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POLICY OF TRUTH SERIES

“There are many things we can alter, we can adapt ourselves to progress and learn new and valuable lessons; but let us keep our national character and respect our traditions, let us beware of becoming a people without roots.”

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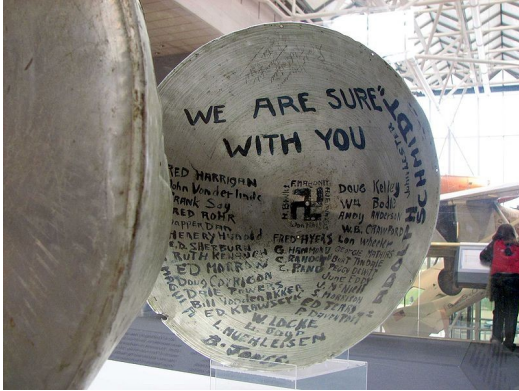
The Swastika in the United States



Boy Scouts at the 1937 National Scout Jamboree in Washington, D.C., using swastikas as part of their Native American portrayal

The swastika symbol was popular as a good luck or religious/spiritual symbol in the United States, prior to its association with Nazi Germany. The symbol remains visible on numerous historic buildings, including sites that are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. It also appeared on tiles, lampposts, metal valves, tools, surfboards, stock

certificates, brand names, place names, medals, commercial tokens, postcards, souvenirs, rugs and clothing; see *Western use of the Swastika in the early 20th Century.*



A swastika shown painted inside the nosecone of the Spirit of St. Louis.

The shoulder patch of the 45th Infantry Division, a National Guard Unit from the Southwestern US, was originally a yellow swastika on a red diamond, in the context of a religious/mystical symbol of the Native American tribes of that region. As war with Germany became imminent in the late 1930s, the swastika was replaced by a yellow thunderbird emblem; this may have been done as a simple tactical move to avoid confusion and friendly fire incidents.

In September 2007 the United States Navy announced it would spend \$600,000 to "camouflage" a barrack at the Naval Amphibious Base Coronado near San Diego , so that it would no longer resemble a swastika from the air.

Native American Traditions



Native American basketball team in 1909.

The swastika shape was used by some Native Americans. It has been found in excavations of Mississippian-era sites in the Ohio Valley. It was widely used by many southwestern tribes, most notably the Navajo. Among various tribes, the swastika carried different meanings. To the Hopi it represented the wandering Hopi clan; to the Navajo it was one symbol for a whirling winds (*tsil no'oli*), a sacred image representing a legend that was used in healing rituals (after learning of the Nazi mimic "whirling winds" the Navajo rejected the symbol). A brightly colored First Nations saddle featuring swastika designs is on display at the Royal Saskatchewan Museum in Canada.

A swastika shape is an ancient symbol in the culture of the Kuna people of Kuna Yala, Panama. In Kuna tradition, it symbolizes the octopus that created the world; its tentacles, pointing to the four cardinal points.

In February, 1925, the Kuna revolted against Panamanian suppression of their culture, and were granted autonomy in 1930; the flag they adopted at that time is based on the swastika shape, and remains the official flag of Kuna Yala. A number of variations on the flag have been used over the years: red top and bottom bands instead of orange were previously used.

Pre-Christian Europe

In Bronze Age Europe, the "Sun Cross" (a cross in a circle) appears frequently, often interpreted as a solar symbol. Swastika shapes have been found on numerous artifacts from Iron Age Europe (Greco-Roman, Illyrian, Etruscan, Baltic, Celtic, Germanic, and Slavic).