



**Commander, U.S. Pacific Fleet
Commander U.S. Naval Forces, Korea
Navy Birthday Ball
Admiral Cecil Haney
Saturday, 20 October 2012
Seoul, Korea
As Prepared For Delivery**

Thank you Rear Admiral, Bill McQuilkin for that introduction and for your leadership here at United States Naval Forces, Korea.

Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen, and especially my fellow Sailors and all those who support us, Happy 237th birthday and AN-YONG HA-SAY-YO! (Hello)

It's my pleasure and honor to serve as your Commander of the United States Pacific Fleet and to be here to celebrate this 237th birthday of our Navy.

Having met many of our Sailors here this evening, I must admit, you're looking pretty good for your age.

Isn't it fantastic to be part of such a rich heritage and legacy! Thank you for your service and commitment to the sea service of the United States military and for being here in Korea; an essential ally for America.

I will start by extending a warm Aloha, all the way from Hawaii, to all the spouses, family members and loved ones of our Sailors here tonight. Your contribution to our mission cannot be overstated. Your encouragement and support are vital to the Navy's efforts and it is greatly appreciated.

I'd like to give special recognition to the American Forces Spouses Club and Family Readiness Group tonight. Thank you for all that you do for our Sailors and their families.

Normally during a Navy ball, I look out at the audience and see a room full of Navy Sailors and their spouses. We have some civilians in the audience, but it is certainly a diverse crowd we have here tonight. I see uniforms representing all services in the United States military. I thank each of you for supporting our United States joint military team.

Foreign dignitaries, ambassadors, diplomats and attachés, it is great to see each of you here this evening as well. Thank you for all that you do to help ensure security in our interconnected world.

I see business and community leaders and even the Navy League here; thank you for your support.

I am so pleased to see our close friends from the different branches of the Republic of Korea's military; Navy, Army, Marines, and Air Force. I also see some familiar faces who have worn the uniform in the past but that are now retired, congratulations.

It is truly an honor and pleasure to have you here to celebrate our birthday. I can't help but note that this is a representation of the same varsity team that worked together during the Korean War and has continued to work well together over the last six decades of the Armistice.

Tonight's theme is 'Celebrating 237 years of Naval Spirit and Innovation.' What a great theme, considering how our Spirit and Innovation have contributed to our Navy's rich history and proud heritage for more than two centuries.

From the humble beginnings, when on October 13, 1775, the Continental Congress authorized the conversion of two merchantmen vessels into armed ships. Our Navy went on to play a significant role in winning our Nation's war for independence. Since then, our Navy has continued to play an important role in defending our Nation and in shaping world history.

As you may have seen from the birthday videos of the Chief of Naval Operations and Secretary of the Navy, this year we have been busy with activities to commemorate the 200th anniversary of the War of 1812; a war that many historians call our second war of independence. Since CNO has discussed the War of 1812, I only want to highlight the wooden hulled Brig/Flagship Niagara that he referenced, that was critical to the Battle of Lake Erie.

Can you imagine sailing on the Flagship Niagara then? Today, as Navy Sailors ride our modern day warships powered by gas turbines, diesel, or nuclear power, it is tempting to complain about the size of our sleeping accommodations or having to take short showers. But, can you imagine the kind of quality of life the Sailors on Niagara had to endure? Those Sailors are part of our great Navy heritage. Given what they had at the time, they were able to fight and win. They are of the same mold as our Sailors today – Bold, Innovative, and Spirited Americans who took the fight to the enemy and fought to win.

An important Korean General – General Kwon Oh Song – Deputy Commander of the Republic of Korea, United States Combined Forces Command and Commander, Ground Component Command, mentioned to me yesterday that today, the United States Navy is the most formidable Navy in the history of the world and how appreciative he was that we worked together with the Republic of Korea military forces. But we also know that the true strength and power of our Navy isn't in the technologically advanced equipment or weapons that we have. Our strength lies in our people; the same unique, pioneering and adventurous type of people that started this business 237 years ago and the same caliber of people gathered in this room tonight. Each of you are what makes our Navy great and you have been making it great for more than two centuries. Thank you.

Now General Kwon is a great resource here and I especially salute the fact that he took time to fly out to USS George Washington and experience a carrier landing and takeoff not that long ago. Also, last month, he came to Hawaii and visited the Arizona Memorial. When I asked him yesterday what I should include in my speech tonight he told me to tell you how awe struck he was visiting the Arizona Memorial and discovering that Sailors who were part of the ship's crew as survivors from the attack on Pearl Harbor Dec. 7, 1941 -- where that ship lost 1,177 from the crew that day -- ask today to be buried with their shipmates and how special the bond of a Sailor must be.' Yes, General Kwon, the bond of being a Shipmate is unique and is a major part of the legacy and heritage of our Navy. It is part of the warfighting ethos of each Sailor in the Navy today.

Now I will not try to cover over two centuries of United States Naval History here. Hard to do in the two hours allotted for my speech.

Just kidding.

But since I am here on Korean soil, it is important that I reflect a bit on the Korean War as Naval forces fought gallantly during that conflict and remain postured to deter conflict today. On June 25, 1950 North Korean forces invaded South Korea. Shortly after, the United States and more than 20 other countries of the United Nations aided South Korea in repelling the invasion.

