

THE UNITED STATES FLAG CODE

As stated during a previous article, "The History of Flag Education" You cannot have Flag Education without The Flag Code." The Flag Code" is a definitive work on how we treat, observe, display, respect the symbol of our country.

The Flag Code was established through a collaboration of many entities and organizations on June 14, 1923. It was on this date that The National Flag Code was adopted by The National Flag Conference. It was not until June 22, 1942 that it became Public Law.

The Flag Code is part of a larger document that is called The United States Code. This is the main document that the Flag Code is written. There are fifty titles that is the U.S. Code, of the fifty Titles there are two titles that pertain to The Flag Code, Title 4 Flag and Seal, Seat of Government, and the States and Title 36 Patriotic Societies and Observations.

There was another Title, Title 18 that imposed criminal penalties to those who demonstrated certain acts of desecration to The Flag of The United States. This Title was held unconstitutional by the Supreme Court decision of *Texas vs. Wade* in 1989. The Flag Protection act amended that decision and imposed a fine and /or prison for up to a year for desecrating the flag. This Act was soon overturned during the trial *The United States vs. Eichmann* on June 11, 1990. Today there are no penalties for the misuse of The United States Flag.

While the Code empowers the president of The United States to alter, modify, repeal or prescribe additional rules regarding the flag, no federal agency has the authority to issue official rulings on citizens or citizen groups. Consequently, different interpretations of various provisions of the Code may continue to be made. The Flag Code may be tested: 'No disrespect should be shown to the flag of The United States of America'. Therefore, actions not specifically included in the Code may be deemed acceptable if proper respect is shown

It is possible that one-day opinions and thoughts may change and a different attitude towards our National Flag and it's stature will be different. If we stand together as members of The Sons of The American Legion we may slow these desecrations through teaching and promoting Flag Education in our communities. Education of our youth is one way to show proper respect and an annual education can introduce the proper respect to generations.

Copies of The Flag Code, "Let's Be Right on Flag Etiquette" and other Flag Education tools are available through The American Legion Emblem sales catalog for a nominal fee.

Don Allisot

Americanism Commission

The Sons of The American Legion