trees of Diversity” were exhibited in parts of Utah, Marquette University would not allow a Christmas tree event—it held an “Igniting Hope” tree ceremony—and a “Winter Concert” in Mesa, Arizona censored the singing of “Silent Night.”

These examples show that the Christmas wars are far from over. But compared to where we were a decade ago, there are encouraging signs. The nation is increasingly fed up with political correctness, and that is a very good thing.

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## **BBC CREDITS PIUS XII**

The BBC has admitted that it was wrong to accuse Pope Pius XII of remaining “silent” during the Holocaust. The British media giant pivoted as a result of an internal probe of the pope’s role.

The revised position came in response to strong criticism of a

BBC report last July that accused the pope of doing nothing while Jews were being murdered by Hitler. Two prominent men, Lord Alton and Father Leo Chamberlain, registered an official complaint; it was the visit by Pope Francis to Auschwitz that occasioned the negative story.

The BBC's editorial complaint unit examined the response by Pope Pius XII to Nazi aggression and concluded that the July story "did not give due weight to public statements by successive popes or the efforts made on instructions of Pius XII to rescue Jews from Nazi persecution, and perpetuated a view which is at odds with the balance of evidence."

In 1999, a British author, John Cornwell, went beyond the myth that Pius XII was inactive during the Holocaust: he branded him "Hitler's Pope." The book was seriously flawed, though it was received with much fanfare. Years later, Cornwell admitted that he was wrong in his assessment, but, predictably, it was never trumpeted by historians and the media the way his initial conclusion was.

Kudos to the BBC for admitting it was wrong about Pope Pius XII. Many others, both at home and abroad, need to follow suit.

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# **TRUMP WILL BE RELIGION-FRIENDLY**

**From The President's Desk**

**William A. Donohue**

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None of the three biggest vote getters in the primaries—Donald Trump, Hillary Clinton, and Bernie Sanders—are known for their deeply rooted religious convictions. Trump is Presbyterian and Clinton is a Methodist, and like many mainline Protestants, they are religion-lite; Sanders is an admitted secularist. What makes Trump different from Clinton and Sanders is his religion-friendly posture, something the faithful from every religious community can welcome.

There are certain advantages to being religion-lite and religion-friendly at the same time. Having no strong personal stake in the conflict between religious liberty and the rights embroiled in abortion, marriage, education, housing, and healthcare, there is good reason to believe that Trump can be counted on to be religion-friendly.

Moreover, he won 52 percent of the Catholic vote (he did much better among practicing Catholics) and 81 percent of the evangelical vote. He is not likely to let his constituents down.

Trump is a businessman, not a culture warrior. As such, he was never seriously engaged in any of the fights that animate those of a more orthodox religious stripe. Take abortion. On October 24, 1999, Trump was asked by Tim Russert on “Meet the Press” if his support for abortion rights would extend to a defense of partial-birth abortion. “I’m very pro-choice,” Trump said, adding that he would oppose a ban on partial-birth abortion.

Within no time, Trump reversed himself. “After the show,” he said, “I consulted with two doctors I respect and, upon learning more about this procedure, I have concluded that I would indeed support a ban.” His remark was published three months later in his book, *The America We Deserve*. This was the beginning of his evolution on this subject.

Trump has consistently said that he will appoint pro-life

judges to the federal bench, and there is no reason to disbelieve him. Indeed, the month before the election he pledged to Catholics that he will work with us, "helping the ongoing growth of the pro-life cause."

On the collision between gay rights and religious liberty, Trump is less specific. He is welcoming to the gay community, assuring them, properly so, that he will not tolerate bullying, but he is also choosing cabinet members that are religion-friendly.

For example, Sen. Jeff Sessions (attorney general), Betsy DeVos (education), Rep. Tom Price (health and human services), and Ben Carson (housing and urban development), are all known for refusing to subordinate religious liberty to the gay rights agenda.

There is one more important consideration. To the extent that Trump makes appointing pro-life judges a priority, he is likely to select men and women who will honor our right to religious liberty; competing rights will not be eviscerated, but they will not eclipse our First Amendment right.

Trump is particularly good on school choice. His choice of Betsy DeVos as education secretary proves his commitment to academic excellence and religious liberty. It would be hard to find someone with a more stellar record of supporting school choice than her. That she is dedicated to including religious schools in her effort is indisputable. Indeed, she played a prominent role in helping Mike Pence succeed with a voucher plan in Indiana that was decidedly religion-friendly.

