MORE ABOUT NAVA 14'S SITE
A Picture Story
By Dorothy H. Claybourne

When NAVA 14 convenes on October 3-6 it will meet at the first university west of the Mississippi. Established 161 years ago, Saint Louis University is centrally located in midtown St. Louis.

Statistically, the University has 4,400 employees and is the 12th largest private sector employer in the metropolitan area. For the calendar year 1980 it is estimated that SLU will have a billion dollar economic impact on the community.

SLU's urban dedication goes beyond its building, education, and personnel. Through its many programs for minorities, senior citizens, job opportunities and health care, it is a leader in the proposed plan to revitalize the area.

Cupples House. Samuel Cupples, a lumber merchant, garnished this mansion with fine imported wood. NAVA 14 will have its banquet here.
ST. LOUIS:

Ritter Hall, named for the late Cardinal of St. Louis. In the rear (left to right) are DuBourg Hall, St. Francis Xavier (College) Church and Jesuit Hall.

DuBourg Hall houses the University's administrative offices. Named for the first Bishop of St. Louis.

Statue of Pope Pius XII by Yugoslav artist Ivan Mestrovic. The building is Davis-Shaunessey Hall, the School of Commerce and Finance.

College Church, modeled after the cathedral in Cobb, (Ireland). Back side view from Verhaegen Hall, which houses the Theology Department.

NAVNEWS
The only suggestion he had was to telephone the Globe, which I did. The photographer was very helpful; he told me how to get to the pier. I grabbed my camera, note cards and pen, the news photo from 1964, and a copy of Flags Through the Ages and Across the World. Unfortunately, I arrived at the Charlestown dock when everyone was off for lunch. However, I immediately spotted the ship from its funnel—red with a huge gold star flanked on either side by yellow zigzag lines. These resembled the wavy stripes in the flag.

I asked the name of the vessel. No one was around so I was forced to walk up to the ship. From the forecastle were flying the national flags of China and the U.S., the latter a courtesy flag. Neither the stern or prow displayed a flag and—since I was diffident about boarding the vessel without permission—it seemed I would learn no more.

At that moment a crewman appeared and I signaled to him. He gestured me aboard. He didn’t speak English, but I had written on a card the Chinese characters for “China” and “flag.” This and a glimpse at my book gave him an idea of my interest and soon I was greeted by an English-speaking crewman, who invited me to sit down and explain what I wanted. As is the custom in China, tea was served, although only to the translating crewman and myself. The First Mate joined us shortly and crew members stood around in obvious interest at the unusual situation. I was reminded of portraits of Chinese listening intently to Chairman Mao, but I didn’t take advantage of the opportunity to proselytize for vexillology.

I showed them in my book how some countries have a special flag for ships and I asked whether such a flag existed for China. I had brought the Japanese language edition of my book because I was hoping that some of the Chinese characters used in Japanese might aid in communication and, more importantly, because the Japanese edition omits the symbols of Taiwan. The crewman understood, but said that China did not have such a flag; the national flag is used for all purposes except the army. The flag I had seen was a house flag for the Coastal Marine Transport Company. It could be flown at the prow or mainmast. Although not sure about the exact design, he thought it might contain four zigzag lines representing the “Four Seas”—South China, East China, Yellow, and Gulf of Chihli.

The Yan Shin Hai was part of the China Ocean Shipping Company, which had a different house flag, but none was available for examination. With apologies the man gave me a document heading illustrating the flag in color. It consists of three horizontal stripes in a ratio of 1:2:1, the center stripe corresponding to the funnel described above and the top and bottom ones green. I was told that the three zigzags stand for the “Three Oceans”—Atlantic, Pacific, and Indian. The star and colors are those of the national flag and the upper and lower stripes represent the color of the sea. The company and presumably, its flag date from 1965.

