

The following is a direct quotation from the beginning of Title 36, Section 176, of the United States Code: "No disrespect should be shown to the flag of the United States of America;" Furthermore, Paragraph (K) of this same Title 36, Section 176, states: "The flag, when it is in such condition that it is no longer a fitting emblem for display, should be destroyed in a dignified way, preferably by burning."

(Ceremony team enters in silence, displaying unfurled flag to the assembled gathering)

I AM YOUR FLAG

I was born on June 14, 1777

I am more than cloth just shaped into a design.

I am the refuge of the world's oppressed people.

I am the silent sentinel of freedom.

I am the emblem of the greatest sovereign nation on earth.

I am the inspiration for which American Patriots gave their lives and fortunes.

I have led your sons into battle from Valley Forge to the blistering desert of the Arabian Peninsula. I have been there though the Civil War, two World wars, at Gettysburg, Korea, the Gulf War, all of them. I was there with George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, Teddy Roosevelt, John F. Kennedy, and I am here with you now.

I walked in silence with each of your honored dead to their final resting place beneath the silent white crosses row upon row.

I have flown through Peace and War. Through strife and Prosperity, and amidst it all, I have always been respected. My red stripes symbolize the blood spilled in defense of this glorious nation. My white stripes, the burning tears shed by Americans who lost their sons in battle. My blue field represents God's Heaven under which I fly, and my stars, clustered together, unify the fifty states as one for God and Country.

I am "Old Glory" and I proudly wave on high. Honor me, respect me, and defend me with your lives. Never let our enemies tear me down from my lofty position, lest I never return. Keep alight the fires of patriotism, strive earnestly for the spirit of democracy, and keep me always as a symbol of freedom, liberty, and peace in our country.

When comes the time when I am old and faded, do not let me fly in disrepair, rather retire me from my duties only to replace me with a new flag so that I may continue to symbolize our country. With this, renew your commitment to what I stand for and pledge your allegiance to me one final time.

(Stop here until the flag's colors are completely separated; then continue).

Scouts Salute!

FIRST STRIPE: The 13 stripes stand for the original 13 colonies which are: Virginia, New Jersey, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Pennsylvania, New York, Maryland, Connecticut, Rhode Island, Delaware, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia.

SECOND STRIPE: The white stands for purity

THIRD STRIPE: The red stands for courage

FOURTH STRIPE: "Give me liberty or give me death"

FIFTH STRIPE: "One if by land, two if the sea"

SIXTH STRIPE: We the people of the United States, in order to form a more perfect union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquillity, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution of the United States of America.

SEVENTH STRIPE: We hold these truths to be self-evident that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

EIGHTH STRIPE; Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof

NINTH STRIPE; Congress shall make no law abridging the freedom of speech or press.

TENTH STRIPE; "Four score and seven years ago, our fathers brought forth to this continent a new nation."

ELEVENTH STRIPE; The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of sex.

TWELFTH STRIPE; "Ask not what your country can do for you, but what you can do for your country."

THIRTEENTH STRIPE; "One small step for man, one giant leap for mankind."

Each state is being represented by a star on a field of blue, which signifies a new constellation being formed.

As we place it into the fire, let it burn brightly and remind us how truly our flag represents our country.

Will you please join me in saying the Pledge of Allegiance.

Will you please join me in singing The Star Spangled Banner. (optional)

Conclude with Taps playing off in the distance. (optional but great if you have someone who can do this)

This concludes our ceremony. Please leave the campfire in silence in respect of our retired flag.