



Written by [Steve Byas](#) on August 4, 2025

Union Daughters Support Restoring Arlington Monument

A call to restore the Reconciliation Memorial at Arlington National Cemetery at the national convention of the Daughters of Union Veterans of the Civil War this past weekend is the latest example of the pushback on Marxist efforts to divide Americans.

The Reconciliation Monument (officially known as the [Confederate Memorial](#)) was erected more than 100 years ago, surrounded by graves of Confederate soldiers, as part of the effort to reunite the country after the Civil War, which took the lives of about three-quarters of a million Americans. Unfortunately, the monument was removed in late 2023 as yet another part of the “Cultural Revolution” sweeping America. Marxists and their dupes desire to erase history, create division instead of unity in the country, and advance a political agenda designed to promote their radical vision for the future.



Tim1965/Wikimedia Commons

The Confederate Monument at Arlington National Cemetery

Fortunately, many Americans, such as the Daughters of Union Veterans (DUV), refuse to look at our nation’s history through the grid of Marxist conflict theory, which views all of history as a class struggle. It is a vision that is at least as old as the bloody French Revolution and the radical societies that precipitated it. The French radicals wanted to eliminate the structures of French society, such as the law code, the calendar, and even playing cards. Their particular target was religion, especially Christianity. They had no desire for “reconciliation,” and their ideological descendants today have the same goal: destroy existing society and replace it with a Marxist one.

The Resolution

The DUV resolution noted that the monument was part of a larger movement to “commemorate national reconciliation after the war and stood as a symbol of peace, healing, and unity among Americans.”

The resolution added that the monument at Arlington was supported by multiple U.S. presidents and prominent Union veterans groups, including the Grand Army of the Republic.

The DUV encouraged “the preservation, protection, and if needed, the restoration and rededication of all Union Civil War memorials throughout the United States that have been damaged, removed, or are at risk of being lost,” including those honoring Confederate soldiers.

Plan for Reconciliation

Less than a week after the conclusion of the Spanish-American War in 1898, President William



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McKinley — a Union veteran — began a “Peace Jubilee” tour of the country. In Atlanta, he told his Southern audience that he believed the time had come for the United States government to “share with you” the care of the graves of Confederate soldiers.

“Sectional feeling no longer holds back the love we feel for each other,” McKinley said. “The old flag waves over us in peace with new glories.”

The United Confederate Veterans (UCV) had identified Confederate graves around the Washington, D.C., area and petitioned the government to relocate their remains to Arlington. McKinley and Congress heartily agreed, noting that many Southerners had fought side-by-side with Americans from the Northern states in the war with Spain. By 1900, 262 Confederates were buried in a specially designated section of the cemetery, and eventually about 400 were included there.

In 1903, President Theodore Roosevelt sent a floral arrangement to the gravesite memorial, a practice followed by every American president since — until Joe Biden. Ironically, Biden had made “unity” the theme of his 2021 inaugural address, but instead joined those wishing to reverse the policy of reconciliation. A federal law was passed requiring the Department of Defense to erase anything Confederate associated with the U.S. military.

Arlington National Cemetery

Arlington National Cemetery was located on land stolen from Confederate General Robert E. Lee during the Civil War. His plantation and Arlington House had been built by the step-grandson of George Washington, George Washington Parke Custis. Custis’ daughter, Mary Custis, married Lee. Upon the death of Lee’s father-in-law in the late 1850s, Lee and his wife inherited the estate, which included slaves.

He also inherited the debts of the estate, which he could have paid off by selling the slaves. Instead, Lee wanted to free them, as Custis had indicated in his will. (Lee could not free them immediately, as the slaves were part of the collateral on the massive debts.) He formally freed them about three years later.

During the Civil War, the plantation was occupied by Union troops, and much of the Lees’ personal property was stolen. When Lee’s wife sent an agent to pay the property taxes, federal officers refused to allow it. They demanded that Robert E. Lee appear in person to pay — an obviously ridiculous and illegal demand. Using the spurious argument that Lee had failed to pay his taxes, the federal government confiscated Arlington, and began burying Union soldiers there.

In 1882, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled the property had been illegally confiscated. Lee’s son sold the land back to the federal government at a signing ceremony, with then-Secretary of War Robert Todd Lincoln (son of the late president, Abraham Lincoln, who had advocated “binding up the nation’s wounds” in his second inaugural address) present.

History of the Memorial

With the passing of time, the bitterness of the Civil War began to fade, and President McKinley led the way in promoting reconciliation by allowing the burial of Confederate veterans on land that, at one time, had been the home of the most prominent Confederate general, Robert E. Lee. Senator Joseph Hawley, who had been a major general in the Union Army during the war, introduced the bill to finance the reinterment of Confederate dead at Arlington.

The United Daughters of the Confederacy (UDC) began raising funds to establish a memorial in the



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Confederate section, with the full support of Secretary of War William Howard Taft. Speakers at the laying of the cornerstone in 1912 included three-time Democratic candidate for president William Jennings Bryan, and James Tanner, a former commander of the Grand Army of the Republic (an organization of Union veterans). Tanner had lost both legs in the war, but favored the monument, which would symbolize reconciliation between the sections.

Atop the 32-foot-tall pedestal is a bronzed female figure crowned with olive leaves (symbols of peace), representing the American South. Beneath her feet is a verse of Scripture from the book of Isaiah declaring that when the Messiah came, weapons of war would be converted into tools of peace.

This effort to destroy the past [is similar to](#) the Cultural Revolution in Communist China under Mao, in which the “Four Olds” were attacked (old ideas, old culture, old customs, and old habits). And reconciliation — an old idea based upon our Christian culture — is not a virtue favored by American Marxists.

Fortunately, the Daughters of Union Veterans do favor reconciliation.



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