As we drank our tea I tried to think of other things to ask. I was told that there are no flag books in China (although a seaman might not be aware of such). Regarding the national flag, I was told that the big star stands for the Communist Party and the four small stars for the workers, farmers, petty bourgeoisie, and the capitalists. (This corresponds to information received from official sources, but in the 30 years since the founding of the People’s Republic a new interpretation might have developed which put less emphasis on economic classes, particularly since the bourgeoisie and capitalists have presumably been eliminated.) I suggested that I had heard other explanations as well, but there were embarrassed laughs and heated denials when I suggested that the large star was for China and the four small ones were for Manchuria, Mongolia, Turkestan and Tibet. That ended the meeting and, thanking my hosts, I departed.

Not everyone lives near a port city and not everyone has access to extensive reference material. On the other hand there are opportunities for flag research for anyone with imagination, time and a willingness to pursue. Cities, counties, government agencies, port authorities, military units, airlines and shipping companies, political parties, churches, etc. all have flags—most of them completely unknown to vexillologists, not to mention the general public (and often those for whom the flag was created). A little correspondence and research, a few telephone calls or interviews could produce an interesting article for the NAVA, NEWS or THE FLAG BULLETIN, perhaps a unique presentation to be made at a NAVA meeting. You may not find yourself having tea with people from the other side of the earth, but your own adventure may be even more interesting and rewarding.
Vexillogist says flag stirs passion

By MARSHA HOWLAND
News Staff

SALEM — When you place a flag in a cemetery this weekend, or watch the Stars and Stripes go by in a Memorial Day parade, remember this: There is more to a flag than meets the eye.

“The flag is one of the most emotional symbols that humanity has,” said the Rev. John R.B. Szala, minister of the First Church in Salem — Unitarian, and an expert on flags, their history and symbolism. “It evokes from the individual a great amount of passion, good and bad, such as patriotism, or antagonism against another people different from yourself.

“The colors fascinate people, just as the art of the flag itself whipping against the wind does something to stir the imagination.

“The flag stands for the personality of a country — its character, its nature, its hopes and aspirations,” Szala added. “It embodies all of these within its single design.”

Szala is the president of the North American Vexillological Association (vexillology is the study of the history and symbolism of flags). His interest in flags began when, in his home city of Pittsburgh, a woman was arrested and fined for superimposing the peace symbol on an American flag in her shop window.

While his expertise, understandably, has shifted to religious flags, he is nonetheless a wealth of information when it comes to the American flag — a banner he calls “one of the most beautiful flags in existence.”

First to be discussed is “the great myth” that Betsy Ross made the first American flag. “We were at war with Great Britain,” Szala said. “We needed a unique national emblem to rally behind. There were many different kinds of flags used during that period. All of a sudden, the Stars and Stripes was approved by the Continental Congress.”

According to Szala, Ross was a Philadelphia Quaker who was involved in upholstery repair and flag making. “Many years after her death, a descendant came before a historical society gathering to contend that Betsy Ross had made the first United States flag,” Szala said. “There have been other contenders. Nothing has been proven to date.”

Red, white and blue, Szala said, are popular colors for flags, in part because they are easily seen against the light blue sky. In addition, the symbolism of the colors is important: generally, red stands for blood and sacrifice; white stands for the purity of intention; “and blue, which is sort of a take-off of purple, stands for majesty, independence, justice.”

Continued on Page 2
Simplicity, Szala said, is the key in any flag. "The more simple the flag, the easier the message gets across," he said. "Some flags are too 'busy.' The function of the flag is to establish a message almost instantly. If you look up at a flag and it has everything on it including the town bathtub, it becomes overwhelming."

The Union Jack (the flag of Great Britain) is, like the United States flag, an example of a successful design, Szala said. Its red, white and blue are beautiful against the sky, and the message of the three crosses is clear — first, that it is a Christian nation, and second, that it is one nation of three countries. The cross of St. George is for England, the cross of St. Patrick is for Ireland and the cross of St. Andrew is for Scotland.

