

**WE WISH YOU A MERRY MULTICULTURAL,  
INOFFENSIVE, SENSITIVE-TO-THE-DEMANDS-OF-  
DIVERSITY, SECULAR SEASONAL HOLIDAY**

**By Don Feder**

**December 23, 2009**

Yes, Virginia, there really is a war on Christmas, despite feeble attempts of the left to convince us that the controversy was concocted by Bill O'Reilly, FOX News and the dreaded Christian right.

That the war is real is incontrovertible. More interesting is the why.

An estimated 96% of Americans celebrate Christmas – not Kwanza, winter solstice, Eid or Buddah's Birthday.

According to a November Rasmussen poll, when shopping, 72% of Americans prefer the salutation "Merry Christmas" to "Happy Holidays," versus 22% who favor the generic greeting. The Christmas camp (doubtless spurred by sinister, theocratic impulses) gained 4 percentage points from last year.

In a Rasmussen survey released on December 10, 76% of adults said it's okay to display religious symbols, like Nativity scenes and menorahs, in public settings (up 2 points from 2008). A paltry 11% disagree. Moreover, 83% believe public schools should celebrate religious holidays.

The foregoing hasn't made a dent in the militantly secular mindset.

Here are a few of the skirmishes in the 2009 War on Christmas:

- Michelle Zundel, principal of the Ashland, Ore. Elementary School (who had already exiled Christmas trees and Santa Claus), ordered the removal of the school's "holiday giving tree" – possibly for fear that it might cause some to wonder which holiday is connected with giving and trees. The non-inclusive tree was replaced by two snowmen. Zundel explained that a snowman is "created by children who play in the snow (*for this she needed a PhD.?*), and so it doesn't have

a particular religious bent” – unless, it’s wearing a yarmulke or carrying a cross.

- Kentucky Governor Steve Beshear decreed that the decorated tree on the lawn of the state capitol should henceforth and forever more be known as a “holiday tree” (which wouldn’t pass muster in Ashland Ore.). Phone calls and e-mails to his office, prompted by the American Family Association, caused the governor to reverse his earlier decision, and re-christen (can I say that?) the conifer a Christmas Tree.
- Erik Brown, principal and grand inquisitor of the Waterbury, Connecticut Elementary School, ordered his staff to shun secular as well as religious symbols during its December 21 “winter celebration.” Thus, Frosty the Snowman joins the baby Jesus in the janitor’s closet. Brown claims the move brings the school into compliance with “a state law that schools can’t knowingly exclude school children.” Bill Donohue of the Catholic League for Religious and Civil Rights notes that there is no such law in Connecticut. Donohue also points out some glaring contradictions: On the Waterbury School District Calendar, April 2 (a school vacation day) is identified as “Good Friday” – clearly excluding those for whom the day is not particularly good. Also, Christmas carols and Hanukah songs, as well “Santa Claus Is Coming to Town,” will be sung at the school’s “winter celebration day,” thereby knowingly excluding those who could care less whether the jolly old elf is en route, as well as those who’d rather sing odes to Allah.
- Howard County, Indiana has decided to replace the traditional manger scene on the lawn of the county courthouse with a lighted display of the Loch Ness monster and other beasts, real and imaginary. County Commissioner Tyler Moore pleaded, “If we put religious or Christmas decorations up, we’d be offending a whole other group of citizens and taxpayers.” Really? And who would they be? I’m sure Moore has no idea. But if someone – anyone – is outraged by a crèche, that’s reason enough to nix it. Never mind the taxpayers who are offended that the Loch Ness Monster

(whose birth is not traditionally celebrated at this time of the year) is a stand-in for something relating to a holiday observed by 96% of the American people.

- Amelia, Ore. cancelled its 29<sup>th</sup> annual Christmas parade. Chelmsford, Mass. has prohibited donations of candy canes, stockings and Santas to its annual gift sale. And, in a rare victory for sanity, the selectmen of North Andover, Mass will allow the town's fire department to display a "Merry Christmas" sign, as it has for the past half-century, reversing an earlier decision.

The other side has a clever riposte to those who object to the foregoing: The War on Christmas is a hoax perpetrated by media hounds and paranoid, axe-grinding Christian fundamentalists.

Writing in *The Grand Rapids Press*, columnist Troy Reimink sneers: "secular humanists (*are*) resuming their annual plot to dismantle the fabric of American society. That's right, the annual war on Christmas – or, rather, people screaming into megaphones about what they imagine to be a war on Christmas – is under way."

