

## Qualifications for membership for Spanish descendents in the SAR

As a relative new member to the SAR and active in the New Mexico Society I am writing this piece in the hope that the NSSAR Genealogical Committee will consider some of the points put forth, from a member with fresh eyes, as they deliberate on the subject of qualifications for membership. Particularly, I am concerned with our membership qualifications for our Spanish (Hispanic) prospective members.

We have in Santa Fe and Albuquerque New Mexico, as well as in Tucson, Arizona and the surrounding environs many Spanish descendents of Presidio soldiers and early settlers that may qualify for membership in the SAR. We need to have a clear policy(s) on who is acceptable and who is not.

First, I should state that I am a direct line male descendent of a Connecticut patriot whose service is well documented. I am the Vice President of the New Mexico Society SAR and a recent student of New Mexico history since I now reside in Santa Fe. I have enlisted the support of Charles Martinez, Past President of the NMSSAR and one who traces his ancestry back to the Presidio.

It would be wise, I believe, for the NSSAR Genealogical Committee to review in detail the history of the Spanish involvement in the war with England and particularly the activity that took place in New Spain during that period (1779-1783). Much of this would be going over old ground, but might be useful as a place to begin.

### Historic Information worth noting

The Spanish in New Spain (the America's) contributed, perhaps unknowingly, to our Revolution. The Spanish attacked the English along the Florida and Louisiana Coast and up the Mississippi River. They also attack them on the islands of the Caribbean and even on the mainland of South America. The Spanish with the French during that time period were at war with England, particularly, in Europe.

Was this to further our cause for Independence? NO.

It was to further the Spanish causes in this hemisphere and to further deplete the English ability to wage war in Europe as well as in the America Revolution. General Galvez exploits are well documented and as a result, the NSSAR has recognized descendents of his forces as members of the SAR including the present King of Spain and his son.

There is and has been excellent research in New Mexico, Arizona and California relating to Spain's involvement in the war with England during our Revolutionary period (1779 to 1783). We, therefore, know that the Spanish and the French were at war with the English at the same time the thirteen colonies decided to break free of English rule. There is reason to believe that there was effort on the part of the Spanish Crown to engage in activities on our behalf as early as 1776.

Let it be noted that only a minority of English colonists initially supported the revolution. For the most part they were loyal subjects of King George and at best were bystanders in the war, unless it directly affected their personal safety or their livelihood. Many colonists got into the Revolution as time past and they found themselves having to take a side. Many stayed loyal to King George. This fact, for instance, is borne out by the migration of many loyalists to Canada following the Revolution. So, as a first point to consider in any membership qualification is: "How were our ancestors involved in our Revolution and is that involvement sufficient to be eligible for membership in the SAR?"

This point has been rather clearly defined. Any involvement that can be documented from service in the Continental Line, Militia, financial support, supplier of arms and food, etc. is sufficient to be considered. Both the DAR and the SAR have rather liberal qualifications in this regard.

Needless to say, many SAR members in good standing have ancestors with varying ties to the actual battles fought in the Revolution and were supporters of the cause in many ways other than in the military ranks.

## What is the “probable” historic information regarding Spanish ancestry

Thus, we are presented with our Spanish descendents here in the Southwest. How can we accept them into our Societies, and by what documents can we verify their participation, in some manner, in our Revolution?

With the present broad interpretation of support to the cause, the descendents of Spanish soldiers and leaders living in New Spain during our Revolution can be and have been accepted as members if they can verify that they descend from a Presidio soldier or are listed on the rolls as having donated two pesos for Spanish soldiers and one peso for settlers loyal to the Spanish King. King Carlos asked (demanded) that all his subjects support the war against England by contributing to his war chest. This donation was requested of all soldiers and settlers at the various Presidios (Santa Fe, El Paso, San Antonio, Tucson, and those in California, and Mexico) and the monies sent to him in the period of 1779 to 1782 or 1783. This action has been well documented.