Ben Carson is a decent man with deep religious roots. As the new Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, he will be positioned to advance the cause of religious liberty. He can be expected to ensure that faith-based programs that are tied to the department's block grants are not burdened with contrived church-and-state regulations. This will put a stop

to the kinds of machinations sponsored by the Obama team.

In fact, the Obama administration's war on religious liberty, especially its attack on Catholic institutions, is coming to an end. The draconian Health and Human Services mandate will be dismantled by Secretary Price. Trump said as much when he noted that Hillary Clinton was aligned against the Little Sisters of the Poor. "That is a hostility to religious liberty you will never see in a Trump administration," he said.

The religious rights of men and women in the armed services will also spike under Trump. We know this not simply by citing what he says, but by reading what his adversaries are saying about him. Mikey Weinstein, who heads the Military Religion Freedom Foundation, is the most vociferous enemy of religious liberty in the military, and he is up in arms over Trump. That is a very good sign.

President Ronald Reagan was not known to be a particularly religious man, yet he was one of the most religion-friendly presidents we've had in recent memory. He was the first to establish formal diplomatic relations with the Holy See, and he was a champion of the pro-life cause.

All indications are that Trump will be more like Reagan, which is a good omen. When he is attacked for standing up for religious liberty—and he will be—it will be up to us to defend him. We plan to do so with vigor.

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## **SCHOOL CHOICE READY TO ROLL**

***Bill Donohue***

The public school establishment had better fasten its

seatbelts—the school choice movement is ready to roll. Donald Trump is committed to school reform and so are an increasing number of governors.

Our new president will have as his new Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos, a strong school choice proponent. She championed the Indiana voucher program launched by Governor Mike Pence, our new vice president. Look for her to hit the ground running.

It is natural to fear competition—in any walk of life—which is why those at the top spend so much time looking in their rear view mirror. This is particularly the case when those in first place owe their position to laws and regulations that insulate them from competition. But the economic success of America is not due to monopolies and oligopolies; rather, it is due to the marketplace.

The same is true of education. The public schools have long been protected from competition by Democrats, virtually all of whom receive funding from the teachers unions. While there are many excellent public schools, there are serious problems deeply embedded in the system: the worst teachers are constantly defended—it is almost impossible to get rid of them—and the schools are top-heavy with unproductive, indeed meddling, administrators.

Only competition will change the status quo. The good news is that the need for change is the very issue that got Trump elected. Now is the time to strike.

There is plenty of evidence that the school choice movement is scaring the daylights out of the public school community. In December, there was a lengthy piece in *Mother Jones*, a left-wing magazine, on Pence's voucher program. It floated many myths that need to be debunked, among them being the idea that school choice is a failure.

The article, authored by Stephanie Mencimer, claims that a

study by researchers at the University of Notre Dame found that in the first three years of the Indiana voucher program, students who left the public schools for a voucher school saw their math scores decline and English scores stay flat (as compared to students who remained in public schools).

To begin with, the math decline extended to the first two years, not three. More important, the study was incomplete: it was not finished and did not use the most rigorous tests available. It must also be noted that when students transfer to private schools, their scores often do not improve immediately; after an initial period of adjustment, they more often do.

“Perhaps not surprisingly,” Mencimer writes, “the kids in these schools [those who transferred to private schools] aren’t performing very well on the state’s standardized tests.” Nonsense.

In 2014, 90.3 percent of the public school students in Indiana passed the reading test; 96.9 percent of those in private schools did. In 2015, 86.8 percent of public school students passed this exam; 95.6 percent of the private school students did.

Over the past few decades, almost every study on school choice programs has found that they succeed: they typically record a marked increase in the academic performance of students who have transferred to a private school. That is what worries the public school establishment: the data are not on their side. If they were, they would not be protesting school choice initiatives.

Another argument against school choice made by Mencimer is that monies spent on school vouchers come at “the expense” of public schools. In fact, as three Harvard studies confirm, public schools benefit when such programs are instituted.

Caroline Hoxby of Harvard’s Department of Education found that



when public schools must compete with private schools and charter schools for funding, students in public and non-public schools do better. This is a win-win.

In Milwaukee, for example, Hoxby found “dramatic productivity improvements” in the public schools when school vouchers went into effect. She also noted a “burst of productivity growth” in Michigan public schools “once charter school competition reached a critical level”; there were “broadly similar” results in Arizona.

