

OLD GLORY

I AM THE FLAG, OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, MY NAME IS "OLD GLORY".

I FLY ATOP THE WORLD'S TALLEST BUILDINGS, I STAND WATCH IN AMERICA'S HALLS OF JUSTICE. I STAND GUARD WITH THE GREATEST MILITARY POWER IN THE WORLD. LOOK UP! AND SEE ME! I STAND FOR PEACE – HONOR – TRUTH – AND JUSTICE, I STAND FOR FREEDOM.

I AM CONFIDENT – I AM PROUD. WHEN I AM FLOWN WITH MY FELLOW BANNERS, MY HEAD IS A LITTLE HIGHER – MY COLORS A LITTLE TRUER – I BOW TO NO ONE! I AM RECOGNIZED ALL OVER THE WORLD. I AM SALUTED – I AM RESPECTED – I AM REVERED – I AM LOVED, - AND I AM FEARED!

I HAVE FOUGHT IN EVERY BATTLE OF EVERY WAR, FOR MORE THAN 200 YEARS: GETTYSBURG, SHILO, APPOMATTOX, SAN JUAN HILL, THE TRENCHES OF FRANCE, THE ARGONNE FOREST, ROME, THE BEACHES OF NORMANDY, GUAM, OKINAWA, KOREA, VIETNAM, IN THE PERSIAN GULF AND . . . A SCORE OF PLACES, LONG FORGOTTEN, BY ALL BUT THOSE WHO WERE THERE WITH ME, . . . I WAS THERE.

I LED MY MARINES – I FOLLOWED THEM – I WATCHED OVER THEM, THEY LOVE ME. I WAS ON A SMALL HILL IN IWO JIMA, I WAS DIRTY, BATTLE WORN AND TIRED, . . . BUT MY MARINES CHEERED ME! . . . AND I WAS PROUD!

I HAVE BEEN SOILED, BURNED, TORN, AND TRAMPLED ON THE STREETS OF COUNTRIES THAT I HELPED SET FREE. IT DOES NOT HURT, . . . FOR I AM INVINCIBLE.

I HAVE BEEN SOILED, BURNED, TORN, AND TRAMPLED ON THE STREETS OF MY OWN COUNTRY, AND WHEN IT IS BY THOSE WHOM I HAVE SERVED IN BATTLE WITH, . IT HURTS. BUT I SHALL OVERCOME . . . FOR I AM STRONG!

I HAVE SLIPPED THE BONDS OF EARTH AND FROM MY VANTAGE POINT ON THE MOON, I STOOD WATCH OVER THE UNCHARTED NEW FRONTIERS OF SPACE.

I HAVE BEEN A SILENT WITNESS TO ALL OF AMERICA'S FINEST HOURS. BUT MY FINEST HOUR COMES WHEN I AM TORN INTO STRIPS, TO BE USED AS BANDAGES FOR MY WOUNDED COMRADES ON THE FIELD OF BATTLE, . . . WHEN I FLY AT HALF MAST TO HONOR MY MARINES, . . . AND . . . WHEN I LIE IN THE TREMBLING ARMS OF GRIEVING MOTHERS, AT THE GRAVESIDE OF HER FALLEN SON OR DAUGHTER, I AM PROUD . . . MY NAME IS "OLD GLORY" . . . LONG MAY I WAVE . . . , DEAR GOD, . . . LONG MAY I WAVE.