During this period in Northern New Spain paper was in short supply and the ability to read and write was primarily in the hands of the priests and a few of the mayordomos. But paper was there, especially for use by the government and ecclesiastical purposes. The necessity of keeping a written record and proper accounting of funds was necessary for the local government to be taken seriously by the Spanish Court. And, as with any instance of embezzlement, stealing from the government was dealt with severely. The reason the records are not there is most easily answered that they were lost. It is known that they did exist, as they are referenced in other documents (i.e., the list of contributors for the donativo). We also have lists of contributors of donativos in 1799-1800 for a war against England, and also a war against France (known as the French Revolution), among others.

For example, William Pile served as Governor of the Territory of New Mexico from 1869 – 1871. One of his darkest acts while staying in the Palace of the Governors in Santa Fe was an unsuccessful attempt to completely eradicate the Archival documents of Northern New Spain. This included leaving boxes of ancient documents in the street for people to take. Many of these documents were lost, but it is felt that the majority of them were recovered. Note: The list of contributors for the 1779 donativo may have been among these documents lost.

Seven years later, after Pile left, Susan Wallace, the wife of Territorial Governor Lew Wallace (author of “Ben Hur”) described finding old records in the Palace of the Governors in a very sorry state to include an infestation of rodents. Some of these documents may have been thrown away. Other documents were known to have been taken to California by Territorial Secretary William G. Ritch. They are currently housed in the Huntington Library in California. Of course, there were many more revolutions in New Mexico, and as previously stated, many documents went missing.

It is known that the donativo requested in 1779 for the War against England was a request. It was specifically stated that the donation was not to be forced or contributors intimidated. It is also known what the Spanish population of New Mexico was in 1790 and is stated below. This was only 11 years after the 1779 first request that was terminated in 1783. So the numbers below would not accurately reflect the exact numbers of households during the first donativo timeframe, but are suggested here as an illustration. Also, only the number of households is given, not the number of adults, which would have been much higher.

The 1790 Census of New Mexico included:

Presidio of Santa Fe: 149 Households (this included invalids)

Santa Fe 568 Households

Abiquiu: 265 Households

Albuquerque 909 Households (including Belen, Isleta Pueblo)

Santa Cruz 503 Households

San Juan Pueblo 286 Households (Spanish families)

Picuris Pueblo 76 Households (Spanish families)

Alameda 25 Households (Spanish families, attached to Albuquerque)

This then TOTALS 2,711 Households of Spanish Families

If each household alone would have given 2 pesos, a total of 5,422 pesos would have been collected. It was recorded that 3,677 pesos were collected. This is a difference of 1,745 (remember that we only used the number of Spanish households, not the number of adults in this illustration. Also, Pueblo residents were not counted in the above numbers (though actual census numbers are available).

In Spanish Archives of New Mexico, Series II (SANM II), #850a, it mentions that the soldiers of the Presidio contributed 247 pesos, not including 1<sup>st</sup> Lieutenant Don Manuel de la Azuela, 1<sup>st</sup> Ensign Don Joseph Maldonado and the Chaplain Fray Juan Bermejo. Later on, mention is made of the 100 pesos donated by Manuel de la Azuela. By comparison, it is also mentioned that Don Felipe de Neve, the Governor of California, gave 2,000 pesos. It is also mentioned that the list of who gave and how much was sent along with letter No. 276, and that all of the funds are kept in a 3-lock box.

SANM II, #850b states that the Pueblos of Zuñi, Pecos and the Moqui Pueblos are exempt from this donativo.

### The concern then that needs to be addressed

Written records are not as complete as would be desired, or probably not as precise as those in the eastern seaboard's, original thirteen colonies. In fact, here in the Southwest some documents were found scribed on animal hides. The documentation, therefore, may be less than desired by the SAR and this needs to be addressed during a review by the NSSAR Genealogical Committee.

Did these Spanish soldiers and subjects know, or even care, that the English colonies in the eastern part of this continent were at war with England? Perhaps, but we think not. They had marauding Indians to fight, settlers to protect, food to grow and daily living to take care of; and the King wanted to reduce their account for his own purpose. If anything, one might suggest, that they were unhappy with such a request (demand). {They may have been as involved in our battle to free ourselves from English rule as many of the colonists in the thirteen colonies were involved. This point should not be overlooked or over played during any review of qualifications.}

However, the Spanish King did send funds to the King of France and he in turn did re-crew and re-supply his fleet in Cuba. That fleet sailed north and blockaded the area around Yorktown deigning the English fleet access and sealing the fate of a trapped English force under Lord Cornwallis, thus resulting in his surrender and disgrace.