The Manhattan Institute, the most respected urban think-tank in the nation, studied how students in low-performing Florida schools did when faced with competition from students in voucher schools. They found that it was precisely in those schools—the struggling ones—where the most improvement was notched (a jump of 9.3 percent on math tests and 10.1 percent on reading). Most telling, low-performing schools that were not threatened with competition by vouchers failed to make similar gains in state testing.

The most recent study on school choice was published in October 2016 by Martin F. Lueken of EdChoice. His focus was not vouchers, but tax-credit scholarships. This initiative allows taxpayers to receive full or partial tax credits when they donate to nonprofits that provide students with private school scholarships. This program is available to individuals and businesses, and bypasses any direct subsidy to private schools.

According to Lueken, “these programs generated between \$1.7 billion and \$3.4 billion in taxpayer savings through the 2013-2014 school year. That is equivalent to up to \$3,000 per scholarship student.” Look for these initiatives to grow. They sidestep some traditional school choice hurdles while saving the taxpayers a bundle. It also makes it harder for the enemies of school choice to make their case.

Mencimer is also fretting over the alleged “windfall for religious schools” that school vouchers offer. *“Creationists, Catholics and a madrasa all received taxpayer funding,”* she emphatically said. Translated that means that bible-thumping evangelicals, parochial-minded Catholics, and machete-wielding Muslims stand to benefit.

Regarding the latter, Mencimer is jittery. She tells us that “a madrasa, an Islamic religious school,” was recently home to a man who tried to join ISIS. Now it is not every day that a so-called progressive will admit to being fearful of a madrasa. However, when it suits their case—trying to frighten the rest of us—they are not above playing the Islamists card.

There is also something else going on here, and it bodes well for the future. Those who share Mencimer’s vision are no strangers to bashing evangelicals and traditional Catholics—they do so routinely—but their bigotry usually does not extend to Muslims. This is a good sign. Not to be misunderstood, it means that progressives fear an alliance among these three groups, one that could prove to be formidable. Orthodox Jews and Mormons are also likely allies.

“Almost every single one of these voucher schools is religious,” Mencimer writes. She never explains why almost all parents who participate in school choice programs elect to send their children to the religious school of their choice. Nor does she explain why the Obamas, the Kennedys, and the like, always send their kids to private schools, while denying school choice to the disadvantaged.

Radical secularists, led by the ACLU, have been suing state laws for decades trying to kill school choice programs. But they are on the wrong side of history. In 2013, as even Mencimer admits, the Indiana Supreme Court ruled that the voucher program passed constitutional muster, arguing that public funds went to students, not the schools.

Even more encouraging is what is happening in Nevada. In September, the state Supreme Court upheld the state's education savings accounts, a program that allows parents who withdraw their children from public schools to use state funds to pay for private school tuition and attendant services. It is the nation's first universal school choice program, one that is likely to be championed by the Trump administration. The ACLU lost in its effort to strike down this initiative as unconstitutional.

It is because these church-and-state objections are not working that so many progressives have decided to choose a different tactic: they are attempting to intimidate the incoming Secretary of Education, rallying the teachers unions against her.

Already, the atheists at Freedom from Religion Foundation are sounding the alarms. They are accusing DeVos of pushing a "theocratic agenda to destroy public, secular education." Barry Lynn, executive director of Americans United for Separation of Church and State, says she is an "insult to public education." And the reliably worried Huffington Post is warning the public about her "conservative Christian worldview."

Politico, a prominent website, did some scratching around and found that in 2001 DeVos said she wanted to promote school choice as a way to "advance God's Kingdom." Look for some inquiring senator to question her about this when the hearings begin. Had she said her quest was to "retard God's Kingdom," those who are now protesting her nomination would be cheering.

DeVos is no extremist, which is why she has won the plaudits of Father Robert Sirico of the Acton Institute. What she, and her husband, Dick, preach is common sense. "We both believe that competition and choices make everyone better and that ultimately if the system that prevails in the United States today had more competition...that all of the schools would be

better as a result.” Amen.

There is another strength to private schools that people like Mencimer never address—safety. When I taught in Spanish Harlem in the 1970s, I quickly learned that the number one reason why parents (mostly mothers) sent their children to St. Lucy’s was safety: they knew their children would not be assaulted.

Across the street from where I taught was a public school. The violence was so bad that it had to be shut down. I sometimes accompanied my students home to protect them from gangs, and occasionally had to confront thugs—taking weapons away from them—who threatened my kids. But none of these incidents took place at St. Lucy’s.

