NEW FLAG OF THE BAHAMAS

On July 10, 1973, the Bahamas became an independent country. The new flag was raised at one minute after midnight. The flag has three horizontal stripes, blue-gold-blue, and a black triangle at the hoist. The design was chosen from numerous entries by Bahamians.

According to George A. Smith, parliamentary secretary to Prime Minister Lynden O. Fowlie, the blue (actually aquamarine) is the color of the water around the islands, black the people, and gold the sun and the nation’s wealth.

The country also has a new coat of arms, consisting of a flamingo and a merlin up on its tail on either side of a shield. In the center of the shield is one of Christopher Columbus’s ships and atop the shield is a rising sun and a helmet symbolizing nobility, and the conch shell. Further, the flamingo is named the national bird of the Bahamas and the merlin the national fish.

According to the parliamentary secretary, July 10 was picked as the day of independence because of the injunction in the ninth verse of the 25th chapter of Leviticus: "Then shalt thou cause the trumpet of the jubilee to sound on the tenth day of the seventh month." (---The New York Times).

Another Smith, Dr. Whitney Smith, President of the North American Vexillogology Association, was present at the independence ceremony in Nassau. He journeyed to the Bahamas especially for the occasion, deemed historic in that no further new countries are in view for independence in the foreseeable future. He took movies of the ceremony and is planning to screen the film at the November NAVA meeting at Valley Forge. (See separate item in this Newsletter). Dr. Smith reports he might have missed the ceremony had he not arrived a day early, because when Bahamians say midnight July 10th, they mean what we would call midnight July 9th. Of course they are right; midnight is the beginning of the new day as well as the ending of the previous day.

Whitney Smith stated that the ceremony of independence was held at Fort Charlotte just outside the capital city of Nassau. There was a police parade and marching band. Guests of honor included Prince Charles and men from the H.M.S. Minerva which brought him to the island for the occasion. Transfer of the official instruments of authority took place the following day, formally ending three centuries of British rule of the islands.
THE EDITOR'S IN-BASKET

The United States flag now flies over the U.S. Liaison Office in Peking as David K.E. Bruce formally opened the office for business on June 27th. This marks the first time the United States flag has been on permanent display in the Chinese capital since the Communists came to govern the country more than 23 years ago. (---The Christian Science Monitor).

The job of a government worker at the Capitol in Washington is running American flags up and down three flagpoles on top of the Capitol building to fill orders from citizens all over the country who want a flag that has actually flown over the U.S. Capitol. He averages 80 flags a day. The flags are raised individually and left flying for a few minutes; then they are lowered and mailed to the persons requesting them. Anyone can order one of these flags. A 3x5-feet flag costs $3.42, and one 5x8-feet costs $6.94, including packing and mailing fees plus a letter certifying that it has flown over the Capitol. Flags can be ordered through the office of your Congressman. (---The New York Times).

Speaking of Congressmen, special flags for lawmakers are now on sale on Capitol Hill for them to fly on their cars, signifying them as members of Congress. Some wag made this wise-crack: "They can hang them on their car antennas just below the fox-tails!"

George Washington's family coat of arms may have come from Norway, according to a researcher into America's Norwegian heritage. The indications are that George's paternal ancestors came from Voss, Norway, whose citizens were referred to as "Vossings." The thought is that "Washington" is an English corruption of "Vossings," whose family coat of arms featured a shield with stars on a field of red-white-and-blue stripes. (---The New York Times).

The largest United States flag ever made will make one more appearance before being finally retired. The flag is seven stories high and weighs eight tons. It will be unfurled on July 4, 1976 across the facade of the building of the downtown branch of the J. L. Hudson department store in Detroit, to celebrate the Nation's bicentennial. The reason for the flag's retirement was given as the high cost of refurbishing the massive 24-year-old banner. (---A.P.)

There are more national holidays in July than in any other month, it seems. Here is the list: July 1st, Burundi, Canada, Rwanda, Somalia; July 4th, U.S.A.; July 5th, Venezuela; July 6th Malawi; July 11th, Mongolian Republic; July 14th, France, Iraq, July 15th, Spain; July 20th, Colombia; July 21st, Belgium; July 22nd, Poland; July 23rd, Egypt, Ethiopia; July 26th, Liberia, Maldives Islands; July 28th, Peru. (---United Nations Secretariat News).

