

flag and its relationship to our American heritage have increased. More American families and businesses are buying and displaying the flag.

Nineteen eighty-six marks the 200th anniversary of the first call for a Federal constitutional convention and the year of rededication of the Statue of Liberty, another mighty symbol of what America means. Let it also be the year we as a people commemorate our flag as the proud banner that the winds of freedom lovingly caress, for which generations of patriots have fought and died—the sign and symbol of a people ruled by a constitution that protects all and enshrines our hopes and our history.

The Congress, by House Joint Resolution 424, has designated 1986 as the "Year of the Flag" and authorized and requested the President to issue a proclamation in observance of this event.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, RONALD REAGAN, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim 1986 the Year of the Flag. To heighten citizen awareness of our flag, I urge all Americans to renew their appreciation of the flag and its relationship to our heritage, through appropriate celebrations honoring the flag.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this twelfth day of May, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and eighty-six, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and tenth.

RONALD REAGAN

Proclamation 5476 of May 12, 1986

### Flag Day and National Flag Week, 1986

*By the President of the United States of America  
A Proclamation*

Over two hundred years ago, in June 1775, the first distinctive American flag was flown over the colonial defenses during the Battle of Bunker Hill. One flag were an adaptation of the British Blue Ensign, while the other displayed the pine tree, a symbol of the experience of Americans who had wrested their land from the wilderness.

As the colonials moved toward a final separation from Great Britain, other flags appeared. At least two of them featured a rattlesnake, symbolizing vigilance and deadly striking power. One bore the legend "Liberty or Death"; the other, "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. Andrew and St. George, but also thirteen red and white stripes to symbolize the American colonies. The Bennington flag also appeared in 1776, with thirteen stars, thirteen stripes, and the number "76."

Two years after the Battle of Bunker Hill, on June 14, 1777, the Continental Congress adopted a flag that expressed clearly the unity and resolve of the patriots who had banded together in the cause of 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, with the addition of thirty-seven stars, each representing one of our 50 States, the flag chosen by the Continental Congress on that June day in Philadelphia still waves over our Nation. This flag