That safety matters has been documented by Paul Peterson and David Campbell of Harvard. They did an important study on the effects of 40,000 scholarships awarded to low-income families; the children were sent to the school of their choice. What they found, beyond academic improvement, was how “very satisfied” parents were with their school’s “safety, discipline, and values.”

Trump may be a billionaire but he gets it on this point. Last July, at the Republican National Convention, he said, “We will rescue kids from failing schools by helping their parents send them to a safe school of their choice.” Yes, the schools must be safe, not just academically excellent.

How anyone can argue against school choice at this point is astounding. In 2010, Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg donated \$100 million to Newark’s public schools; it was matched with another \$100 million. It was a monumental failure—all \$200 million down the toilet. Most of the money went to the unions, consultants, and other vultures. What did he expect?

In 2014, New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio refused to support school choice, instead electing to give \$839 million to improve failing public schools. The results are just in: it,

too, was a monumental failure. Of the 94 schools that began the program, three met all of their targets.

Trump's support for school choice couldn't have come at a better time.

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## **MICROSOFT'S LGBT CHRISTMAS AD**

Ask any schoolboy what the meaning of Christmas is, and he will say it celebrates the birth of Jesus. Ask the ideologues at Microsoft, and they will say it means whatever their politics dictate. This past year it represented an opportunity to exploit Christmas by pushing the LGBT agenda.

Microsoft released a TV ad, "Art of Harmony," that was laden with Christmas overtones, yet absent of Christian content. "This holiday season we brought together a group of people who are making a difference in the world," the ad said. It did not say what holiday was being observed, though we have a hunch it wasn't Kwanzaa; the ad ended by showing a Christmas tree in the background.

As it turns out, this was no ordinary "group of people." Included was Jazz Jennings, described by Microsoft as "the youngest person to publicly identify herself as transgender, now a national role-model and activist for transgender youth." No doubt she is—her agents have seen to that. [Little Jazz was not mentioned by name but she was seen speaking before the Human Rights Campaign, a pro-gay and anti-religion organization.]

Zea Bowling also made the cut. Zea was described as "a 7-year

old first grader who stood firm in the face of hate during a celebration of the Supreme Court ruling that legalized same-sex marriage.” Such courage for a kid fresh off her tricycle. And such brains: she may not know how to tell time, but she sure knows who the haters are—those who believe marriage is between a man and a woman.

In a scene where a rainbow flag was waved, we received our marching orders: “People should let people be whoever they want to be.” Were Jazz and Zea’s parents listening?

No one, of course, was shown celebrating Christmas. Nor were there any kids shown standing up to corporate bullies who rip off the Christmas season to make cheap political points.

Anyone who thinks this isn’t a political statement needs to read what the ad agency that created it had to say. “This year has been challenging for many and much of what we hear in the news can be negative. Microsoft wanted to lift people up and remind them that ordinary people can make a difference. The message focuses on the spirit of the holidays, people coming together and celebrating what is good and right with the world—what unites us, instead of what divides us.”

Bill Donohue guessed this was open to interpretation, so he offered his:

Much of what I heard in the news was indeed negative. Hillary’s criminal behavior, her lying, her scheming, and her dancing to Jay Z’s “f\*\*king n\*\*\*ers” lyrics did not make me happy. But the ordinary people, those adorable “deplorables,” did put a smile on my face, proving that even they can make a difference.

Yes, we do need to “celebrate what is good and right with the world,” which is precisely why so many will be dancing in the streets come January 20. It’s on a Friday, so it’s a sure bet the champagne will be flowing. Keep the Advil handy.

If the bi-coastal elites at Microsoft really believe in diversity, then let them have their LGBT celebrations in June during gay pride month, and leave December to Christians.

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## **“BAD SANTA 2” IS A CULTURAL MARKER**

It's a hard call which is worse: “Bad Santa 2” or its juvenile fans. By any measure, the movie, and its reception in many quarters, is proof positive that American culture is witnessing a race to the bottom.

When the first “Bad Santa” was released in 2003, we described Santa as a “chain-smoking, drunken, foul-mouthed, suicidal, sexual predator. He is shown soiling himself in Santa's chair, vomiting in alleys, having sex with a woman bartender in a car, and performing anal sex on a huge woman in a dressing room.”

The sequel is just as immature. The script was written by Johnny Rosenthal and Shauna Cross, two geniuses who never outgrew their adolescence—or learned how to write. Don't take our word for it.