A favorite entertainment with the public on mild summer evenings in Washington is the pageant called "Torchlight Tattoo," held nightly in front of the Jefferson Memorial by the Tidal Basin. With music by the U.S. Army Band, a parade of events enacted from American history moves across the brightly lighted outdoor stage. Costumes and flags of various periods of history bring the action to life. Featured performers are the Old Guard Fife and Drum Team, the U.S. Army Herald Trumpets, the United States Army Drill Team, the U.S. Army Chorus. Continental musicians in black tricorn hats, white wigs and scarlet gaiters...
EDITOR'S IN-BASKET
(continued)

France is presenting to the American people as its gift to the Bicentennial Celebration, a sound and light show ("son et lumière") to be installed at Mount Vernon. There is a possibility the President of France may come here to open the show officially. Frenchman, Gaston Papaloux, who will do the work, is considered to be the greatest sound and light man known. He produced the shows at Versailles and at the Pyramids at Luxor, among other places.

FLAG CO-INCIDENCES

As Iran replaces Canada as one of the four-member countries of the I.C.C.S., an interesting pair of co-incidences comes to our attention. Member countries Poland and Indonesia both have national flags consisting of two horizontal stripes, red and white. (Poland white over red, Indonesia red over white). Member countries Hungary and Iran both have three horizontal stripes: Hungary, red, white and green, and Iran green, white and red.

Further in the same vein, NAVA members will recall that the Viet Cong flag consists of a red field with a gold star, large, in the center. It seems that President Thieu of South Viet Nam has just recently adopted a party flag that has a yellow field with a large red star in the center.

(---submitted by Whitney Smith).

FLAG QUIZ

NAVA members who attended the annual meeting last November in Chicago will remember taking a quiz, the winner of which received a valuable prize. No prize is here offered, but it was thought that those who were unable to attend the meeting would enjoy taking the quiz too. Answers will be found at the bottom of page 4 (no fair peeking!) To score yourself, multiply correct answers by four and then add four. If you score high, write and tell the editor.

1. In what year did the current United States flag become official?
2. In what year did the current Canadian national flag become official?
3 thru 13. A hijacker has diverted your plane to a strange airport. You are not sitting next to the window and the man there can only tell you that the flag flying outside the terminal building bears a certain emblem. Of course you as a vexillologist immediately know what country you are in when you hear that the emblem is, an eagle eating a snake, a hat, a map, three flags, an umbrella, a dragon, a two-headed bird, a pair of dividers, an armillary sphere, a pair of keys, a lion with a coconut.
14. What is the correct fly length for a United States national flag whose hoist is one unit wide?
15. What is the correct fly length for a Canadian national flag whose hoist is one unit wide?
16 thru 19. Papua New Guinea became the fifth country whose national flag bears the Southern Cross. The other four are?
20 thru 22. Ever since the French Revolution vertical stripes have been popular in flags. What national flags bear the following vertical stripes? (These stripes do not necessarily constitute the whole design of the flag; they may be part of the field or something may be added on top of them; the colors are given as arranged from hoist towards fly.) Red-black-orange; red-blue-red; green-red-blue.
FLAG QUIZ  (Continued)  23. Who in the early 19th century saved the U.S. flag from having innumerable stripes?

24. The national flag which some believe to be the oldest still used was supposed to have fallen from heaven on the 15th of June 1219. The country which flies this flag is?

NAVA ANNUAL MEETING  Time marches on, and the Seventh Annual Membership Meeting of the North American Vexilliological Association will be here before we know it. Just to refresh our collective memory, the dates and place are as follows:

Dates: Nov. 2nd, 3rd, and 4th, 1973 (Friday p.m. through Sunday p.m.)
Place: Headquarters of the Freedoms Foundation, Valley Forge, Pa.

Final plans are underway and it looks like another bang-up meeting. Committee members Bill Spangler and Jack Lingo urge members planning to attend to arrive right after lunch on Friday, November 2. A tour of the Dettra Flag Company plant and a tour to Independence Hall, Philadelphia, are both on the schedule. A package deal including both tours, and meals Friday night through Sunday noon comes to just $30.00, a rare bargain, so how can we afford not to attend!

Directions: Driving via Pennsylvania Turnpike, take exit 24 and follow the signs to Valley Forge. Otherwise, head for the town of King of Prussia and then follow the signs. Freedoms Foundation is located just west of Valley Forge on state route 23.

Members who may wish to present papers or bring exhibits are encouraged to do so. In this case it is desirable to let the Committee know as soon as possible so that space may be assigned in the program. For this purpose write to:

Mr. William C. Spangler, Vice President
Dettra Flag Company, Inc.
Oaks, Pennsylvania 19456

giving the subject of the paper and the approximate time it would take to present it.

A letter from the Committee is going out soon, giving final details and a registration form which those planning to attend will be asked to fill out and send in in advance of the meeting.

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