

## January Patriotic Instruction

Brothers,

The New Year has come and gone, and we are now looking forward to new beginnings and opportunities. The year 2020 was tough on all of us, and we hope that the year 2021 will bring us all good tidings and joy. We must again renew our conviction in our mission statement of preserving the memory of the Boys in Blue. However, that is not all we have to renew with the turn of the year, 2020 was not just hard on us, but it was hard on our country, on the good ol' United States of America, and it is time for us to remind not only ourselves, but our neighbors and fellow countrymen and countrywomen, that we have not, and will never turn our back on Lady Liberty.

I have mentioned in the past that Patriotism starts in our neighborhoods, and in our communities, this is a sentiment that I truly believe in. We must get into our communities and start educating as to why we are so lucky to be in this country. We must point out, that while not perfect, America has given us all amazing opportunities that more than likely we would not have received if we lived elsewhere. Are there some that have a tougher road than other, of course there are, but this is the country that if you want something bad enough, and work your tail off, odds are you will be successful in one way or another, and that is something to be proud of.

The United States of America, at its foundation, was a unique concept, in the sense that we wanted nothing to do with a monarchy or long-term leadership. You see many of the world powers in the 1770s, France, China, Ottoman Empire, Portuguese Empire, Prussia, Spanish Empire and British Empire were all a monarchy or dynasty in one form or the other, in other words, the leadership passed from family member to family member and the decisions were made by them with little to no input from the citizens. The Constitution of the United States of America, which was originally drafted by the Constitutional Convention in 1787 and sent to the States for Ratification, with Delaware being the first state to ratify in December of 1787 and the last original colony to ratify being Rhode Island in 1790. The first thing that is established by the Constitution, in Article I Section 1, is Congress. Later Sections of Article I go on to define who can be members of the newly formed House of Representatives and Senate, and how they get put in position. The long and short of it is, the States decided every 2 and 6 years for Representatives and Senators, respectively. This concept was foreign to most countries in the late 1700's, the idea that the people living in the country, the citizens, have a voice in how the country is governed. From this, the American Dream was born as any citizen could come to a position of power in this country, like say a lawyer from Illinois, who was born in Kentucky, that would go on to be arguably the greatest President this country has seen.

If we teach these lessons to our neighbors, in schools, libraries, community centers, and to other local organizations that at her heart, America is the Land of the Free, where every citizen's voice is heard. By doing this, our country will become stronger in the long run. That the opportunities that we all have had, will be passed on to our children and their children. That the great melting pot of America, can better the lives of those who live here as long as they follow the laws, and work their tails off.

In Fraternity Charity and Loyalty,  
Br. Ben Frail, PDC  
National Patriotic Instructor