Nick Schager, writing for *The Playlist*, noted the “narrative purposelessness” of the film. Similarly, Colin Covert of the *Chicago Tribune* said “the plot is so muddled it seems to have been stitched together from the dregs of multiple ditched drafts.”

But to some critics, the banality of the script matters less

than fantasizing how normal people might react to this crud at Christmastime.

The *Hollywood Reporter* liked the movie because it is “Raunchy, rude and politically incorrect.” The latter observation, which was made by many reviewers, is factually incorrect: it is *politically correct* to trash Christian teaching, values, symbols, and holidays. It is politically incorrect to trash Judaism or Islam, which is why it is rarely done.

Juliana Roman of movieweb.com was happy that “Bad Santa 2 is as gloriously raunchy as the original. Bravo to the filmmakers for having the guts to make it just as ribald and patently offensive.” Sorry, Juliana, it takes no guts in Hollywood to offend Christians, especially during Christmastime. Once Hollywood makes a movie doing to the LGBTQ community what it does to Christians—it should be released during Gay Pride Month—then Tinseltown can be heralded for its courage.

“‘Bad Santa 2’ is vulgar, nasty and offensive, but it has flawed aspects also.” It would be hard to beat this inane comment, courtesy of Kyle Smith of the *New York Post*. The movie is not flawed because it is vulgar, nasty and offensive, he said, but for other reasons. Evidently, the gutter talk is its only saving grace.

It would be great if Jesse Watters of Fox News interviewed moviegoers as they exited the theater. Imagine what kind of people find this trash humorous!

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## SHOPPERS BEWARE OF MACY’S SEX



# POLICY

If you shop at Macy's, please beware that your daughters and nieces may run into a strange looking man dressed as a woman in the store's bathrooms and fitting rooms. More important, you should know that they have no rights.

Indeed, a senior store detective, Javier Chavez, was fired from his job at a Macy's store in Queens, New York, simply because he responded to a complaint by a woman and her daughter that a man dressed as a woman was in the women's restroom. It's actually worse than this: He agreed to abide by Macy's sex identity policy—if a man says he is a woman, he must be treated as such—yet because he expressed his religious misgivings (he is Catholic), he was fired anyway.

The Macy's Thought Police have given much consideration to the rights of men who claim to be a woman. Here is their policy:

- ***Restrooms & Fitting Rooms.*** Privacy in restrooms and fitting rooms is of foremost concern in all situations, regardless of an individual's gender identity or gender expression. Sex-segregated facilities (such as restrooms and fitting rooms that are designed for use by women and men separately) exist in most locations. In some locations there may be unisex facilities that are intended for use by either sex, such as single occupancy restrooms or family restrooms.

Generally, sex-segregated facilities are for use by adults and teens of the identified gender (and by small children of either gender who are accompanied by an adult). Transgender persons identify with a physical sex that is different than their physically manifested sex at birth. Therefore, **transgender persons may use the restroom or fitting room that is consistent with their gender identity/presentation, that makes them feel least vulnerable, and that they believe will**

**result in the least interest and notice from others.** (Their emphasis.)

If an associate or customer expresses extreme discomfort with the possibility of meeting a transgender person in a restroom, the associate or customer expressing discomfort should be directed to a unisex restroom (if available).

Similarly, if an associate or a customer expresses discomfort with the possibility of meeting a transgender person in a fitting room, the associate or customer expressing the discomfort should be given information regarding the location of other fitting rooms in the store and/or should be advised that he or she can purchase the item, try it on at home and return it if needed.

If an associate is asked the location of a restroom and is unsure of the person's gender, the associate will either (i) provide information regarding the location of a unisex restroom (if available and nearby), or (ii) provide information regarding the location of a nearby restroom for men and a nearby restroom for women. The associate should not assume the question relates to a restroom for a specific gender unless the request is phrased that way.

- ***Photo Identification.*** If a customer presents photo identification that resembles the customer but does not represent the gender the customer presents, and if the associate believes the customer may be a transgender person, the associate will accept the document at face value, as long as the address is current and the name is correct for the account. The associate will not discuss the customer's transgender status with anyone.
- ***Names & Pronouns.*** It is important associates use the appropriate pronoun (him/her, she/he) and title (Mr./Ms, Sir/Ma'am) when addressing a transgender person. The pronoun and title must relate to the person's gender

identity/expression. Further, a transgender person may elect to use a preferred name that is consistent with his/her gender identity. Associates must be respectful and adhere to this choice at all times.

