

Do You Agree With What Obama Just Said About Bill Cosby?

President Barack Obama, when asked on Wednesday about possibly revoking entertainer Bill Cosby's Presidential Medal of Freedom, the highest U.S. civilian honor, said there is no mechanism for doing so, but added no civilized country should tolerate rape.

Obama declined to comment on the specific allegations against Cosby, who has been accused by a series of women of raping them after giving them a drug.

"I'll say this: If you give a woman, or a man for that matter, without his or her knowledge a drug and then have sex with that person without consent, that's rape," Obama told a White House news conference.

He added that "any civilized country should have no tolerance for rape."

Cosby, who turned 78 this week, has never been criminally charged, and most of the allegations exceed the statute of limitations. His attorneys have denied the accusations.

Cosby testified in 2005 that he had obtained Quaaludes with the intent of giving the sedatives to young women in order to have sex with them, according to court documents unsealed last week.

The unsealing of that deposition came after more than 40 women alleged in the last nine months that Cosby sexually assaulted them in incidents dating back decades.

The career of the pioneering black comedian—best-known for playing lovable father figure Dr. Cliff Huxtable on the hit TV comedy series *The Cosby Show*—is in tatters.

NBC and Netflix scrapped plans for a television sitcom and comedy special, while several shows on his comedy tour were canceled. He also stepped down from the board of trustees at Temple University, his alma mater.

A national sexual-assault prevention group called PAVE has gathered some 10,700 signatures asking the White House to revoke Cosby's medal, awarded in 2002.

"With respect to the Medal of Freedom, there's no precedent for revoking a medal. We don't have that mechanism," Obama told reporters. "And, as you know, I tend to make it a policy not to comment on the specifics of cases where there might still be, if not criminal, then civil issues involved."

Obama last year launched the campaign "It's On Us" to fight sexual assault on college campuses. Asked by Univision to comment on the rape allegations against Cosby last December, Obama avoided mentioning the comedian and said that "it's important not to focus on one case."

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