The Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was written in August 1892 by the socialist minister Francis Bellamy (1855-1931). It was originally published in The Youth's Companion on September 8, 1892. Bellamy had hoped that the pledge would be used by citizens in any country.

In its original form it read:

"I pledge allegiance to my Flag and the Republic for which it stands, one nation, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all."

In 1923, the words, "the Flag of the United States of America" were added. At this time it read:

"I pledge 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."

In 1954, in response to the Communist threat of the times, President Eisenhower encouraged Congress to add the words "under God," creating the 31-word pledge we say today. Bellamy's daughter objected to this alteration. Today it reads:

"I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America, and to the republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all."

Section 4 of the Flag Code states:

The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag: "I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one Nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.", should be rendered by standing at attention facing the flag with the right hand over the heart. When not in uniform men should remove any non-religious headdress with their right hand and hold
it at the left shoulder, the hand being over the heart. Persons in uniform should remain silent, face the flag, and render the military salute."

**FLAG DAY**

On **June 14**, 1777, the Continental Congress approved the design of a national flag.

Since 1916, when President Woodrow Wilson issued a presidential proclamation establishing a national Flag Day on June 14, Americans have commemorated the adoption of the Stars and Stripes by celebrating **June 14** as Flag Day. Prior to 1916, many localities and a few states had been celebrating the day for years. Congressional legislation designating that date as the national Flag Day was signed into law by President Harry Truman in 1949; the legislation also called upon the president to issue a flag day proclamation every year.

According to legend, in 1776, George Washington commissioned Philadelphia seamstress Betsy Ross to create a flag for the new nation. Scholars debate this legend, but agree that Mrs. Ross most likely knew Washington and sewed flags. To date, there have been twenty-seven official versions of the flag, but the arrangement of the stars varied according to the flag-makers' preferences until 1912 when President Taft standardized the then-new flag's forty-eight stars into six rows of eight. The forty-nine-star flag (1959-60), as well as the fifty-star flag, also have standardized star patterns. The current version of the flag dates to July 4, 1960, after Hawaii became the fiftieth state on August 21, 1959.

The White House Office of the Press Secretary June 10, 2011

**Presidential Proclamation--Flag Day and National Flag Week**

On June 14, 1777, the Second Constitutional Congress adopted a flag with thirteen stripes and thirteen stars to represent our Nation, one star for each of our founding colonies. The stars were set upon a blue field, in the words of the Congress's resolution, "representing a new constellation" in the night sky. What was then a fledgling democracy has flourished and expanded, as we constantly strive toward a more perfect Union.

Through the successes and struggles we have faced, the American flag has been ever present. It has flown on our ships and military bases around the world as we continue to defend liberty and democracy abroad. It has been raised in yards and on porches across America on days of celebration, and as a sign of our shared heritage. And it is lowered on days of remembrance to honor fallen service members and public servants;
or when tragedy strikes and we join together in mourning. Our flag is the mark of one country, one people, uniting under one banner.

When the American flag soars, so too does our Nation and the ideals it stands for. We remain committed to defending the liberties and freedoms it represents, and we give special thanks to the members of the Armed Forces who wear our flag proudly. On Flag Day, and during National Flag Week, we celebrate the powerful beacon of hope that our flag has become for us all, and for people around the world.

To commemorate the adoption of our flag, the Congress, by joint resolution approved August 3, 1949, as amended (63 Stat. 492), designated June 14 of each year as "Flag Day" and requested that the President issue an annual proclamation calling for its observance and for the display of the flag of the United States on all Federal Government buildings. The Congress also requested, by joint resolution approved June 9, 1966, as amended (80 Stat. 194), that the President annually issue a proclamation designating the week in which June 14 occurs as "National Flag Week" and call upon citizens of the United States to display the flag during that week.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, BARACK OBAMA, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim June 14, 2011, as Flag Day and the week beginning June 12, 2011, as National Flag Week. I direct the appropriate officials to display the flag on all Federal Government buildings during that week, and I urge all Americans to observe Flag Day and National Flag Week by displaying the flag. I also call upon the people of the United States to observe with pride and all due ceremony those days from Flag Day through Independence Day, also set aside by the Congress (89 Stat. 211), as a time to honor America, to celebrate our heritage in public gatherings and activities, and to publicly recite the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this tenth day of June, in the year of our Lord two thousand eleven, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-fifth.

BARACK OBAMA

[The president’s ethnocentric, nationalistic, patriotic Flag Day proclamation contrasts sharply to what a new law graduate sees in Old Glory and the Pledge. Dick]

**Pledge Allegiance to . . . Justice for All**

By Brad Avakian

Before coming to law school I was a teacher at a small charter school in South Florida. On some of the more hectic mornings, one of my young students would have to remind me of a tradition that has been practiced in this country for more than 100 years. Embarrassed, I would choose a student to lead the class in the Pledge of Allegiance and the entire class would face Old Glory hanging next to the chalkboard. With our hands over our hearts the words would fall out of our
minds. Most days my thoughts were beyond this ritual and looking to the day’s schedule, trying to remember if we had art or P.E. first period or whether I had already made copies of today’s vocabulary worksheets. As a law student, the closing words of the Pledge have taken on much more importance in my mind: “. . . with liberty and justice for all.”