So, as we access the past actions of the NSSAR Genealogical Committee and actions of the DAR and the rather large amount of evidence now available, we should ask:

“What is the present and future policy regarding the acceptability for membership of the Spanish descendents of the Presidio soldiers and the Spanish subjects of New Spain whose accounts were reduced one or two pesos by request (order) of the Spanish King?”

We should also ask: “Are these men, who can trace back and verify lineage to a particular person listed on the roles at the Presidio's during the time of the payment to their King eligible for membership in the SAR?” Also, “Are other Spanish residents on the rolls as having given a peso also eligible for membership in the SAR?”

We believe that prior action by both the SAR and the DAR say yes? Further, we believe the NSSAR needs to review its policy(s) and assure that future applications be accepted without reservation when presented with proof that the applicant is related to one of the people listed on the rolls.

Let us not embarrass the NSSAR, the State Societies and Chapters or the new applicant by holding up an application or questioning the validity of their connection to the Spanish activity that permits them to apply.

Either these several past actions have been in error, or the broader interpretation of qualifications for membership in the SAR is correct.

If the later is correct, then a clear and well-stated policy should be set forth so that all future members and prospective members can evaluate their qualifications prior to submitting an application.

References provided in the attached South Coast Chapter website report support the position suggested in the statements above. Indeed our past NMSSAR president, Charles Martinez is one of the descendents of a Presidio soldier (<http://www.nmgs.org/artbenav.htm>) and contributed to this request. A copy of his lineage and references to his ancestor are also attached for your review.

Sent forward for your review and action by:

Eugene M. Tomlinson, Past President of the Santa Fe Chapter  
Vice President of the NMSSAR

Charles Martinez, Past President of the NMSSAR  
Vice President of the Santa Fe Chapter



*Sons of the  
American  
Revolution*



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## *South Coast Chapter*

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### **Spanish Involvement in the American Revolution**

Spain declared war on England 21 June 1779 and continued operations against England until peace was declared 3 September 1783. King Carlos III urged his soldiers and sailors to attack the English wherever they appeared.

King Juan Carlos I joined the Society on the basis of the service of his ancestor on 23 February 2000.

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## Sailors

(The following is the address given by Dr. Granville Hough at the Galvez Gala on 12 October 2003 in the city of Long Beach, California. He discusses the process of having the Hispanic contributions recognized by the SAR and what those contributions were.)

In 1996 I learned that the National Society, Sons of the American Revolution, had turned down a California applicant who had no receipt to prove his soldier ancestor had donated one or two pesos to defray the costs of the war with Britain from 1779 into 1783. This seemed a strange denial as the applicant's ancestor had risked his life as a soldier, so why worry about a donativo? I told my SAR chapter I could develop a rationale for accepting Spanish soldiers as patriots, and it said go ahead.

I knew Louisiana soldiers serving under Governor Bernardo de Gálvez had been accepted as Patriots since 1925, and that French soldiers and sailors who served under General Rochambeau and Admiral de Grasse had been accepted since 1903.

So I developed the rationale and looked for applicants to test it. We found two descendants of California soldiers, with clear lineages, and got our first California descendants admitted in 1998.

I had no intent of publishing anything, but concluded it might be useful publish the rationale, then to list names of California soldiers, visiting sailors, and other men who were of the right age to make the donativo.

My daughter joined me in the research, and we did the first book on California, mostly rationale, then the second book giving the names of nearly everyone in California under Spanish jurisdiction during the war period, and most of their descendants until American occupation in 1848, about 5000 persons.

It was interesting research, and no one had ever done such a listing of Spanish soldiers and sailors. We then did Arizona and Northern Sonora, then New Mexico. We were able to get our first descendant of a New Mexico soldier accepted in 1999. We moved on to Texas where a couple of people had already been accepted, but there was no complete listing. We did one, including all the territory now under the Texas flag.

Up to this time we had worked on more than 20 Presidios, more than 10 flying companies of mounted infantry units, and militia units of the larger towns. When we worked on Louisiana, we encountered our first organized Spanish Regiment, the Regimiento de Infanterie de Luisiana. (Here is a representation of the flag of that regiment when Colonel Bernardo de Gálvez personally led it at Manchak, Baton Rouge, Mobile, and Pensacola.)

