



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY  
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS  
2000 NAVY PENTAGON  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20350-2000

IN REPLY REFER TO

1730  
Ser N097/02170  
14 Jun 02

Dear Colleagues:

*Put your hand over your heart when the flag goes by.  
Put your hand over your heart when you see "Old Glory" fly.  
Face that Star-Spangled Banner, and when the music starts,  
Put your hand—put your hand—over your heart.*

These words are the chorus of the song my friend Wintley Phipps sang to begin an inspiring concert of patriotic music here in Washington, D. C. some weeks after the September 11<sup>th</sup> attacks. That he would begin with a song calling attention to the American flag—calling for respect and honor to it—made perfect sense. In the same way, Flag Day's call for us to pay attention, respect and honor to our national ensign makes very good sense, and more so this year than any other in recent memory.

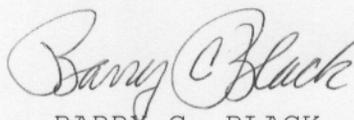
The American flag has been busy these past nine months. It has been raised, Iwo-Jima-like, amid the rubble of the World Trade Center, and unfurled from the roof of a still-smoldering Pentagon. It has draped the caskets of firefighters and policemen here at home, and of fallen warriors who took the fight to the enemy's back yard. The American flag now flies from thousands of highway overpasses and millions of car antennas across the country. It waves proudly on the T-shirts of little tykes and tottering great-grandmothers. In response to September 11<sup>th</sup>, most Americans have made every day Flag Day.

I am proud that, though we lower our flag in deference or submission to no other nation, we routinely and appropriately subordinated it in the Sea Services to the banners of our religious commitment to God. And when we pledge our allegiance to this flag, we acknowledge that our allegiance is based on the reality the flag symbolizes: a unified nation, governed by elected representatives, and committed to universal liberty and justice, all under the authority and guidance of Almighty God.

And so we celebrate this amazing experiment called "America". This is somehow expressed in a flag. We honor a spirit that makes our Nation and the hope of so many not yet free. We put our hands over our hearts when the flag goes by because that simple sign of respect represents all we know we owe, but cannot hope to express—let alone repay—to all that the Stars and Stripes represent.

O say, can you see...what the Star Spangled Banner means on Flag Day  
this year?

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Barry C. Black". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the typed name.

BARRY C. BLACK  
Rear Admiral, Chaplain Corps  
U. S. Navy  
Chief of Navy Chaplains