"There is something within the human mystique that elicits a response to religious and political symbolism," Szala said. "It's the same thing that happens to a person when you step through the portals of Notre Dame. All of a sudden the awe overpowers you. How can you describe it?"

There are, of course, many kinds of flags — national, religious, civic, industrial, and others, according to Szala. Of national flags, he said, "A flag emerges as an emblem of national consciousness when people recognize that they share a common destiny, that they inhabit a common territory, that they communicate in a unique language, that they share similar social and religious customs."

Flags in their present-day (cloth) form "were invented, as probably everything else was, by the Chinese, in the 12th century B.C.,” Szala said: National flags appeared in Europe in the 12th century A.D., having been introduced by Crusaders returning from the Far East. Before cloth flags, banners were made of feathers on totem poles, wood and metal. The oldest unchanged national flag, Szala said, is the flag of Denmark, designed in the 13th century.

Szala has an extensive collection of national, church and other flags, and generally flies a flag over his Jefferson Street home each day. "People stop their cars, get out and want to know if it's an embassy in Salem," he said with a laugh. "They see strange things up there."

Unusual flags in his collection include the banners of the Church of the Foursquare Gospel (the church of evangelist Amy Semple McPherson), Salvation Army founder Walter Booth (the "Blood and Fire" flag), and the Anglican Church of Canada.

Szala, the minister and vexillologist, is quick to point out that, "The first act of flag desecration in America took place in this church under Gov. Endicott and the third minister of the church, Roger Williams." In a lengthy story in "Twice Told Tales," Nathaniel Hawthorne described the incident which culminated in Endicott's cutting the cross out of the king's flag (among Puritans, the cross was considered a sign of "popery").

As Szala said, a flag evokes a good deal of passion.
How was it used? Where did it go?

MASSONRY'S SEVEN-POINTED STAR

By JAMES R. CASE, 33°

The Templar regalia worn by Thomas Smith Webb, preserved in the Asylum of St. Johns Commandery at Providence, R.I., is pictured in Scully's History of the Grand Encampment. Its provenance is indisputable and dates back to the first decade of the 1800's. A description reads in part as follows: "...on the Baldric, the seven-pointed star, with the motto 'in hoc signo vinces'..." Why was it called the rather than a star?

When Thomas Smith Webb was assembling the present structure of American Masonic knighthood, he brought the Red Cross Knights of Boston into the fold. At their head was the energetic and enthusiastic Henry Fowle, who in his autobiography states he had come into knowledge or possession of 20 or more degrees.

The Red Cross degree does not belong in company with the orders of Christian Masonic knighthood, either chronologically or in essence. Nor is it definitely known who brought the Red Cross degree to America. It may have been some Knight Mason of Ireland who passed it along by conferral, or more likely, by communication. The theme concerns an incident which occurred at Babylon in Mesopotamia, then Persian and much later Islamic territory, where today the number seven has a peculiar significance. The ritual of the pilgrimage to Mecca includes several ritual acts, repeated seven times. The great mosque at Mecca has seven minarets.

Seven is not a regular number but is the sum of three and four. The heptagon or seven-sided figure is not as simple to construct with rule and compasses as those of six, eight and nine sides. It does not figure in the Golden Bough or in the Cabala. The seven-pointed star was soon eclipsed in Templar circles, and there arose the eight-pointed star, composed of two superimposed or interlaced squares, and the nine-pointed star, composed of three interlaced triangles. Jonathan Nye, who was Grand Master of Knights Templar 1829-35 and who died in 1843, is pictured in Scully's history with a nine-pointed star and the Latin cross.

Aside from the simple red cross, the number of regulation Templar crosses has grown and usage now includes the Latin cross, the Calvary or passion cross, the Maltese and the patriarchal crosses. The plain red cross, or Greek cross, of equal arms and angles, and the seven-pointed star appear conspicuously today only on the banner of the Order of Red Cross.
Cross with the pertinent, and correct, motto "Magna est veritas et prevalebit."

