



**Commander, U.S. Pacific Fleet
71st Anniversary of the Battle of Midway
Pearl Harbor, Hawaii
Admiral Cecil D. Haney
07 June 2013
As Prepared For Delivery**

Thank you Jim for your opening remarks and for you and your team's hard work to organize this special commemoration ceremony. It's great to see the Pacific Fleet team assembled for this event and other Joint Force Members.

Given the theme of this commemoration, it is great to have Rear Admiral Paul Becker from the United States Pacific Command and the Joint Intelligence Operations Center team here as well. Consul General Suh, thank you for being here also.

Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen, members of our armed services and our Pacific Fleet staff, welcome and aloha!

To fully appreciate the importance of our victory at the Battle of Midway and the significant contribution of the intelligence and cryptological professionals, let me put it in historical context. After the surprise attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7th, 1941, our Nation struggled to replace significant losses to our Fleet and to engage the Japanese. During the six months after Pearl Harbor, we were defeated in nearly every engagement, though encouraged by some success in the Doolittle Raid and the Battle of the Coral Sea.

In early 1942, the Japanese were planning an additional operation that they believed would completely eliminate the United States as a strategic power in the Pacific. They hoped that another demoralizing loss, like the one at Pearl Harbor, would force America to admit defeat in the Pacific War.

Their plan was to take the islands of Midway in an effort to extend their defensive perimeter around their homeland. Recognizing the importance of our aircraft carriers, that luckily had been underway during the attack on Pearl Harbor, the Japanese also hoped to lure them into a trap.

Japanese forces consisted of four aircraft carriers, seven battleships and numerous escort ships, submarines and aircraft. All told, 185 ships of the Imperial Japanese Navy bore down on Midway. Planning to take the island by surprise, they did not expect significant resistance.

The American force that deployed to engage them was small in comparison, consisting of only three aircraft carriers and a total of 28 ships. We were not only outnumbered, we were out classed. Much of our weapons and equipment were obsolete leftovers from World War I. Many of our pilots were flying their first combat missions against the most experienced and battle hardened Japanese pilots. Historians say that the Battle of Midway was a fight that we had no right to win.

However, between 4 and 7 June, our forces soundly defeated the Imperial Japanese Navy. The victory inflicted irreparable damage on the Japanese fleet and turned the tide of the war. Historian John Keegan called it “the most stunning and decisive blow in the history of naval warfare.”

When it was over, we lost one aircraft carrier, one destroyer, 150 aircraft and 307 lives, but the Japanese lost all four of their aircraft carriers, one cruiser, 248 aircraft and 3,057 Sailors. Their losses included their most experienced pilots and trained aircraft mechanics whose technical expertise could not easily be replaced.

Our victory at the Battle of Midway was the turning point of the war. From then on, America went on the strategic offensive and steadily advanced on the Japanese homeland until “V-J” Day, when the Japanese surrendered on Aug 15, 1945.

So how could we win the Battle of Midway against such staggering odds? First, our shipyard repair capability here played an important role. The carrier *Yorktown* had been badly damaged in the Battle of the Coral Sea. The Japanese believed that it had been sunk, but the crew was able to get it back to Pearl Harbor. Initially it was believed that it would take months to complete the repairs, but when challenged by Admiral Nimitz, the industrious men and women at Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard worked around the clock and had her fit for battle in only three days. Because of their efforts, the U.S. Navy was able to put to sea a total of three aircraft carriers instead of the two that the Japanese thought might be available.

Second, the Battle of Midway was a joint effort, where all three services integrated together for the fight. Midway Island was strengthened in preparation for the attack with as many aircraft as it could take. On the eve of battle the runways on these islands were packed with long-range Navy and Army aircraft and a Marine Air Group. During the battle, these airplanes played a key role in pressing the attack on the enemy. To this day, the legacy of these joint operations lives on in our joint military approach to modern day conflicts.

Third, and perhaps most crucial, were the brave and dedicated men who stepped up in our time of need and volunteered to fight. After the surprise attack on Pearl Harbor, Americans filled with an overpowering sense of patriotism saw that our Nation was in peril, and readily volunteered. Many contributed their sweat, muscle, blood and even their lives in sacrifice for our Nation. An unusual and important group of men here in Hawaii contributed their mental abilities as they worked diligently to find a way to break the Japanese operational code. Because they were able to break that code, they were able to determine when and where the surprise Japanese attack would strike. This allowed us to set our own trap for the Japanese.