Then we went on through the West Indies in our seventh volume with numerous Spanish and colonial regiments, then finally back to Northern

Mexico for our eighth volume on backup regiments and other units for the Presidios. We have four more volumes in progress.

Along the way, we were questioned on the work we were doing, mainly based on the way people were taught American History. The question was: "How can we accept descendants of Spanish soldiers? Spain has always been our enemy." And that is exactly the way many influential American historians have depicted it. But that is not the way Spanish soldiers and sailors saw it at the time. They, just like Americans, fought the British where they were or wherever they were sent. They celebrated all victories over the British, no matter who won them.

But there is one quote from a highly regarded American historian at the time of WW I which is still quoted: He made a statement that John Adams and John Jay in negotiating for peace with Britain had no reason to consider Spanish interests as Spain had been of no help to the American colonies and had wished them ill.

He apparently ignored Spanish aid and the de Grasse/Saavedra Accord which governed French and Spanish operations in the Western Hemisphere from July 1781 until the end of the war. He was not aware that a Chesapeake Bay Campaign (Yorktown) was the first item of that accord and that its success was due to five elements, two of them Spanish: Washington's Army, Rochambeau's French Army, de Grasse's French Fleet, Spanish financing, and Spanish covering for the French fleet in the West Indies.

Nor did this eminent American historian make any suggestions as to what SECURED Yorktown, or why the four British staging areas at New York, Charleston, Penobscot Bay, and Detroit were never used by the British to reinvade. Few Americans know that the British were straining mightily in 1782 and 1783 just to hold on in the West Indies. Bernardo de Gálvez was waiting to invade Jamaica during that time with 10,000 troops at Guarico in Haiti. He was joined in Venezuela in Feb 1783 by nearly all of Rochambeau's American Expeditionary Force that had fought at Yorktown, 10,000 French troops. French General d'Estaing was lining up 20,000 more French and Spanish troops at Cadiz in Spain awaiting orders to sail. And Bernardo de Gálvez was already designated as the overall commander of the invading forces. The British had to negotiate or lose everything in the West Indies. That **IMMINENT THREAT IN THE WEST INDIES** is what SECURED Yorktown and made it into the victory we celebrate.

I will point out two other false beliefs which have harmed our relationships with our neighbors:

One is that the War with Mexico began when Mexican troops attacked American troops on Texas soil near the Rio Grande. I defy any historian to show evidence that Texas ever extended south of the Medina River. The Mexican War started when pro-slavery President James K. Polk in May 1848 sent American troops into Mexican territory south of the

Medina and Mexicans defended their land. It is clear we started the Mexican War under false pretenses.

Another false belief is that the Spanish American War was started when saboteurs blew up the battleship Maine on 17 Feb 1898. I defy any historian to show that there were any saboteurs near the Maine that night, whether Spanish, Cuban, or some other. Most likely, the Maine blew up from instantaneous combustion of overheated coal in confined ship storage. The evidence is insufficient for that or any other conclusion. It seems quite clear to most historians that we entered the Spanish-American War under false pretenses.

These three fallacies have biased American history and textbooks for generations. They constantly come up in one form or another, in editorials, from talking heads, and even from reviewers of SAR applications. (These actions were generations after our Revolution and should not be used as evidence or have any substance as to what occurred during the period 1779 to 1783.)

But the study of service records of Spanish soldiers shows interesting and remote places where they served, each with some relation to the war with England. The National Society, Sons of the American Revolution, has recognized the global aspects of the Revolutionary War. In March of this year, the Society removed all geographic restrictions on patriotic service so that male descendants of Spanish soldiers or sailors, in service 1779-1783, can now join our organization, no matter where the ancestor served.

We are also beginning to recognize that Spanish soldiers who fought for freedom for the United States did not forget what they helped create. Within a generation, nearly all the countries we know in the Western Hemisphere had become free nations. The little American Revolution of 13 English colonies had become the Great American Revolution of the Western Hemisphere. [\[top\]](#)

### **The Galvez Project**

The web site for the Galvez Project is:

<http://www.hispanicamericanheroesseries.com/index.php>

The following has been excerpted from that web site.

