



SONS OF SPANISH AMERICAN WAR VETERANS NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

National President
James W. McBryant II
P.O. Box 628
Westfield, IN 46074
317-331-4216
jmcbryant2@gmail.com

November 11, 2019

Brothers of SSAWV,

Our nation pauses today to pay our collective respect to members, past and present, of our armed forces. As an order dedicated to preserving the memory of those who served in the Spanish American War, The Philippine Insurrection and the Boxer Rebellion, we honor the service of our ancestors. While the campaigns of that period were not as significant, in historical perspective, as many other military actions of our nation's history, none can claim equal significance in serving to unite a nation recently fractured by Civil War. Furthermore, the armed forces at that time were significantly reduced in number, and arguably inadequate to face the challenge before them. As a result, the soldiers, sailors and Marines who answered the call to service were overwhelmingly volunteers. This very personal and honorable act of volunteering embodied the sacrificial principles on which our great country was founded.

As often occurs yet today, political motives at that time were hotly debated. Some believed the United States should not become involved militarily in international issues, while others believed it our nation's duty to offer freedom of opportunity to peoples oppressed by imperialist structures. What cannot be argued is the fact the citizen-soldiers of that time set an example, that endures through today, of a principle of participatory democracy that compels one to set aside personal interest in the desire to serve others.

Whatever religious beliefs one may espouse, none can argue with the words of the Teacher who stated so long ago, "Greater love has no man than to lay down one's life for one's friends." Sacrificial service has always been the standard to which our military is called. Those who laid down their lives temporarily in the service of others are worthy of our respect and appreciation. Those who, in the act of laying down their lives, made the ultimate sacrifice in losing that life are consummately deserving of our devotion.

In closing, I wish to offer a special word of appreciation to those of our order who have served, or are currently serving, our nation in the armed forces. You have our respect and gratitude. As regards those whose service we are particularly dedicated to honor, I offer the words of our SSAWV prayer – "Peace be to the ashes of our Spanish American War dead and honor be to their memory."

In Fraternity, Patriotism and Humanity,

James W. McBryant II

National President

DEVOTED TO THE MEMORY OF SPANISH AMERICAN WAR VETERANS
www.ssawvhq.org