I won't list all 20 nations involved but I understand we have dignitaries from at least three here tonight. His Excellency, Jaime Cabal, Ambassador of Columbia, it is great to have you here tonight. Also, Attachés from New Zealand and Canada, Colonel Ramsden and Colonel Morneau. Thank you for your support then and now.

Within a few weeks of the North Korean invasion, United States, United Kingdom and Republic of Korea naval units were driving North Korean Naval forces out of the West Sea and the Sea of Japan, to establish sea control. Naval forces of course were engaged in many aspects of the war effort providing needed capability from the sea in providing naval air and gunfire support, clearing mines and providing lift for amphibious operations.

Just last month we commemorated the 62nd anniversary of the daring amphibious landing at Inchon, code named Operation Chromite, which cut the supply lines of North Korean forces. Are there any Marines present here tonight? Although the operation was planned and executed by General Douglas MacArthur, I understand the United States Marine Corps did the heavy lifting during Operation Chromite.

Operation Chromite is considered the turning point of the war. An amazing feat given the challenge of marshalling quickly the appropriate forces in a highly constrained and challenging environment. A great example to Sailors and Marines today on being aggressive, innovative, and the importance of having plans, training, and capability to do amphibious operations. The Korean War, on land, at sea and in the air, was truly a combined arms effort, but also a bonding experience between our Nation and yours.

Since the signing of the armistice in 1953, the relationship between the United States of America and South Korea has only strengthened. The Republic of Korea Navy has been patrolling alongside us participating in missions like counter-piracy which is so critically important. In fact, Rear Admiral Chung Anho was the most recent commander of Commander Task Force-151 hosted aboard the Republic of Korea's *Wang Geon* and marks the second time South Korea has commanded the mission.

For nearly six decades, the people of South Korea have risen from the ashes of a war torn nation to become one of the largest economies in the world and a cornerstone for security in Asia. As I travel the Pacific, I am impressed at how much the nations of the Asia-Pacific are increasingly interconnected and how our security and prosperity have become interdependent. Globalization demands maritime security to maintain peace and stability here in the Asia-Pacific and to protect the economic prosperity of nations on all sides of the Pacific Ocean. An important reality, but it is not always easy to achieve or guarantee. All we have to do to understand this challenge is to look north to the DMZ or visit the Cheonan wreckage as I did earlier today. My heart goes out to the families who lost love ones as the Republic of Korea Navy lost 46 that day.

Today we live in an uncertain world where the lives and livelihoods of so many can be threatened, sometimes in an instant. As we celebrate this Navy Birthday, we have our own reminders of just how uncertain this world is. On the 12th of October we commemorated the 12th anniversary of the attack on USS *Cole* and we remembered the loss of 17 of our Sailors. We just commemorated the 11th anniversary of the 9/11 attack on the United States homeland. These serve as reminders that we must work to avoid surprise, but if surprised, we must be ready to respond to it. No matter what the challenge, the United States Navy continues to work with our United States Joint Forces in support of allies and partners to be ready to provide the full range of military options. Whether it is assisting in humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, deterrence ops, or high end war-fighting, our Navy is there.

More than 237 years ago, at the dawn of our Nation's founding, an uncertain future led to great debate among our forefathers. They agonized over the question of whether to declare their independence. In a moment of clarity, nine months before signing the Declaration of Independence, they created our United States Navy. As humble as it was, our forefathers set forth the principles that we still believe today. That our Nation's Navy serves to maintain maritime security, for peace and prosperity, and that our Navy creates certainty in an otherwise uncertain world.

Today as we in the United States Navy work these challenges, we are focused on three key tenets of Chief of Naval Operations Greenert's Sailing Directions-warfighting first, operating forward and to always be ready. These tenets are critically important today as we work to address the challenges here in the Pacific and the world. Our global Navy is out and about in a big way, hard at work as we continue the proud tradition of defending

America, promoting our National interests around the world, supporting our allies, deterring conflict, and if deterrence fails, taking the fight to the enemy-and winning.

For many in this room, you have spent your entire career at war - given Operation Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom. Some of you Sailors have gone ashore in combat zones with our Joint military and coalition forces, as you carried on the Navy legacy ashore and showed the versatility of our Navy team. Can I get everyone here who has gone ashore on an Individual Augmentation or Global War on Terrorism Support Assignment (GSA), in support of these wars to please stand and be recognized?

How about CTF 151?

I salute each of you for your valuable contribution to our proud Navy heritage. Each of you are heroes and I couldn't be more proud of you. For more than 200 years our Navy has been successful because of people like you.

Each and every one of you who serve today are an invaluable member of a special team working and winning in one of the most challenging eras in our Nation's history and I am genuinely grateful for your significant contributions. We have a great legacy based on our principles of honor, courage, and commitment. We have a great reputation - let's work hard to keep it.

So let me end this by shifting colors. Let's get the rest of the birthday party underway. Thanks to each of you for your service and for the families, thank you for your dedication and support; and for inviting me here. I want to thank the Republic of Korea and Republic of Korea military forces for their support.

I wish each and every one of you a very Happy Birthday! May God bless our nations, our Combined Forces, our Navies and each of you who serve.

KATCH-EE-GAP-SHI-DA (We go together!)
KAM-SAH-HAHM-NEEDA (Thank You)