



Written by [Bruce Walker](#) on December 23, 2009

Angel Removed From Christmas Tree

At the insistence of Irv Sutley, a lifelong atheist and a 65-year-old disabled Marine, Sonoma County, California, has removed the angel from on top of a Christmas tree in the County Recorder's office. Sutley noticed the angel, as well as stars and other images with religious connotations, on Friday, December 18. The angel was removed, but not the Christmas tree itself despite the fact it also has religious origins.



The "Yuletide tree" predates Christianity — just as December 25 was once celebrated as a Near Eastern holiday (the birthday of Mithra) and as the old Roman holiday of the Saturnalia. Sutley was either ignorant of the religious origin of the Yuletide tree or, perhaps more likely, the avowed atheist had no real interest in banning all religious symbols from public life, but was rather obsessed with driving only Christian symbols from government buildings and property.

Though Sutley may not realize it, Nazi Germany also worked to eliminate overtly Christian symbols from public life while pushing the nation in the direction of paganism. During their 12-year Reich, the Nazi pagans banished religious symbols from schools and punished students who sang Christmas carols (as opposed to non-Christian Yuletide songs). On the other hand, the celebration of the Yuletide Log, the Yuletide tree, and other pagan, anti-Christian state sanctioned activity was actively encouraged by the Nazis.

The inextricable link between faith and government, regardless of the wishes of Sutley, is clear. Irv Sutley sent an email from his home in Santa Rosa — Saint Rose — and his complaints about the expression of Christianity in California must necessarily involve many other Christian named communities like Sacramento, Los Angeles, San Diego and San Francisco (to name a few.) Atheists who find any nominal expression of Christianity in public life will also find evidence that America was not intended, by those who founded out nation and its territories, to be unchristian. Consider the names of these cities: Providence, St. Paul, Corpus Christi, St. Louis, Santa Fe, and San Antonio.

Surely the name of a city, which appears on countless state documents, means more than an angel on the Christmas tree. Yet so far atheists have made no effort to change the name of St. Petersburg into Obamagrad. Will we see the day when Los Angeles will be forced to adopt a more secular name? Perhaps the trend can be best understood by thinking about how these scenarios would be received. What if the citizens of San Francisco wanted to change the name of their city to a more secular name? Provided that the law was complied with, it is hard to imagine any Christian groups complaining. What if a new metropolitan area wanted to incorporate into a city with a profoundly secular name like



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Darwinopolis? Complaints from anyone? Probably not.

Now what if a built-up area wished to incorporate into a new town with a name like Christ the Savior or Star of David or Blessed Creator? Does anyone doubt that atheists would be marching in the streets and filling the courthouses? What if the citizens of South Carolina wished to change their state motto from the secular "While I breathe, I hope" to the Floridian "In God we trust" or if North Dakotans wished to change their motto "Liberty and Union, now and forever" to the South Dakotan motto of "Under God the people rule"? Only by re-writing history (and renaming the parts of America) can atheists seriously argue that they live in a nation of official godlessness.



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