

# ANTI-CHRISTMAS ANIMUS EVIDENT NATIONWIDE

The culture war that has gripped the nation is nowhere more clearly evident than in the annual attempt to stamp out Christmas. Things got out-of-hand this year, in particular. Some thought the events of 9-11 would bring us together, but as the following examples demonstrate, there are some who are absolutely determined to divide us.

- Government officials in Las Vegas banned a display of the nativity scene at McCarran Airport and at the Fremont Street Experience downtown.
- In Kensington, Maryland, the Town Council unanimously voted to ban Santa Claus because two persons complained. Interestingly, Karen Libman, who led the fight against Santa, had earlier pushed for the display of a menorah on public property. After much publicity and turmoil, Santa was allowed to be displayed. University of Southern California law professor, Susan Estrich, defended the censorship of Santa on Fox News Channel's "Hannity and Colmes."
- In Minnesota, red poinsettias were banned by Ramsey County Manager Paul Kirkwood from the annual display in the county's St. Paul courthouse.
- All religious symbols were banned from display in buildings run by the Portland Housing Authority in Maine.
- The superintendent of schools in Silverton, Oregon, ordered all religious symbols removed from students' lockers.
- "Christmas" was deleted from school calendars all over America. In some cases, the Catholic League was able to get a pledge from the principal that this will not happen again.

- In Frederick County, Maryland, the principal banned Christmas cards from being given out because he said that those with a Christian message may not be a legally protected right.
- A fourth-grader in Ephrata, Pennsylvania, was forbidden to pass out Christmas cards.
- Wearing red and green scarves in a Christmas skit was enough to get two middle school students disciplined in Rochester, Minnesota.
- A teacher in Plymouth, Illinois, was admonished by her principal not to read a book about Christmas to her second-grade students.
- Icicle lights were banned from display by government officials in Northdale, Florida.
- A teacher at Sable Point Elementary School in Seminole County, Florida, was threatened with her job if she did not remove a pin that said, "Jesus is the Reason for the Season."
- Complaints reached gossip columnist Liz Smith to the effect that the nativity scene following the Christmas Spectacular at Radio City Music Hall was religious in nature.
- A school in Oyster Bay, Long Island, allowed Jewish religious songs at the holiday concert but prohibited Christian songs.
- Public housing officials in Vincennes, Indiana, banned all religious symbols from its complex.
- The ACLU threatened to sue St. Martin Parish Catholic churches in Louisiana because they put a nativity scene in a public park.
- The Melbourne Square Mall in Melbourne, Florida, allowed Jewish religious symbols but banned Christian ones. A local

rabbi defended the placement of the menorah saying it wasn't religious.

- The display of a Christmas tree led to an uproar on the campus of Bradley University.

- Officials who work for Wisconsin Governor Scott McCallum defended their decision to call the Christmas tree in the Wisconsin Capitol the "Holiday Tree."

- Menorahs were placed in student housing units at Harvard University without a word of protest. But there were no nativity scenes. Indeed, the display of Christmas trees became a contentious issue on campus. Some Jewish students complained that the Christmas tree was divisive. One compared it to "a Trojan horse," saying it opened the door to placing other offensive symbols on campus. He specifically mentioned the swastika. The Catholic League offered to buy nativity scenes if students were interested in displaying them but there were no takers.

- In Lebanon, Pennsylvania, Rabbi Louis Zivic of Beth Israel Synagogue complained that the Holiday Concert at Cedar Crest High School was too Christian in emphasis. As a result, school officials decided to no longer ask visitors to stand while the chorus sings the "Hallelujah Chorus" from Handel's "Messiah." An official from the local chapter of the ADL, Gerrie Greene, agreed saying that it appears previous holiday concerts were "pervasively religious." Greene noted that the concert "was almost entirely of Christmas carols, most of which were sacred in nature." Progress was made, however, in one city. The policy that prohibited C-TRAN employees in Vancouver, Washington, from wearing religious symbols on their clothing or from having religious decorations in the workplace was lifted. The victory belongs to Catholic League member Douglas Wolverton.