Few Americans are aware that Bernardo de Galvez was the Spanish governor of the Louisiana territory that encompassed thirteen of our present states. They are also unaware that long before any formal declaration of war, General Galvez sent gunpowder, rifles, bullets, blankets, medicine and other supplies to the armies of General George Washington and General George Rogers Clark. Once Spain entered the war against Great Britain in 1779, this dashing young officer raised an army in New Orleans and drove the British out of the Gulf of Mexico. General Galvez captured five British forts in the Lower Mississippi Valley. They repelled a British and Indian attack in St. Louis, Missouri, captured the British fort of St. Joseph in present-day Niles, Michigan.



With reinforcements from Cuba, Mexico, Puerto Rico, General Galvez captured Mobile and Pensacola, the capital of the British colony of West Florida.

At Pensacola, Galvez commanded a multinational army of over seven thousand soldiers. Most of these men were already serving in the areas known as Nueva España. This included all the land east of the Mississippi, including present day Southwest and southern states, Cuba, Mexico, Puerto Rico, Hispanola, and other Spanish colonies such as Venezuela. The Spanish forces in the Americas were also joined by soldiers from Spain, other European nations, American colonists, indigenous, and blacks. It was this multi-ethnic force fighting together to achieve the goals of the American Revolution under the leadership of a remarkable general commander.

Pensacola was defended by a British and Indian army of twenty-five hundred soldiers and British warships. An American historian called the siege of Pensacola "a decisive factor in the outcome of the Revolution and one of the most brilliantly executed battles of the war." Another historian stated that General Galvez' campaign broke the British will to fight. This battle ended in May 1781, just five months before the final battle of the war at Yorktown.[\[top\]](#)

### **[Rosters by Presidio](#)**

On the left please find the names of the presidios which were active during the Revolutionary era. Under each presidio you will find the roster of known soldiers. The same format is used for the sailors. One you are at the individual unit use the "Find on this page" feature of your browser to search for specific names.[\[top\]](#)

### **[A helpful Web Site for further Research](#)**

Biographical information on these soldiers can be found on the Arizona State Museum web site

<http://www.statemuseum.arizona.edu/drsw/index.html>

Select DRSW Master database and type in the name of the soldier in quotes. Be aware of alternative spellings: some times Antonio appears as Anttonio!

A Chapter member submitted his lineage to the New Mexico Genealogical Society and they have posted it on their web site

<http://www.nmgs.org/artbenav.htm>.

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### **[References for Spanish Soldiers and Sailors of 1779-1783](#)**

Descendants of Spanish soldiers who served in CA while Spain was at war with England during the American Revolution have available excellent references for documenting service of their ancestors. We know families of 220 of 500 plus soldiers or sailors who served during those

years.

1. Granville Hough, Ph.D., and N. C. Hough, *Spain's California Patriots in its 1779-1783 War with England During the American Revolution*, 1998 (eight volumes)
2. Granville Hough, Ph.D., "California During the American Revolution," *California Compatriot*, Winter 1998
3. Granville Hough, Ph.D., "California in the Revolutionary War," *SAR Magazine*, Winter 1999
4. Descendants who already know their soldier ancestor's name can start with Marie Northrop's two volumes, *Spanish-Mexican Families of Early California, 1769-1850*, Vol. 1 (revised 1987), and Vol. 2 (1984). Statements of military service in these volumes were taken from Bancroft's Pioneer Index.
5. In addition to Marie Northrop's volumes, descendants may also start with Dorothy G. Mutnick's five volumes, *Some Alta California Pioneers and Descendants, Divisions One and Two*. In Division One she covered descendants of the Anza Expeditions, and in Division Two she covered the 1781 Expeditions to settle Los Angeles and establish Santa Barbara Presidio. Her work was based on mission records and is a thorough compilation of families.
6. Presidio lists for 1782 for San Diego, Santa Barbara, Monterey, and San Francisco are in the Eldridge Papers of the Bancroft Library. Those for San Diego and Monterey were copied by Marie Northrop and are in LDS film #1421704, item 12. San Diego lists for both 1780 and 1782 were published by Bill Mason in *The Journal of San Diego History*, Fall, 1978. The Santa Barbara list is in at least three local histories of Santa Barbara: Hawley's *The Early Days of Santa Barbara*, Englehardt's *Santa Barbara Mission*, and O'Neill and Meier's *History of Santa Barbara County*. All the lists can be viewed and downloaded from this web site.
7. The service records for CA soldiers are stored in the Archives of the Indies in Seville, Spain. Mr. Raymond F. Wood abstracted 900 service records for the Spanish soldiers he could identify in CA between 1769 until after Mexican Independence and placed these abstracts in the Research library of the Autry Museum of Western Heritage, 4700 Western Heritage Way (in Griffith Park adjacent to the Los Angeles Zoo. These records sometimes show dates of enlistment, promotion, discharge, death, and retirement. They can be studied by appointment: call (213) 667-2000. The Research Library will send copies of the cards at no charge for no more than three ancestors if the ancestor can be identified well enough by the descendant.
8. Hubert Howe Bancroft's *California Pioneer Register and Index Including Inhabitants of California, 1769-1800* extracted military service or other activity as recorded in Bancroft's earlier 7 volume *History of California*.
9. Hubert Howe Bancroft's 7 volume *History of California* noted military service or other activity when it was found in Spanish