Over the past year I have had the opportunity to utilize the Center for Public Interest Law and Advocacy and its Miller Pro Bono Program here at the Law School. I do not recall what motivated me to participate other than curiosity about the sort of legal problems the local homeless population might encounter, but on a number of occasions last spring and throughout the summer I visited either Centre House, a transitional housing program in State College, or the Women’s Resource Center with an attorney from MidPenn Legal Services. These experiences widened my legal perspective. Surely part of the American Bar Association’s goal in mandating that law schools “offer substantial opportunities for . . . student participation in pro bono activities” in order to meet accreditation standards was to promote these sorts of experiences. [i]

We are all lucky to be here. Obviously I am not aware of the path of all my peers and what struggles they have overcome to make it to this point in their lives, but now that we are here we are all in a privileged position. We want to be attorneys and we are well on our way. This fact does not guarantee an easy road for us from here forward. In fact, in most cases it probably assures decades more of hard work and dedication to a demanding field. However, our law degrees, and the knowledge we have acquired in earning those degrees, heighten our position to a level that most of my former elementary school students, and the vast majority of Americans, will never reach. While most people in this country think of “Liberty and Justice” as little more than lyrics in a patriotic nursery rhyme, every Dickinson Law School student realizes they carry enormous significance.

As members of the bar we will be required to adhere to rules of professional responsibility. According to Model Rule 6.1, all lawyers “should aspire to render at least fifty hours of pro bono publico legal services per year.” This may seem like a modest goal, less than an hour a week, however this goal is not being met and few states do anything in the way of enforcement or even encouragement. Mandatory pro bono has been discussed by legal scholars ad nauseam, but the furthest the states have been willing to go is to enact reporting laws, which does little more than shame attorneys in to helping those who cannot help themselves. And only seven states have mandatory reporting rules. [ii]

**The Justice Gap**

As Professor Deborah L. Rhode, director of the Stanford Center on the Legal Profession, aptly points out, “the United States has the world’s highest concentration of lawyers” and yet millions of serious legal problems in this country go unaddressed.[iii] Maybe the sheer density of lawyers makes it easier to convince ourselves that the next person will pick up the slack so we can carry on with more important matters. But as attorneys, justice should be at the top of
our list of priorities. A recent report by the Legal Services Corp.,” Documenting the Justice Gap in America: The Current Unmet Civil Needs of Low-Income Americans” (Justice Gap Report), found that “only one legal aid attorney is available for every 6,415 low-income people.”[iv] This fall I have seen this extraordinary need first hand through an externship with MidPenn Legal Services. If this data and my experience say nothing else, it says that Legal Services cannot do it alone. . . .

However, no matter how rough things may get for us, we still have a reliable **credo carved into stone above the steps of the Supreme Court: “Equal Justice Under Law.”** As legal scholars, we have a deeper understanding of those words than the average citizen and while Professor Rhode proclaims that this principle is “widely embraced and routinely violated,” I propose that we, as law students and future attorneys, are the difference makers and we have the ability to enforce our country’s most valued legal ideal.

**A Challenge to Change**

. . . . I came to law school because it has put me in a better position to help my former students who called me Mr. A and had infinite questions about our world and our country and started every day by reciting their understanding of what our flag represents.

The best named judge in our nation’s history, Judge Learned Hand, said it best: “If we are able to keep our democracy, there must be one commandment: **Thou shalt not ration justice.**”[v] Our country needs us to be successful, but even more than that our country needs us to be just. If there is not “liberty and justice for all,” as all young children are brought up to believe there is in this country, then our legal system is worthless. Whether you think a lack of equal treatment is a necessary evil in a free and capitalistic society or not, I defy anyone to walk into an elementary school classroom and explain to the students that the Pledge is just something we say, but not believe. Either way, giving an hour of our time every week is the least we can do to give back to a society that has trusted us with the power to determine their legal future.

For the entire essay go to

http://law.psu.edu/academics/research_centers/center_for_public_interest_advocacy/student_perspectives/justice_for_all

**Police State Much? by Cindy Sheehan**

Police State Much?
Cindy Sheehan

“Totalitarianism is patriotism institutionalized.”
Steve Allen

“Patriotic” Americans are still berating me for
“demeaning” my son’s “sacrifice.” A typical message goes something like this: “Your son died to give you the right to spew your filth against this country. If it wasn’t for the military and people like your son, you wouldn’t have the freedom to protest.”