A prized possession of St. Andrews Lodge No. 56, Portsmouth, N.H., is a baldric (more properly a collar) on which is mounted a seven-pointed star. Lodge Historian Philip N. Rugg can discern no design on the boss in the center of the star. When the baldric is worn, the star appears over the wearer’s heart. A letter of transmission accompanying the baldric when it was given to St. Andrews Lodge some decades ago states that "it was worn by General George Washington at a Masonic meeting in Derby, Conn., during the Revolutionary War." This cannot be supported by reference to the record of Washington’s itineraries. The Lodge at Derby was chartered in January 1783. This is another Masonic mystery to be resolved by further research.

Seven is a significant number in the Lodge. The presence of seven or more is required to open an Apprentice Lodge. There is an exposition of the seven arts and sciences in the Fellowcraft degree after an ascent of the winding stairway of three, five, and seven steps.

The Bennington Flag (so-called) became popular during the 1976 bicentennial observance of the signing of the Declaration of Independence. Its origin is obscure but is indisputably on display in the museum at Bennington. It is of such a size that it could not have been carried in battle. The quibbler points out that the Battle of Bennington was fought elsewhere—and in 1777, not 1776. The flag has 13 seven-pointed stars, 11 of which are arranged in a manner which suggests an arch, which led an imaginative commentator to assume that it might have some Masonic significance.

There are other instances of the seven-pointed star being used on Royal Arch jewels, Mark Master pennies, Masonic certificates and aprons. It can be found on the Kirkwall scroll. It appears as the emblem of the Knight Masons of Ireland. Its use in connection with the chapter might have reference to the Royal Arch as the seventh degree.

One can catalog numerous instances where the number seven occurs. For example: in the Bible, seven days of creation, seven churches of Asia Minor; in the Koran, the seventh heaven; in history, the seven wise men of Greece, the seven hills of Rome; in folklore, the fortunate seventh son; in fairy tales, the seven league boots of Hop o’ my Thumb; in astronomy, seven stars of the Pleiades, or Ursa Major, the Big Dipper; in geography, the seven seas, or seven wonders of the world; the seven champions of Christendom—Saint George for England, Denis for France, James for Spain, Anthony for Italy, Andrew for Scotland, Patrick for Ireland, and David for Wales. And many, many more.

Insignia of orders of knighthood and merit illustrated in Webster’s International Dictionary show no star with seven points. Among the flags pictured in the 1976 World Almanac, that of Australia (with seven member states) uses seven-pointed stars. The flag of Jordan does show a single seven-pointed star, but others display only the five-pointed star or pentalpha, except that of Israel with six points which is the Star of David or the Seal of Solomon.

According to Jeremy Ladd Cross, writing around 1820, the Order of the Red Cross was conferred in Europe under various titles. The present appellation was given on account of the red cross borne on their banner. It was established by the King of Persia in remembrance of the renewal of friendship with Zerubbabel. There was instituted a new order of the East, afterwards known as Knight of the Eagle. In France they were known as Knight of the Sun and in Palestine as Knight of the Red Cross.

The Grand Council of Knight Masons of Ireland exercises control over the Knight of the Sun, Knight of the East, and Knight of the East and West. All those names, as well as the substance of the Order of Red Cross as conferred in the Commandery, are found in several degrees of the Scottish Rite.

Aside from the esoteric significance of the seven points as shown on charts of the degrees in the Ancient Accepted Rite, we are told by an unnamed commentator that Knights Templar owe each other Brotherly Love, Humility, Forbearance, Kindness, Truth, Beneficence, and Charity. From another source we learn that the seven passions and emotions may be given as Joy, Love, Anger, Remorse, Fear, Hope, and Jealousy. A beautiful Grand Master’s Jewel presented to the Grand Lodge of Tennessee in 1915 is suspended from a clasp of which "seven elongated rays symbolize the seven attributes of Deity—Power, Wisdom, Justice, Truth, Mercy, Love, and Harmony." Several other interpretations of the meaning of the number seven could be listed.

