



American Defenders of Bataan and Corregidor Memorial Society

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May 20, 2016

First Lady Michelle Obama
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mrs. Obama,

Like you, we are women who care deeply for our country. We care about what we have been, and can be, as female Americans. We are the widows of former American POWs, and proud members of the American Defenders of Bataan and Corregidor Memorial Society. Our organization honors the veterans of WWII, specifically the survivors of the Bataan Death March, the hell ships and Japanese slave labor camps.

With your husband's impending trip to Japan, we urge you to work with your husband and the White House staff to repair the gulf that exists in the legacy for these under recognized brave American men who were abandoned by this country and forced to surrender in April and May of 1942 -- the largest surrender in our history. Only 1 out of 2 survived this ordeal.

The defenders of the Philippines were known as the Battling Bastards of Bataan. "No mama, no papa, no Uncle Sam." It is time to bring back Uncle Sam to remember them and to honor their contributions.

The Pacific War must not be remembered simply as the legacy of one new weapon, for it is not the weapons of war, but rather the causes, conduct, and lessons of that war that matter most.

Thank you for your time and consideration on this very urgent matter.

Sincerely yours,

Dottie Stempin
San Antonio, Texas

Jean Pruitt
Sweetwater, Tennessee

Pat Thompson
Colorado Springs, Colorado

Esther Jennings
San Francisco, California

Lora Cummins
San Antonio, Texas

Ruth Wilber
Colorado Springs, Colorado

Doris DeVivo
Council Bluffs, Iowa

Norma Alexander
San Antonio, Texas

Rose Bridges
Spartanburg, South Carolina

cc: President Obama