



**Commander, U.S. Pacific Fleet**  
**U.S. Pacific Command/U.S. Pacific Fleet Change of Command**  
**Pearl Harbor, Hawaii**  
**Admiral Harry B. Harris Jr.**  
**27 May 2015**  
*As delivered*

Most of you know that I'm from the South and we say y'all a lot. But y'all is actually singular, the plural form is all y'all. So to all y'all, aloha!

Mr. Secretary, your presence means so much to us and CNO, thank you sir for your words, your confidence, and for entrusting your Pacific forces to me for the last 19 months.

Governors and senators, representatives and Mr. Mayor, Admirals Hays, Fargo, Zlatoper, Macke and Generals Brown, Leaf and Stackpole, thank you for being sounding boards for me in this time. And Admiral Macke thanks for letting me drive your Corvette.

To my fellow component commanders, Generals Brooks, Robinson and Toolan, and Admirals Thomas and Kilrain, thank you for welcoming me into your flag and general officer o'hana.

Members of the diplomatic corps, government leaders, fellow flag and general officers, senior enlisted advisors, men and women of the US Pacific Command and US Pacific Fleet, what you do on a daily basis is of fundamental importance to our nation's defense. I'm proud to be your commander.

Distinguished guests and ladies and gentlemen. Let me begin by saying how lucky Bruni and I are to continue to serve here in Hawaii. John Steinbeck once wrote, "The Pacific is my home ocean, I know its moods, its colors, its nature." Indeed, Bruni's and my roots and histories run deep here in the Pacific. This is our home.

Folks I am acutely aware that the greatest speech in American history was given by President Lincoln at Gettysburg and it lasted just a little over 2 minutes -- and Julius Cesar probably gave the longest speech and his friends killed him.

I do have to take a few moments to thank a few folks, to Sam and Pam Locklear, for welcoming Bruni and me with open arms when we got here in 2013, and for total access since then.

This is my third tour working directly for Admiral Locklear in fact, for almost half of my time as a flag officer, he's been my boss. Thanks sir for your mentorship. Admiral Locklear has set a high bar, Pacific Command has been well led, well trained and highly disciplined. Sir, you will be greatly missed.

We are who we have been brought up with and who we've come up with, that means family and friends. So to my mom-in-law, and brother-in-law from Arizona, and cousin Peggy, her daughter and grandson from the great state of Tennessee, thanks for making this a family affair. Today is Peggy's 54th wedding anniversary and her husband Bob Houston nailed it when he said, "The true Harris is really coming out, because she chose a Harris over her husband on her anniversary."

I stand on the shoulders of giants and many are here today. My great friends from Annapolis days, P-3 bubbas, Downeasters, Miamians, Pentagonians, OPNAVians, friends from Down Under and tours in Japan and Bahrain and Guantanamo and Hawaii. Folks like Redeye and Gaby Monroe who get the award for traveling the farthest, Germany, unless, Cowboy Powers gets that award for coming here from Iraq,

and friends who have come from all over the United States to share this day with Bruni and me. I'm glad to have given you all an excuse to visit Hawaii.

I want to acknowledge Rear Admiral Jerry and Linda MacKay, I was Admiral MacKay's aide as a lieutenant and I might add, once an aide, always an aide. He's mentored me ever since. He taught me how to be a flag officer and he and Linda have been part of Bruni's and my lives from the get go. Thank you sir.

And to all the veterans here, all of us owe all of you a debt of gratitude. We should commemorate Memorial Day and celebrate Veterans Day every day.

To our industry partners and Hawaii civic organizations, America's strength comes from the synergy between her brave sons and daughters who have chosen the warrior's way and the people and organizations in our communities and industry that provide them with a steadfast support and the best equipment to get the job done.

A special welcome to the Swifts, Notso and Trish. There's no person more suited to be the Pacific Fleet commander than Admiral Swift, former J3 at PACOM, former 7th Fleet commander, and most recently, the Director of the Navy Staff. He understands completely both his operational and Title 10 responsibilities. He gets it. Welcome aboard.

And finally, to Bruni, who keeps me honest, tries to keep me humble, an impossible task I might add, and lets me continue this great adventure called Navy. As Admiral Greenert hinted at, I guarantee you when this ceremony is over, someone will come up to me and say "Oh, you're the fella that's married to Bruni Bradley, good to finally meet you."

So ladies and gentlemen, our President is crystal clear: the U.S. will rebalance to the Pacific. Our joint force will work closely with our allies and friends in the Indo-Asia-Pacific region. And our boss' scan is broad. So Pacific Command will work with our interagency partners and with all the combatant commands to support Secretary Carter as he hones his strategy to accomplish our national objectives globally. I am mindful of my responsibilities to judiciously manage the global employment of the considerable forces assigned to the Pacific. To this end, I will work closely with the service chiefs as PACOM employs their priceless personnel and costly material.

There's no shortage of challenges that confront us. From North Korea with its quest for nuclear weapons and the means to deliver them intercontinentally. To China's preposterous claims to and land reclamation activities in the South China Sea. To a resurgent Russia whose Pacific coastline boasts four strategic submarine and air bases and exceeds the distance from here to California. To the plight of Rohingya migrants in the Indian Ocean. This is hard work, but this is what we live for. It's juice worth the squeeze. If called upon, we would fight tonight to defend American interests in the vast Indo-Asia-Pacific. This is not aspirational, its in our DNA.

Our nation deserves no less, our President and Secretary of Defense expect no less and our adversaries didn't pause for this ceremony; they have aspirations, so let's get underway and go to it. I will now read my orders.

CNO Order 1245: when directed by reporting senior, detach from duty as Commander, United States Pacific Fleet and report duty as Commander, United States Pacific Command. Admiral Swift, I'm ready to be relieved.