It may be that some hint of the origin of the seven-pointed star can be found in the flag of the present day Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. Reference is made to the seven points of the star as reminiscent of the first seven lines of the Koran, which might be freely translated:

Praise be to Allah, All Wise Lord of the Universe, Beneficent, merciful, impartial Arbiter on Judgement Day. Thou alone do we worship; to Thee alone do we pray, Guide us in the straight and narrow path of life. The way of those to whom Thou art all goodness. Not the way of those who incur Thine anger Or who go astray in ways of wickedness.

ILL: JAMES R. CASE, 33°, is a noted Masonic scholar and has been Grand Historian of the Grand Lodge of Connecticut since 1953. He holds Scottish Rite membership in the Valley of Bridgeport.
Over 90,000 supporters of the Equal Rights Amendment converged on Chicago's Grant Park on May 10 for what was called the largest march in Chicago's history and the largest gathering in support of the ERA ever in the state of Illinois.

Marchers came from every state of the union and represented over 300 organizations and delegations.

The massive event, which had been conceived and coordinated by NOW, drew to Chicago the largest group of ERA supporters assembled since the July 9, 1978 National ERA March for Ratification and Extension held in Washington, DC. That event had also been coordinated by NOW.

"We could not have been more pleased with the turnout," said Jane Wells-SchOoley, NOW's Vice President Action who was the overall coordinator of the event. "NOW members from all over the country helped to mobilize supporters from their areas. Illinois NOW and Chicago NOW did a spectacular job in mobilizing ERA supporters from their state."

Also key to the organizing effort as well as to the turnout was the work of the American Association of University Women and organized labor.

"AAUW volunteer activists were an important contingent of the march organizing team," noted Wells-SchOoley, "and helped to bring over 1,000 AAUW members to Chicago."

Labor participation in the march was tremendous as exemplified by large delegations from UAW, Steelworkers, Coalition of Labor Union Women, Teamsters and other delegations too numerous to mention.

The march, which took place along the shores of beautiful Lake Michigan, brought together the thousands, most of whom were dressed in traditional suffragist white, for a processional-style march reminiscent of the early 1900 suffragist marches and was patterned after the 1977 Alice Paul March and the 1978 National ERA March in Washington. The throngs of supporters were organized into delegations, by organization and geographical designation, and the stately purple, white and gold delegation banners unfurled in the Chicago lakeside breezes.
A Big One – World War I Old Glory dwarfs New Hampshire factory workers standing below. Such patriotic displays have always been popular. International tensions and electioneering promise a resurgence in flag flying this year.

Business better than ever for American flag makers

By Donald J. Frederick

WASHINGTON – Old Glory is flying high. With the approach of the patriotic holidays, flag makers are expecting their biggest year since the Bicentennial.

"International tensions and economic problems at home have motivated many people to display a symbol of faith and hope in their country," explained Daniel G. Connors, executive with Annin & Co., a Verona, N.J., firm that has been making flags for 133 years.

"Then, too, this is an election year, and flags will be in demand for parades, rallies, and conventions," added Connors.

Grass-roots Demand

But flag manufacturers are most impressed this year with the grass-roots demand for the national banner. "Our distributors tell us it sometimes starts on a single street, spreads to a neighborhood, and encompasses a whole town," said Connors.

What prompts this rallying round the flag? It might be started by a prominent citizen in a community, a local organization, or a newspaper campaign. Most popular this year are the 3 x 5 foot flags that homeowners display on small poles or drape from the front porch. Annin’s largest flags measure 20 x 30 feet and are very big with fast food restaurants, gasoline stations and other retail businesses. Many of these businesses are located near highways, and they use the big flags to attract trade more than anything else, Connors explained.

