

THE STARS AND STRIPES

What is a flag? For what does it stand?
Is it merely an emblem for a given land?
The answer lies in your heart and mind,
And is, for most of us, not hard to find.

Our Flag is more than just some fabric weaved.
It reflects our dreams, our goals achieved.
The countless battles fought to keep us free,
And the peace enjoyed with liberty.

There are those who, behind our freedoms, hide;
Who profane Our Flag, and have often tried
To defame, destroy and desecrate
Those colors our forefathers held so great.

But that Star Spangled Banner has endured these years,
It has been witness to sacrifice, blood and tears.
And as long as the Liberty Bell can ring...
Our Flag will dip to no one, be he man or king.

Yet those colors mean more than just ideals.
They are a symbol of what a patriot feels:
Love for Country, and Honor, and Duty as well.
And they wave in tribute to those who fell.

To the Soldier who bore them up San Juan Hill.
To the Blue and the Grey who lie deadly still.
As they faced each other in our Civil strife,
To save his own dear Flag, each gave up his life.

To those brave Marines who on Iwo Jima fought,
So they could raise Old Glory on that bloodsoaked spot.
To our sons and daughters who raised their hand,
Then bravely served and died for their Flag, their Land.

But as for those who cannot shed a tear,
When Our Anthem sounds out loud and clear;
Or those who will not in silence stand,
To show respect for their Native Land...

For them I am truly sorry, and also sad.
They can't feel as I do: Just so glad,
To have such pride... it lifts me ten feet high,
When The Stars and Stripes go passing by.

-Frank J. Montoya
CW3, US Army, Retired