Prospective customers should also know that Macy's instructs its employees to resist "the impulse to judge the person by his/her appearances." That's right. If a person has a beard, he may be a woman. How can this be? We need to understand that "sex and gender are not the rigid categories that we may assume them to be."

They are anything but rigid at Macy's. So if a man says he is a woman—or a duck for that matter—he/she/it is exactly that.

Of course, you can bypass this insanity altogether by bypassing Macy's.

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## **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 responded 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?

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# “HAMILTON” ACTOR SHOWS HIS REAL COLORS

Recently, Brandon Victor Dixon, the actor who plays Aaron Burr in the musical, “Hamilton,” scolded Vice-President Elect Mike Pence on the need to “uphold our American values and to work on behalf of all of us.” He cited respect for diversity as one of those key values.

Dixon is a phony: he has no moral ground to stand on. This is what he tweeted on St. Patrick’s Day 2012: “St. Patty’s day weekend is like Christmas for black dudes who like white chicks. Happy holidays boys.”

We guess Irish Catholics can take solace in the fact that Dixon didn’t refer to these “white chicks” as “ho’s”—that’s what he calls black women.

Looks like the list of persons Dixon needs to apologize to is growing.

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## OBAMA IS “OUR MOST CATHOLIC OF PRESIDENTS”

*The following article written by Bill Donohue was recently published by CNSNews.com.*

On the December 15 edition of the “Axe Files” podcast, White House Chief of Staff Denis McDonough told David Axelrod the following about President Barack Obama. “I think this is the—our most Catholic of presidents. And I mean that by capital C Catholic, in what I see and what he does every day.

It's not to say that he's—does everything entirely consistent with Catholic teaching. That's not the idea.”

We'll, yes that is the idea. When someone says that Obama is “our most Catholic of presidents,” surely the record should speak for itself. Here are some of Obama's views and policies that McDonough needs to explain.

- In 2003, when Obama was an Illinois state senator, he led the fight to oppose a bill that would have mandated health care for a baby who survived an abortion, and he did so *even after the bill explicitly said it would not imperil Roe v. Wade*. The Catholic Church does not support infanticide.
- Before he was elected in 2008, he said he would sign a bill, the Freedom of Choice Act, that would have forced Catholic hospitals to perform abortions.
- One of the first executive orders Obama signed after being sworn in on January 20, 2009 was to overturn the Mexico City Policy that denied federal funding of private organizations that perform and promote abortions abroad.
- On January 29, 2009, Obama said he looked forward to restoring U.S. aid to the U.N. Population Fund that pays for abortion.
- Obama supports partial-birth abortion, the procedure where a baby who is 80 percent born has his head pierced with a scissors.
- In 2008, Obama said the biggest mistake he ever made was to side with the parents of Terry Schiavo: they petitioned a federal court to allow their daughter food and medicine needed to live. Obama reversed himself, thus siding with those who said, just “let her die.”
- Obama sent his two daughters to private schools but opposed every school choice initiative that would allow poor parents to escape the public schools by enrolling in a private or parochial school.

- Obama opposed the Defense of Marriage Act signed by President Bill Clinton that allowed the states to determine what defines marriage, thus undercutting the traditional definition.
- Obama supports same-sex marriage.
- Obama opposes a display of the Ten Commandments on public property.
- Obama supports the intentional killing of embryos.
- Obama sought to appoint Dawn Johnsen to head the Office of Legal Counsel. She cut her teeth as a lawyer working with the ACLU in the late 1980s trying to take away the tax exempt status of the Catholic Church.
- Obama appointed Harry Knox to his Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnership program. He has a record of hate speech against the pope.
- Obama was the first president to welcome atheist leaders to the White House, some of whom are Catholic bashers.
- When Obama spoke at Georgetown University in April 2009, his staff insisted that all religious symbols in the room where he was to speak had to be covered with a drape.
- Obama's Health and Human Services mandate, still pushed by the administration, says that Catholic institutions that hire and serve non-Catholics are no longer Catholic, and are therefore subject to government oversight. This includes the Little Sisters of the Poor.
- Obama fought U.S. bishops for years—and is doing so now—trying to force Catholic non-profits to pay for abortion-inducing drugs, contraception, and sterilization in their healthcare plans.
- Obama made sure that no grants went to Catholic programs that provide relief to the victims of human trafficking—even though the grant proposals received high scores from independent reviewers—simply because the Church opposes abortion.

I could go on, but the point is clear: If Obama is the “most



Catholic of presidents," then why has he spent the last eight years sticking it to Catholics and the Catholic Church?