



An American Shame: The Abandonment of an Entire American Population

Sr., USMC (Ret), Major Ralph Stoney Bates

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This is a true story of the Americans of Guam. Abandoned by their government even before the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. That abandonment opened the door for the Japanese conquest of Dutch East Indies, the Solomon Islands, and the Philippines, and the brutal imprisonment of 25,000 American civilians in their own homelands. These American civilians, mostly Chamorros, suffered torture, rapes, and death for 31 months awaiting the return of military and naval forces of the country who had abandoned them. All through that occupation and uncivilized brutality they remained covertly and overtly loyal to America and Americans. Even today, these Americans of Guam struggle for recognition, restitution, and rewards for their unflinching contributions and loyalty to the United States of America. This is one of their many stories: Not too long ago, a young American soldier arrived home here from one of our recent wars in a foreign land. He arrived in a wooden casket, draped with an American flag. A guard of honor escorted his remains and local dignitaries honored his return home, greeting him at the airport in a manner all military war casualties deserve. He served his country honorably and gave his life, not only defending America, but giving the people in a foreign land the right to choose their own destiny — the right to vote for their leaders, the right to own property, the right to prosper by the sweat of their own brow, the right to receive benefits from the government that levies taxes on them, and protection from government's ability to take their property without due process. These are some of the things that young soldier fought and died for— things he cannot have. Before this young man entered military service — and had he lived to return here as a military veteran — he was and would have been ineligible to vote for his commander-in-chief, the president of the United States. He would be required to pay taxes, but would not receive the full benefits of that taxation. For example, he would pay tax for the Affordable Care Act but would not be eligible for its benefits. Where this young soldier is buried, and where his father lives, American flags fly from masts and standards, the Star Spangled Banner is sung, and pride for America is firmly rooted in the hearts and minds of every living soul. Indeed, here the World War II population — those Tom Brokaw forgot to write about in his "The Greatest Generation," the grandparents of this young soldier — was abandoned by its government to face imprisonment, brutality, torture and attempted extermination by Japan during 31 months of agony from December 1941 to July 1944. Their love and pride in America knows no bounds. And, even though limited U.S. citizenship was granted this population by Congress after the war, they have all the requirements and demands of citizenship, but not all of the rights of citizenship. They have no representation (law making vote) in the Congress of the United States. Yet, they continue to march to the sound of the guns when America calls. This is Guam, America's western outpost, occupied by the guardians of the outer limits on America's frontier. The first to see the sun rise over American soil are the people of Guam. As retired Marine Brigadier Gen. Vicente Blaz once told Congress about the people of Guam, "equal in war, unequal in peace." That statement appropriately describes these American military veterans and retired military residing here. It's a national disgrace the American people should tell Congress to correct. Soon! The author spent six months on the American island of Guam and over a year of intensive research, and reflects his admiration for the Chamorros of Guam, and his incomprehension of their treatment by the United States government. This book is to awaken the American people, all the American people, to the stories of a society of captives, and their dreams of justice.

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