

Letter from the Editor - A symbol protected

Posted by [TBN Editor](#) On 12/12/2016

Hollywood, MD – It remains to be seen if President-elect Donald Trump's call for punitive measures to be taken against flag-burners will actually result in any major legislation. Burning the American flag in protest is certainly a despicable act, one that can be dangerous in the wrong venue. It should be noted, however, that the proper way to dispose of an old American flag is—yes, burning it! That does pose a dilemma since the intent for the burning must be articulated. Considering that, you can see why the U.S. Supreme Court ruled over 25 years ago that burning a flag was protected by the First Amendment.

My love for the American flag is quite sincere. There have been occasions during my long walks on the sides of the region's main roads that I have seen small discarded American flags. I have a few in my possession, ones that I picked up and rehabilitated. Soap and water actually work just fine on Old Glory. One thing I've never had a notion to do is to take the found flag to the local police and say, "officer, you've got find out who did this." As inconsiderate as tossing a flag on the ground is, it's not a crime. The police and courts are busy enough without becoming bogged down with flag desecration cases.

Besides, good Americans protect the flag better than any statute, including the Constitution, ever could. Major League Baseball fans have never forgotten the swift action Rick Monday, then playing for the Chicago Cubs, took during a game in April 1976 at Dodger Stadium. An adult male and his 11-year-old son ran onto the field with a flag and were about to set it ablaze. Monday ran towards them and grabbed the flag before it could be torched. Despite hitting a game-winning home run years later in a National League Championship Series with the Dodgers, the rescue of the American flag is the play for which Monday will be best remembered. By the way, the adult would-be flag-burner was arrested. He was subsequently charged with trespassing.

Consider also, the various organizations—the Boy Scouts, the Girl Scouts, the Elks, armed forces veterans groups, just to name a few—who constantly teach and practice flag etiquette. Their devotion and patriotism was not legislated and it certainly isn't prompted by the fear of punitive actions if they do otherwise.

America does have many challenges and problems and we hope our new president will lead us to doing better in those areas going forward. But the collective love Americans have for the flag is something that has never stopped being great. We salute all who have protected and continue to protect our flag.

The opinions expressed to not necessarily reflect those of TheBayNet.com management.

Contact Marty Madden at marty.madden@thebaynet.com

Copyright © 2019 thebaynet.com. All rights reserved.