Oh, really? If I have the “freedom to protest” then why have I been arrested so many times and why did I have a four-month restraining order from protesting near the White House last year that would have landed my buns in jail for six-months if I violated it? Why are activists still be arrested for solely exercising what used to be our fundamental rights?

In fact, attorney Bill Quigley has documented that more than 2600 activists have been arrested since Obama was sworn in 2009. Read More:

BOOKS

[The following recently published books make presidential Flag Day proclamations seem ignorantly shallow or dangerously deceptive. Dick]

--STEPHEN NATHANSON. Several books on patriotism. *Patriotism, Morality, and Peace.* Roman and Littlefield, 1993. Is patriotism a worthy ideal, one that we ought to promote and support? Or is it a dangerous and destructive notion that leads to war and hostility? "Patriotism, Morality, and Peace" provides the first sustained philosophical treatment of these questions, distinguishes different forms of patriotism, and shows why some forms are indeed dangerous, while others can be valuable and constructive.

A deep grounding of the peace movement is its effort to reclaim the attribution of "patriotic" for criticism of the nation-state when it wages war. The book traces the many ways "in which major groups in the peace movement have advanced this cause in their publications over the past 20 years."

**STEPHAN SALISBURY.**

*Mohamed's ghosts: An American Story of Love and Fear in the Homeland*

Mohamed Ghorab had no hint one late spring morning that when he dropped his daughter off at school, his life would change forever. Federal agents and police surrounded him in front of terrified parents, teachers and school children. They hustled him off to jail and eventually deported him. His wife was detained at the same time. Agents raided the obscure Philadelphia mosque where Ghorab was imam, ransacking its simple interior and his house next door.

This was a fearful time in the life of America following 9/11, as prize-winning reporter Stephan Salisbury well knew. But he did not anticipate the extremity of fear that emerged as he explored the aftermath of that virtually forgotten raid. Over time, the members of the mosque and the imam’s family opened up to him, giving Salisbury a unique opportunity to chronicle the demolition of lives and families, the spread of anti-immigrant hysteria and its manipulation by the government.

As he explored these events, Salisbury was constantly reminded of similar incidents in his own past—the paranoia and police activity that surrounded his political involvement in the 1960s and the surveillance and informing that dogged his father, Harrison Salisbury, a well-known New York Times reporter and editor, for half a century. Salisbury weaves these strands together into a personal portrait of an America fracturing under the intense pressure of the war on terror—the homeland in the time of Osama.

“Stephan Salisbury tells a dark and important story that has not been told before and that vividly conveys the texture of the lives of men and women caught up in a web of hostility and government interference.” Gay Talese

“Drawing on his own history as an antiwar dissident, Salisbury writes compassionately of the families destroyed and the lives ruined by government-orchestrated repression. This is a vital document for our times, lyrical to an extent unexpected in a political book, yet imbued with a fervor that at every turn is made just by dogged, scrupulous reporting.” Ken Kalfus, author of *The Commissariat of Enlightenment*

“Stephan Salisbury has written a deeply reported, thoughtful meditation on what happens when a society decides it needs to spy on its own. Salisbury’s immersive account of the real-life consequences that happen when an entire community is placed under suspicion makes it clear that covert government surveillance comes with costs that can’t be measured on any balance sheet. Everyone agrees that abuses of power are bad, but Salisbury pushes readers to ponder the consequences—for individuals and for our open, democratic society—that accompany even the legal variety of permanent surveillance.” Michael Schaffer, author of *One Nation Under Dog*

**Stephan Salisbury** is the senior cultural writer for The Philadelphia Inquirer, where he has been a reporter for three decades. He has covered everything from the Pennsylvania prison system, unrest in Ireland and Eastern Europe and the coup in Turkey to the culture wars in the United States and the disruptions of American life in the wake of 9/11. He has received numerous awards and was a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize as part of an Enquirer team investigating local election fraud in 1995. Posted on Tuesday, April 27th, 2010, filed under Author Signing, Moonstone Arts Center Events and follow the comments on the RSS 2.0 feed. You can skip to the end and leave a response. Pinging is currently not allowed

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**OMNI SEeks a World Free of War and the Threat of War, A Society**
WITH LIBERTY AND JUSTICE FOR ALL, A COMMUNITY WHERE EVERY PERSON'S POTENTIAL MAY BE FULFILLED, RESPECT FOR DIVERSITY AND DISSENT, AN EARTH FREE OF ENVIRONMENTAL RACISM, EARTH RESTORED. GRASSROOTS NONVIOLENCE, WORLD PEACE, HUMAN RIGHTS, SOCIAL and ECONOMIC JUSTICE, ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP PROTECTING SPECIES AND THE EARTH.

END OF LIBERTY AND JUSTICE FOR ALL DAY NEWSLETTER #2

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