Nothing, however, matches America’s largest flag – a star spangled extravaganza more than 21 stories high and weighing seven tons. The big banner would have kept Betsy Ross busy for a lifetime. Each of the stars on the two-acre flag measures 13 feet across and the stripes are 16 feet high and 411 feet long.

After visiting several cities, the flag will end up at its permanent location on the Verrazano-Narrows Bridge linking Brooklyn and Staten Island.

Gone With The Wind

The flag succeeds a slightly smaller version of the Stars and Stripes that made an ill-fated appearance on the bridge during New York’s 1976 Bicentennial festivities. The wind tore it almost in half the first time it was hoisted aloft.

Steel supports will protect the new flag, which on patriotic occasions will be raised and lowered with cables powered by nine small motors.

The undisputed heavyweight champ before the appearance of the Verrazano contenders was a flag that weighed a ton and a half and adorned the front of a Detroit department store on suitable holidays. Measuring 230 x 204 feet, it took 55 men to get it into place each time.
Famed Photo

By Kevin Leary

The soul-stirring photograph has been seen more than any other picture in the history of photography. It has been reproduced on stamps, war bonds, paper weights, cartoons, and in sculptures of ice, hamburger and bronze.

The picture helped win World War II, and made Chronicle photographer Joe Rosenthal a Marine Corps hero.

Rosenthal's Pulitzer Prize-winning picture of the flag-raising on Iwo Jima, taken Feb. 23, 1945, froze in one four-hundredths of a second a symbol of the indomitable fighting spirit of the U. S. Marine Corps.

Yesterday the Marines of the 12th Marine Corps District on Treasure Island turned out spit-shined and in dress blues to pay tribute to Rosenthal in a delayed 35th anniversary of the photograph and the bloody victory at Iwo Jima.

"To say we are here this morning to pay tribute to a man would be an understatement," said Colonel E. L. Erickson, commanding officer of the district. "We are here to pay homage and show our appreciation to a living legend."

Rosenthal, 68, took the historic photo when he was a combat correspondent with the Associated Press. For the past 34½ years he has been an aggressive and artistic photographer with The Chronicle.

Rosenthal, rejected from military service in World War II because of poor eyesight, ultimately saw as much combat as any veteran of the war.

Rosenthal became a combat photographer and had a ringside view of history, taking pictures of some of the most dramatic moments of the war.

A practical newsman, Rosenthal figured the best way to get good news pictures was "to get where the action is, where the pictures happen themselves, and all I had to do was point the camera."

And that's where he went looking for news — New Guinea, Hollandia, Guam, the Palau group and bombing raids over the Japanese-occupied Philippines. He was always where the bullets were flying because that's where the pictures were that he wanted.

When he and his Marines fought their way to the top of Mount Suribachi four days after landing, Rosenthal found to his disappointment that a small American flag was already flying over the bloody, 566-foot summit.

However, five Marines and a Navy corpsman were about to raise another larger flag, one that could be seen by Americans all over the tiny 7½-square-mile island.

It was that flag-raising that Rosenthal caught, creating his immortal picture.
GEORGE CAHILL: COMPLEAT EXTROVERT

Gupton Vogt recently said when speaking of George Cahill, "He has to be the greatest extrovert on earth." Those of us who know and love George have to agree with Gupton.

Born 5 November 1925 in Indianapolis, Ind., George F. Cahill grew up in Kansas City, Mo., where his parents still live. During World War II he flew with the Eighth Army Air Force. He received his B.S. in Pharmacy in 1949 from Purdue University.

George has worked as a stock and shipping clerk, stockyard hand, ambulance and hearse driver, haberdasher, salesman and huckster. What he does best is peddle the U.S.A. as a professional patriot.

