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National Navaho Code Talkers Day

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Since the Revolutionary War, when General George Washington praised the Indians under his command, the United States has been privileged to have members of the Indian Nation serve in its armed forces.

From the bravery demonstrated at Valley Forge and the establishment of the U.S. Indian Scouts on August 1, 1866, to the present day, Native Americans have heeded the call to duty. Though often excluded from the annals of United States history, these people, nonetheless, have defended the only land they have ever known, asking for nothing more than opportunity in return.

The Navaho Nation, when called upon to serve the United States, contributed a precious commodity never before used in this way. In the midst of the fighting in the Pacific during World War II, a gallant group of men from the Navaho Nation utilized their language in coded form to help speed the Allied victory.

Equipped with the only foolproof, unbreakable code in the history of warfare, the code talkers confused the enemy with an earful of sounds never before heard by code experts. The dedication and unswerving devotion to duty shown by the men of the Navaho Nation in serving as radio code talkers in the Marine Corps during World War II should serve as a fine example for all Americans.

It is fitting that at this time we also express appreciation for the other American Indians who have served our Nation in times of war. Members of the Choctaw, Chippewa, Creek, Sioux, and other tribes used their tribal languages as effective battlefield codes against the Germans in World War I and the Japanese and Germans in World War II.

Beyond this unique role, American Indians serving in the United States military forces have established an outstanding record of bravery and heroism in battle. Many have given their lives in the performance of their duty. Their record should be recognized by all Americans.

By House Joint Resolution 444, the Congress has requested me to designate August 14, 1982, as National Navaho Code Talkers Day.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, RONALD REAGAN, President of the United States of America, do hereby designate August 14, 1982, as National Navaho Code Talkers Day, a day dedicated to all members of the Navaho Nation and to all Native Americans who gave of their special talents and their lives so that others might live. I ask the American people to join me in this tribute, and I call upon Federal, State and local officials to commemorate this day with appropriate activities.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this 28th. day of July in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and eighty-two, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and seventh.

Ronald Reagan