These men, such as Joe Rochefort, Edwin Layton, Jasper Holmes and others in the intel and crypto community worked diligently to study and ultimately break the Japanese code. As Captain Jim Fanell mentioned, it was fantastic to have Admiral ‘Mac’ Showers here in Hawaii last year where he shared his firsthand account of how this was achieved. Admiral Showers served in the distinguished Combat Intelligence Unit called “Station Hypo” that figured out the Japanese were after Midway this time, despite others who thought Hawaii or the West Coast might be the next Japanese target. He explained

how their team intercepted 500-1,000 Japanese radio messages per day in May '42 and deciphered and translated roughly 25 percent; an astonishing feat that enabled them to conclude Midway was the target.

Their efforts became what we now call Operational Intelligence. By providing insights to the enemy's intentions this allowed commanders to make timely and effective decisions in operational planning that gave them a decisive advantage. As a result, we were able to aggregate the necessary forces in time and use surprise to our advantage in order to even the odds in this important fight. The Navy intel and crypto team was key to winning the victory at Midway. Our Nation owes them a debt of gratitude, not just for the advantage they gave us then, but for their legacy that continues today. A proud legacy that each of you in the Information Dominance Corps, especially in the Pacific Fleet N2/N39, represent so well. By honoring them, we also ensure that we do not forget that those lessons learned are still applicable now.

The difficult, detailed work that Commander Rochefort and his team performed 71 years ago is very similar to the approach that Captain Jim Fanell and this team are doing today. I'm amazed at the work that this group of professionals performs as they integrate and synthesize bits of info, and from it, work diligently to derive a coherent picture. The understanding of the environment that they derive supplies me with the tactical data points and operational insights that I depend on, and the critical info I need to make time-sensitive decisions in this dynamic Indo-Asia-Pacific region.

Today, our Sailors of the Information Dominance Corps, consisting of 44,000 active and reserve Navy officers and enlisted, and civilians, have become part of a new generation of Naval professionals whose mission is to provide timely, relevant and accurate information to the Navy leadership at the strategic, operational and tactical levels of warfare. They contribute daily to our vision and understanding of what lies over the horizon. This is the legacy of those important code breakers from World War II who helped us achieve victory at the Battle of Midway.

Today, information dominance remains critical as we operate throughout the world, particularly in this Indo-Asia-Pacific region. With our rebalance, the U.S. Navy is increasing its attention on the information domain in order to maintain a leading role in shaping the maritime security environment of this region. A sound maritime environment requires the ability to integrate information into our strategic and operational plans and activities. Just as the Battle of Midway was a joint offensive operation that demonstrated the ability and flexibility of each of our services to fight together, so too does the 21st Century require our joint forces to do the same across all the critical domains. Our work must continue to be an orchestrated, joint effort, requiring our Sailors to integrate their skills and knowledge at all levels with our sister services. Complete integration of information, not just in maritime operations, but in the joint arena, will provide for a strong United States presence, required for security and stability in the Indo-Asia-Pacific region.

While we live with the fiscal realities of today's sequestration and scarcity of resources, programs like the Pacific Fleet Intelligence Federation provide us a proven concept of how we can maximize and interconnect our networks with one another to keep producing operationally relevant intelligence for decision-makers. Those of us gathered here at Makalapa can see the importance of this heritage of cooperation and why men like Admiral "Mac" Showers spent a lifetime deliberately working to pass the torch into the hands of the next generation of Sailors. The success of the code breakers teaches us that

today the same dedication to innovation and creativity is the key to our success in this new age and geopolitical arena.

As I conclude, I want to leave you with this thought. Last year, I had the opportunity to travel to Midway Atoll for the 70th commemoration of the Battle of Midway. There were only about 100 people not counting the thousands of albatross birds on the island to mark the event. While I was there, I met two survivors, Colonel John Miniclier and Sergeant Edgar Fox. It was great to listen to these patriots' stories about that battle as I toured the island with them. Each year, the number of these survivors decreases. As Jim mentioned, we mourn the passing of Admiral Showers. It won't be long before there are no more survivors of this important time in our history.

It is up to us to make sure that their contributions to our Nation are celebrated and remembered. Many of you in the Information Dominance Corps carry on the legacy of the Sailors of Station HYPO. This important commemoration helps keep the memory of their efforts alive. Each of you who wear the uniform represents those who fought, sacrificed and ultimately won the Battle of Midway. As part of this all volunteer force, please do your part to continue this tradition.

Although 71 years have passed, historians are still writing about the battle, military planners are still studying it and we continue to cherish every opportunity we have to commemorate it.

Frankly, if I could, every Sailor in my Pacific Fleet would stop at Midway Atoll to take in this history and to keep it fresh in our minds as we sail into the future in this uncertain environment.

May God bless our Nation, our Navy and each of you here today. Thank you.