



Discovering Our Nation's Heritage  
The Story of

# THE PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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# The Story of the Pledge of Allegiance

## Most

schools today fly a United States flag outside the building on a flagpole.

In many schools, students start the day by facing a flag in the classroom and reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

However, 125 years ago this was not



true. Only a few school buildings had a flagpole, and most classrooms did not display a United States flag. Students did not say the Pledge of Allegiance because it was not written until 1892.

The meaning of the Pledge of Allegiance and how it came to be written is an exciting story.





# U<sub>nder God</sub>

# Events

that shaped our  
country also

changed the wording of the pledge itself. The most recent change to the pledge occurred in the 1950s. The United States led the free world in rebuilding Europe after the destruction of World War II (1939–1945). The United States believed in freedom, justice, and equality. In the countries that followed the lead of the United States, people could worship God freely. Citizens could work hard and keep what they earned. Democratic countries quickly recovered from the destruction of war.

Leaders of the Soviet Union also had a plan for rebuilding Europe. Their idea was vastly different from the





American plan. Communist dictators controlled the Soviet Union. They carefully controlled every part of their citizens' lives. They denied people religious freedom and banned Bibles.

People in communist countries longed for liberty and justice as described in the American Pledge of Allegiance. Families forbidden to worship God escaped from communism and streamed into free countries. Communist dictators built fences and walls along their borders to keep people from fleeing their rule.

President Dwight David Eisenhower of the United States led the free world in the 1950s. He believed that Americans should remember the freedoms they enjoyed. God had blessed America because its citizens trusted and served Him.

In the 1950s, Christians asked for the words "under God" to be added to the Pledge of Allegiance. President

Eisenhower agreed. He said, “In this way we shall constantly strengthen those spiritual weapons which forever will be our country’s most powerful resource in peace and war.”

On June 14, 1954, Flag Day, President Eisenhower signed the law that added “under God” to the Pledge of Allegiance. He said, “Millions of our schoolchildren will daily proclaim in every city and town, every village and rural schoolhouse, the dedication of our nation and our people to the Almighty.”

**The Pledge of Allegiance** “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.”



**Flag Day** is June 14 each year in the United States. That date is the birthday of the United States flag. On June 14, 1777, the Continental Congress accepted the design of a red, white, and blue flag. Although Flag Day is not a legal holiday, patriotic individuals celebrate the date by flying the American flag.

**The United States Flag** is also known as Old Glory, the Stars and Stripes, and the Star-Spangled Banner. The 50 stars stand for the 50 states of the Union, and the 13 stripes stand for the original 13 colonies that became the first 13 states.



**Dwight David Eisenhower** served as President of the United States from 1953 to 1961. During his presidency, “under God” became part of the Pledge of Allegiance and “In God We Trust” became the national motto.

Eisenhower came from the small town of Abilene, Kansas. His family was poor. As a teenager, he worked at a local business to earn money so his older brother could attend college. Later, Eisenhower attended



the military academy at West Point. He eventually earned the rank of general. During World War II, General Eisenhower became the commander of the soldiers who defeated the army of Adolph Hitler, the Führer (leader) of Germany.

Because of his honesty and friendly smile, people encouraged Eisenhower to run for president. He easily won the election. As the chief executive of the nation, he offered this prayer: “Give us, we pray, the power to discern clearly right from wrong, and allow all our words and actions to be governed thereby.”