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Flag Day and National Flag Week, 1987

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Each year, for a special day and a special week during June, we take time to reflect on our flag and all it means to us. We do so in June because Old Glory was born in that month; the first distinctive American flags of the Revolution flew at the Battle of Bunker Hill in June 1775, and the Continental Congress adopted the Stars and Stripes as the flag of the United States on June 14, 1777.

Even brief reflection on the meaning of the flag fills the mind and the heart with thoughts of our land and our heritage of liberty purchased at great cost by generations of Americans. Our flag was battle-born, fashioned during the struggle that won us our independence and gave bright hope to a world long oppressed. Ever since, America has seen its portrait in the folds and furls of our Star-Spangled Banner. We see freedom in the Red, White, and Blue, and we see too the sacrifice and the heroism of countless brave hearts. The poet Henry Holcomb Bennett had exactly this in mind many years ago when he penned the lines, "The colors before us fly; But more than the flag is passing by."

"More than the flag is passing by." Through the years, the number of stars on our flag has changed, and their arrangement has changed as well; but what the flag stands for will never change. During Flag Day and National Flag Week, let us remember with devotion that the flag we love and honor is the flag of freedom that flew in victory at Yorktown, the flag the United States Marines raised on Mount Suribachi, the flag Francis Scott Key saw by the dawn's early light.

Long may it wave.

To commemorate the adoption of our flag, the Congress, by a joint resolution approved August 3, 1949 (63 Stat. 492), designated June 14 of each year as Flag Day and requested the President to issue an annual proclamation calling for its observance and for the display of the flag of the United States on all government buildings. The Congress also requested the President, by joint resolution approved June 9, 1966 (80 Stat. 194), to issue annually a proclamation designating the week in which June 14 occurs as National Flag Week and calling upon all citizens of the United States to display the flag during that week.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, RONALD REAGAN, President of the United States of America, do hereby designate June 14, 1987, as Flag Day and the week beginning June 14 as National Flag Week, and I direct the appropriate officials of the government to display the flag of the United States on all government buildings during that week. I urge all Americans to observe Flag Day, June 14, and Flag Week by flying the Stars and Stripes from their homes and other suitable places.

I also urge the American people to celebrate those days from Flag Day through Independence Day, set aside by the Congress as a time to honor America (89 Stat. 211), by having public gatherings and activities in which they can honor their country in an appropriate manner, especially by ceremonies in which all renew their dedication by publicly reciting the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag of the United States of America and to the Republic for which it stands, one Nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this second day of June, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and eighty-seven, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and eleventh.

Ronald Reagan