George has been 27 years in the employ of the Boy Scouts of America, serving in five metropolitan cities. His interest in flags grew along with his links to Scouting and came to full bloom with the opportunity to create The Flag Plaza and the National Flag Foundation. NFF is a unique patriotic educational center dealing with the history of the U.S. as depicted by its flags. George also founded the "Pride in America" Company, which produces and distributes art and literature to promote patriotic awareness and pride.

In 1967, as Director of the National Flag Foundation, George invited Whitney Smith to edit NFF's Flags of America book, and he learned about NAVA at that time. He attended the next meeting and joined. He is interested in historic American flags and state flags of the U.S. and in related emblems and symbols.

George is a member of the Executive Committee and Trustee of the American Humanics Foundation and a lifetime member of the board of Alpha Phi Omega, the National Service Fraternity. His awards and honors have been many. Among those he particularly treasures are Pittsburgh Man of the Year Community Service Award in 1976, the Gen. Ridgeway Award by the West Point Society in 1977, and several Freedom Foundation Awards.

George has contributed articles to numerous publications. In 1978 he wrote and published Big Ideas: 60 Inspirational Messages, a booklet of anecdotes on individual responsibility.

George is a Roman Catholic and a Republican. His political stance, he says, is "Conservative, to the right of Teddy Roosevelt, Winston Churchill, and Genghis Khan."

George and Muriel Cahill were married on 5 January 1952. They live with their three children in Pittsburgh.

When George was asked if he had any other interests, he replied, "Enough is too much!" Amen.

Dorothy H. Claybourne
Letter:

Editor:

I would like to request that you inform all personal flag owners to contact the Tumbling Waters Registry of Contemporary Personal Flags as we are again offering registration.

I have enclosed information on this free service and I pledge to be rapid and thorough on responding to applications or inquiries. Also, I am pleased to inform you that I have replaced Janet Smith in the P.R. department.

Sincerely,

Shirley A. Martial
Chief, Division of Research & Information
Tumbling Waters Museum
131 South Perry Street
Montgomery, AL 36104

The Registry is a program started by TWM in an effort to catalog the estimated million and a half personal flags that exist in the world today. Drawings or photographs of personal flags and information on the design and symbolism are kept in the Registry. Personal flags are accepted for the Museum's collection.

Letters

To the Editor:

There seems to exist much confusion in the minds of people regarding the flying of the flag at half staff.

President Eisenhower in 1954 issued a directive which stated when, and for what length of time, the flag of the United States of America should fly at half-staff:

"For 10 days in the case of the death of the Vice President, the Chief Justice or a retired Chief Justice, or the Speaker of the House of Representatives.

"From the day of death until interment for an Associate Justice of the Supreme Court, a member of the Cabinet, a former Vice President, the Secretaries of the Army, Navy and Air Force, a United States Senator, a member of the House, a territorial delegate, the Resident Commissioner of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, or the Governor of a state or territory.

In the event of the death of other officials, former officials or foreign dignitaries, the flag should be displayed at half-staff, in accordance with such orders or instructions as might be issued by or at the direction of the President, or in accordance with recognized customs or practices not inconsistent with law."

The presidential proclamation also stated that heads of departments and agencies of the federal government could direct that the flag be flown at half-staff on occasions other than those specified.

In the light of tradition and flag etiquette, it is, in my opinion, inappropriate to lower the national flag at half-mast for the hostages in Iran.

Perhaps the historical background of the custom will substantiate my claim.

Lowering the flag at half-mast had its origin in early naval battles.

The defeated foe had to lower his flag halfway so that the victor's colours could take the place of precedence and honor.

With the passage of time, the lowered flag became a symbol of respect, especially to one of superior station. Most nations eventually adopted the practice of flying their flags at half-staff as a mark of mourning and acknowledgement of Death's victory over mortal life.

Let us, by all means, proudly fly Old Glory in honor of those noble men and women being held hostage in Iran, but let us not strike our colours before an adversary whose violation of human rights makes them unworthy of this act of respect.

REV. JOHN R. B. SZALA, President North American Vexillological Association Salem