

UNITED STATES CELEBRATES FLAG DAY ON JUNE 14

WASHINGTON (USIS)—Henry Ward Beecher, one of the United States most eloquent and respected 19th Century orators, once said: "A thoughtful find, when it sees a nation's flag, sees not the flag alone but a nation itself. And whatever may be its symbols, its insignia, he reads chiefly in the flag the government, the principles the truths, the history that belonged to the nation that sets it forth"

Many a thoughtful American will repeat those words on June 14, when the United States celebrates the 171st anniversary of the adoption by the Continental Congress of the "Stars and Stripes" as the national emblem of the then recently formed United States of America.

It was in Philadelphia, on June 14, 1777, that the Continental Congress passed a resolution declaring that "the Flag of the United States be 13 stripes, alternated red and white; that the union be 13 stars, white in a blue field representing a new constellation."

There was no change in the number of stars or stripes from this adopted design until 1794, when Congress in recognition of the admission of Vermont and Kentucky, voted to add two stripes, and two stars, one for each of the new States.

It was this flag, with 15 stripes

and 15 stars, that was flying over Fort McHenry, Maryland, during the bombardment by the English fleet on the nights of September 13-14, 1814, that inspired Francis Scott Key to write "The Star Spangled Banner", now the national anthem of the United States.

By 1818, when there were 20 states in the Union and the prospect of the creation of more, it was evident that the addition of a stripe for each new State would result in an unwieldy flag. That year, Congress voted that the flag should contain 13 alternate red and white stripes, representing the original 13 States of the Union, and that a star should be added for each new state on the Fourth of July following its admission to the Union.

When the first shot of the Civil War was fired in 1861, the flag had 33 stars, but in July of that year another star was added for Kansas, and before the Civil War ended the admission of West Virginia brought the total of stars to 35.

There were 44 stars on the United States flag in 1892, when James B. Upham, a member of the editorial staff of YOUTH'S COMPANION wrote the original of the PLEDGE TO THE FLAG, which slightly modified is now recited daily by millions of school children throughout the United States,

their youthful voices pledging allegiance "to the flag of the United States of America and to the Republic for which it stands; one nation indivisible, with liberty and justice for all."

The last two stars, bringing the total to the present; 48, were added July 4, 1912 in recognition of the admission to the Union of the states of New Mexico and Arizona.

The celebration of June 14 as Flag Day was established, or rather nationalized, by a proclamation issued May 30, 1916, by President Woodrow Wilson.

President Wilson's proclamation urged that the anniversary of the day upon which the flag of the United States was adopted by Congress as the emblem of the Union "be given special significance as a day of renewal and reminder, a day upon which we should direct our minds with a special desire of renewal to thoughts of the ideals and principles of which we have sought to make our great government the embodiment."

This proclamation gave authoritative national expression to the sentiment which, for years, had been accumulating in favor of a general observance of Flag Day, and set the keynote for this patriotic observance down to the present.

Wilson Voiced Feeling Of Americas In 1918 Independence Day Speech

On July Fourth, 1917 the first United States combat troops reached Paris on their way to the Western Front during World War One.

The following year, 1918, President Woodrow Wilson expressed the reaction of the peoples of the Americas whenever they felt liberty threatened in his Independence Day message.

President Wilson said:

"We have heard the demand and watched the struggle for a self-government spread and triumph among many peoples.

"We have come to regard the right to political liberty as the common right of humankind. Year

after year, within the security of our borders, we have continued to rejoice in the peaceful increase of freedom and democracy throughout the world. And yet, now we are confronted with a menace which has won..... We are face to face with the necessity of asserting anew the fundamental right of free men to make their own laws and choose their own allegiance, or else permit humanity to become the victim of a ruthless ambition that is determined to destroy what it can not master.

"Against its threat the liberty-loving people of the world have risen and allied themselves."

Million Italians Walk Off Jobs In Protest Strike

ROME, July 2 (INS)—Almost a million Italian workers quit their jobs at noon today in a 12-hour general strike called by the Communist-led Italian Confederation of Workers in protest against government labor policies.

A last-minute agreement enabled shops to remain open, but transportation was paralyzed and virtually every industrial plant shut down. It was Italy's first nationwide walk-out in six months.

Police and troops were confined to their barracks ready to in-

tervene in the event of trouble, but no immediate disorders were reported.

Flying squads of guards in swift jeeps took up strategic positions, and Interior Minister Mario Scelba said they were on hand to guarantee the right to strike for strikers and the right to work for those unwilling to participate in the walk-out.

Rome workers are holding a mass protest meeting in the Rome Colosseum this afternoon and other demonstrations are planned for Milan, Turin and Genoa.

Marshall Plan Pact Adopted By Denmark

COPENHAGEN, July 2 (INS)—Both houses of the Danish Parliament today overwhelmingly adopted the United States Marshall Plan agreement with Denmark. Only Communists opposed it.



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Representative Joseph W. Martin, Jr., of Massachusetts, Speaker of the United States House of Representatives.



Senator Arthur H. Vandenberg of Michigan, President pro tempore of the United States Senate, and Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.



Admiral Louis E. Denfeld, Chief of Naval Operations, United States Navy.



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Thomas D. O'Keefe, who was recently appointed assistant to the Assistant U. S. Secretary of Commerce for American Republics' Supply Problems.



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