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MSGID/GENADMIN/CNO WASHINGTON DC/N00/APR//
SUBJ/NAVAL HISTORY AND HERITAGE COMMEMORATION - BATTLE OF MIDWAY//
RMKS/1. ON 4 JUNE 1942, A JAPANESE ARMADA STEAMED TOWARDS MIDWAY WITH INTENT TO DESTROY ALL U.S. FORCES ON THE ATOLL, ESTABLISH ITS OWN BASE, AND DRAW OUT AND DESTROY U.S. AIRCRAFT CARRIERS OPERATING UNCHECKED SINCE FEBRUARY 1942. UNBEKNOWNST TO JAPAN, HOWEVER, THEIR NAVAL CODE HAD BEEN BROKEN, AND THE UNITED STATES WAS PREPARED FOR THE ATTACK. WHEN A NAVY FLYING BOAT PILOT SPOTTED JAPANESE SHIPS ON 3 JUNE, U.S. FORCES DEPLOYED TO COUNTER THE THRUST AND SURPRISED THE ENEMY. THE ENSUING BATTLE OF MIDWAY (4-6 JUNE 1942) WOULD SPELL THE BEGINNING OF THE END FOR THE ENEMY AND HELPED SET THE UNITED STATES AND ITS ALLIES ON THE ROAD TO VICTORY IN WORLD WAR II.

2. THE VICTORY AT MIDWAY WAS BORN OUT OF THE METTLE OF AMERICAN SAILORS, MARINES, AND AIRMEN. THEY ENTERED THIS BATTLE WITH INFERIOR NUMBERS, AIRCRAFT, TORPEDOES, AND WITHOUT SUBSTANTIAL BACKUP FORCES. THEY COMPENSATED FOR THEIR MATERIAL SHORTCOMINGS WITH COURAGE, DISCIPLINE, AND COMMITMENT TO MISSION ACCOMPLISHMENT - FROM THE BRAVE TORPEDO ATTACKS AGAINST JAPANESE CARRIERS BY TORPEDO SQUADRONS FROM HORNET, ENTERPRISE, AND YORKTOWN; TO THE COURAGEOUS DEFENSE OF THE ISLAND ITSELF BY MARINE PILOTS WHO VALIANTLY ATTACKED THE INCOMING FORMATION OF ENEMY BOMBERS AND FIGHTERS; TO THE AVIATORS OF TASK FORCES 16 AND 17 AND THE SAILORS WHO FOUGHT OFF ENEMY COUNTERATTACKS.

3. SECRETARY OF DEFENSE JAMES R. SCHLESINGER SURMISED, "MIDWAY WAS FAR MORE THAN A DECISIVE NAVAL VICTORY. IT WAS FAR MORE THAN THE TURNING OF THE TIDE IN THE PACIFIC WAR. IN A STRATEGIC SENSE, MIDWAY REPRESENTS ONE OF THE TURNING POINTS OF WORLD HISTORY - AND IN THAT ROLE IT REMAINS UNDER-APPRECIATED." WITH THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE BATTLE OF MIDWAY QUICKLY APPROACHING, IT IS TIME TO RENEW OUR COMMITMENT TO APPRECIATE AND PRESERVE OUR MIDWAY NAVAL HISTORY AND HERITAGE. AS WORLD WAR II VETERANS PASS FROM OUR LIVES, WE MUST CARRY THEIR LEGACY FORWARD BY SPEAKING TO OUR SAILORS AND TO THE PUBLIC ABOUT THEIR CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE NAVY AND THE NATION. AS WE BUILD UPON LAST YEAR'S EFFORTS, I DIRECT THE FOLLOWING ACTIONS:

A. COMMANDING OFFICERS AND OFFICERS IN CHARGE: USE NAVY HISTORY AND THE NAVAL HISTORY AND HERITAGE COMMAND (NHC) PRODUCTS TO EDUCATE AND MOTIVATE OUR SAILORS. EXECUTE CHIEF OF INFORMATION (CHINFO) PUBLIC AFFAIRS PLAN AND PARTICIPATE IN PLANNED COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES AS OPERATIONALLY FEASIBLE.

B. NHC: DEVELOP AND MAKE AVAILABLE TO COMMANDING OFFICERS A BODY OF LESSONS LEARNED AT THE TACTICAL, OPERATIONAL, AND STRATEGIC LEVELS FROM THE BATTLE OF MIDWAY; PLAN OF THE DAY HISTORICAL NOTES FOR EACH WARFARE COMMUNITY FOR THE WEEK LEADING UP TO THE BATTLE OF MIDWAY; THE TEMPLATE FOR THE 2009 NAVAL DISTRICT WASHINGTON (NDW) COMMEMORATIONS CEREMONY FOR USE BY COMMANDER, NAVY INSTALLATIONS COMMAND AND HIS REGIONAL COMMANDERS. POST THESE DOCUMENTS AND ASSOCIATED POINTS OF CONTACT ON THE NHC WEB SITE, WWW.HISTORY.NAVY.MIL.

C. CHINFO: DEVELOP A BATTLE OF MIDWAY PUBLIC AFFAIRS PLAN AND PROMULGATE TO SHORE AND AFLOAT COMMANDS BY 10 MAY 2010. THIS PLAN SHOULD INCLUDE NAVY'S STRATEGIC MESSAGE AND TALKING POINTS FOR THIS EVENT; A COORDINATED WREATH LAYING CEREMONY AROUND THE WORLD ON 4 JUNE 2010; AND PLANNED COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES IN EACH FLEET

CONCENTRATION AREA THAT COMMANDERS CAN PARTICIPATE IN.

D. NDW: CONTINUE TRADITION OF SPONSORING A WREATH LAYING CEREMONY TO HONOR THE HEROES OF MIDWAY. COORDINATE YOUR LESSONS LEARNED FROM THIS CEREMONY WITH NHC FOR OTHER NAVY REGIONS TO FOLLOW. NDW'S CEREMONY WILL SERVE AS THE MODEL FOR OTHERS TO FOLLOW, AND AS THE OFFICIAL CEREMONY OF THIS OFFICE.

E. AS A FOCAL POINT FOR THE COMMANDS IN THEIR AREA AND THE COMMUNITY AT LARGE, EACH REGIONAL COMMANDER SHALL HOST A WREATH LAYING CEREMONY IN THEIR REGION. REGIONAL COMMANDERS COORDINATE YOUR ACTIVITIES WITH CHINFO TO SUPPORT THE REQUIREMENT FOR SIMULTANEOUS CEREMONIES, TIME ZONE PERMITTING.

4. UNDERSTANDING OUR PAST IS IMPORTANT IN BUILDING OUR FUTURE. KNOW NAVY'S HERITAGE, RESPECT IT, AND BUILD UPON OUR TRADITIONS WITH YOUR SERVICE TODAY.

5. RELEASED BY ADMIRAL G. ROUGHEAD, CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS.//