records. These records seldom give more than the places or times where the soldier was listed or the activity in which he was engaged. Volumes I and II cover the Spanish period, III and IV the Mexican period, and the others later periods to the 1880 decade, when the volumes were published. These volumes are also in the "complete works" as volumes 18 through 24. Some of the sources Bancroft used burned in the San Francisco fire of 1906, but the majority are stored in the Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, CA.

10. 1790 Padron (census) lists the soldiers and their families. The ages of those listed as, soldiers and their children frequently indicate how long the soldiers had been in service. Some of these lists were published by Marie Northrop in the *Historical Society of Southern California Quarterly* as follows: Los Angeles (June 1959); San Francisco (Dec 1959); Santa Barbara (Mar 1960); Monterey (June 1960); San Jose (Sep 1960); and San Diego (Mar 1961).
11. Thomas Workman Temple, II, work includes his abstracts of mission records, available through Family History Centers of the LDS. His "Soldiers and Settlers of the Expedition of 1781," *Historical Society of Southern California Quarterly*, (1931 ) is very helpful, as are his other published works.
12. Adam C. Derkum's 38 notebooks, "Spanish Families of Southern California," are available on 5 LDS microfilm rolls 1597975 through 1597979. There is no index, but the families are arranged alphabetically. N. C. Hough has prepared a list of surnames for which there are significant entries available. This is published in Granville and N. C. Hough, *Spanish California Patriots in its 1779-1783 War with England during the American Revolution*, 1998, Part 1, "Using Derkum," pages 122-153 and including all his sources on pp 151-153.
13. Early mission records have been studied and abstracted by numerous scholars. Most of the original records have been microfilmed by the Church of Latter Day Saints (LDS). These can be ordered from the LDS in local Family History Centers. Two records partly in English are #0944242, and Item 12 of #1421704.

Part of the above was kindly published as an article by the Society of Hispanic Historical and Ancestral Research in its *Somos Primos* Vol. 9 #2 (Summer 1998)[\[top\]](#)

## **Spanish Louisiana Flag of 1781**

Flag drawing by *António Martins*

*Michael Bunn*, of the Old Capitol Museum of Mississippi History, asked about the flags used by Spanish military forces in America, specifically De Soto ca. 1540 and Gálvez ca. 1780. I received the following

information from Spanish vexillologist *Eduardo Panizo*:

An image of this flag exists in the Spanish *Archivo General de Indias*, in the city of Seville. It is a battalion flag of the *Regimiento de Infanteria de Luisiana 1779-1781*. This was the flag used by this regiment, commanded by Bernardo de Gálvez, at the battle of Pensacola on May 8th 1781, where the Spanish Army defeated the British one.

This white square flag features the traditional red Burgundy cross used by the Spanish army, cornered by four identical coats-of-arms, and over all the latin writing *Honor et Fidélitas*, meaning *Honour and Loyalty*.

*José Carlos Alegría*, 6 September 2000

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From The Flags of The World web site, with permission  
<http://www.crwflags.com/fotw/flags/es%5E1701.html#1779>

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