

# ANTI-CHRISTMAS STRATEGIES EVOLVE

There was no anti-Christmas agenda until the 1980s, and at that time it was led by the ACLU. The strategy of choice was to ban the display of religious symbols, especially the crèche, on public property. This legal strategy, which worked relatively well, has been superseded by a cultural strategy. The goal now is to dilute the significance of Christmas via contrived competition. To wit: every religious, racial and ethnic heritage—including invented ones like Kwanzaa—is now celebrated in December.

It is important to note that the agenda is not a positive one; it is not designed to honor world traditions. No, the agenda is negative—it is designed to combat Christmas. Here's a splendid example:

Margaret Downey, founder of the Freethought Society of Greater Philadelphia, sued Chester County in 2001 because a large Ten Commandments plaque was displayed at the Chester County Courthouse. After winding its way through the courts, Downey lost. Chester County, however, decided that the courthouse lawn should be open to all seasonal displays. The crèche and menorah were quickly displayed and soon the lawn was adorned with Downey's "Godless Holiday Tree"; it was decorated with the book covers of atheistic tracts.

True to her multicultural religion, Downey is not against all religions—it's just Christianity that gets her goat. "We'd love to see Kwanzaa candles and a Buddha statue, too," she said. Buddha is okay because it represents an Eastern religion (Western religions are taboo).

It's not just Downey and her merry band of atheists who ascribe to the contrived competition strategy. Elementary

school teachers in New Jersey informed officials at William Paterson University that they would not take their students to a holiday show if it centered solely on Christmas. They won. The moral of the story is: Best to throw the Nothought Scrooges a bone if the kids are to see Santa.