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## Flag Day and National Flag Week, 1982

*By the President of the United States of America*

### A Proclamation

Two hundred seven years ago, in June 1775, the first distinctive American flags to be used in battle were flown over the colonial defenses at the Battle of Bunker Hill. One flag was an adaptation of the British "Blue Ensign" while the other was a new design. Both flags bore a symbol reflecting the experience of Americans who had wrested their land from the great forests: the pine tree.

At the same time, as the colonies moved toward a final break with the mother country, other flags appeared. At least two of them featured a rattlesnake, symbolizing vigilance and deadly striking power. Each of these bore a legend. One was "Liberty or Death," and the other was "Don't Tread on Me." The Grand Union Flag was raised over Washington's Continental Army headquarters on January 1, 1776. It displayed not only the British crosses of St. George and St. Andrew but also thirteen red and white stripes to symbolize the American colonies. In 1776, the Bennington flag appeared. Its design included thirteen stars, thirteen stripes, and the number "76".

On June 14, 1777, two years after the Battle of Bunker Hill, the Continental Congress chose a flag which expressed very directly the unity and resolve of the colonies which had banded together to seek independence. The delegates voted "that the flag of the thirteen United States be thirteen stripes, alternate red and white; that the union be thirteen stars, white in a blue field representing a new constellation."

After more than two centuries, the flag chosen by the Continental Congress on that June day in Philadelphia still flies today over our Nation, symbolizing a shared commitment to freedom and equality and altered only to reflect our growth to fifty states with the gradual addition of thirty-seven more white stars.

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 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, 1982, as Flag Day and the week beginning June 13, 1982, as National Flag Week, and I direct the appropriate officials of the Government to display the flag 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 Congress as a time to honor America (89 Stat. 211), by having public gatherings and activities at which they can honor their country in an appropriate manner.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this 4th. day of May 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 sixth.

*Ronald Reagan*