In the *Chicago Sun Times*, Joel Mathis charges that the War on Christmas is "a trumped up controversy to insert Bill O'Reilly and the American Family Association into the headlines." O'Reilly and AFA President Tim Wildmon must be busy boys, zipping around the country, banning Christmas carols and creches, and magically transforming Christmas trees into Holiday hedges, all for the sake of publicity.

Speaking of the AFA campaign to get retailers to wish their customers a "Merry Christmas," Mathis charges that "some Christians are so insecure about their place in American culture that they are demanding the rest of the culture pander to them. Never mind that there are a whole host of holidays celebrated by Americans this time of the year: Hanukah, Kwanza, the winter solstice (*no kidding*)..." and why can't we be more inclusive, dammit!

There are also Americans who celebrate Groundhog Day, Sadie Hawkins Day, Diwali and Ramadan-a dingdong -- and so what?

Kwanza is a “holiday” invented by an enterprising Afro-centrist in the 1960s. Hanukah is probably celebrated by 2% of Americans. How does one celebrate the “winter solstice” anyway – besides venerating a photo of Shirley MacLaine?

America was founded by Christians and grew to greatness inspired by a Judeo-Christian worldview. George Washington didn't play spin the dreidel (though he did write a famous letter of tolerance to the Jews of Newport, R.I.). The Pilgrims who landed on Plymouth Rock didn't have their famous feast to celebrate the winter solstice.

For most of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, we had municipal Christmas trees, public displays of crèches and Christmas greetings uttered in shops and stores – and America was better for it.

I'm a Jew. I don't celebrate Christmas (though they tell me it commemorates the birthday of a Jewish kid). But I'm not offended by those who do, yea, even publicly. This is a Christian nation. Christianity is the glue that holds America together. As a patriot, I defend the public celebration of Christmas as a public good.

Does anyone in Israel object to municipal menorahs? Do they say, “Oh the poor Moslems, they must feel so excluded”? Only in America.

America is the only nation that has made a fetish of sensitivity and inclusiveness. But we're very selective about that to which we are sensitive. We can have full-frontal nudity and simulated moaning and gasping on cable TV, but a manger scene on the courthouse lawn is an affront to decency.

We can have grade-school children indoctrinated in the more bizarre aspects of the homosexual lifestyle – the president of the United States can tell a gay gathering that he longs for the day when two men or two women living together are treated exactly the same as mom and dad – but Christmas carols are over the line.

Our seasonal sensitivity samba is due in part to hyper-concern for the sensibilities some, and in part to the fear of law suits. The ACLU is

ever vigilant to lighted trees and other attempts to establish a national church, and ready to pounce.

But there's another, darker motive. The War on Christmas is a War on Judeo-Christian morality is a War on America. Take our president – please!

Obama was planning a “non-religious Christmas,” White House Social Secretary Desiree Rogers told a gathering of her predecessors earlier this month. That included not displaying the traditional manger scene with other Christmas decorations. The administration later reversed that decision, which apparently did not play well in Peoria.

At the lighting of the National Christmas Tree, Jeremiah Wright's protegee told us that Christmas is no longer a religious holiday. Now, it's “a tradition that has come to represent more than any one holiday or religion.”

If you can't drive Christmas underground, co-opt it. How you can divorce a holiday with Christ in its name from Christianity is beyond me. But if any ideologue can do it, it's Barack Muslim-middle-name Obama.

His comments at the Seasonal Shrub lighting are in keeping with earlier pronouncements.

Speaking in Turkey this spring, Obama informed all and sundry that: “Whatever we once were, we're no longer a Christian nation. At least not just. We are also a Jewish nation, a Muslim nation, and a Buddhist nation, and a nation of nonbelievers.” Witness “In Nobody we trust” on our currency and what's been called our second national anthem – “Allah Bless America.” And what about that section of the United States known as the Koran-belt?

Bloviating at Human Rights Campaign banquet on October 10, boobus maximus told the assembled homosexual activists that he longs for the day when same-sex relationships are “just as real and admirable” as normal families.

From his support for abortion on demand, to his push to repeal the Defense of Marriage Act, to his appointments (Kevin Jennings, who winks at pedophilia, as Safe Schools Czar), here is a president determined to finish the job of morally deconstructing America.

The banishment of Christmas from the public square advances the lie that there is not and never has been a moral consensus in the land of the free, which allows the left to say “My morality is just as good as yours” – 1.2 million abortions a year is just as good as the sanctity of life. Drug use is just as good as sobriety. Sodomy is just as good as marriage. Promiscuity is just as good as monogamy and so on.

Merry Christmas is more than symbolic. It’s a reminder of who we were and could be again, and where our institutions and system of government came from. And that the left cannot allow.

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