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SUBJ/COMMEMORATION OF THE BATTLE OF IWO JIMA 80TH ANNIVERSARY MESSAGE TO THE FLEET//

RMKS/1. This month, we honor the 80th anniversary of the Battle of Iwo Jima, a pivotal moment in history and one of the most critical battles in our Navy's legacy. This battle will forever stand as a testament to the bravery, courage, and heroism of those who fought for and made the ultimate sacrifice in defense of our nation.

2. The Battle of Iwo Jima was a critical juncture for our Allied forces during World War II. Beginning on February 19, 1945, and continuing until March 26, 1945, our Sailors, Marines, and Soldiers faced immense adversity to secure this strategically important island, which would prove instrumental to our future successes in the Pacific campaign. Of the battle, Fleet Admiral Chester Nimitz remarked, "uncommon Valor was a common virtue."

3. As we honor this historic event, we remember with profound respect the valor and dedication of our predecessors. Twenty-two Marines, four Navy Corpsmen, and one Navy Landing Craft Infantry (Gunboat) Commanding Officer were awarded the Medal of Honor for their actions, including 13 of them posthumously. Over the course of the 36-day battle, more than 6,100 Marines and Sailors were killed on Iwo Jima. In the assault units, approximately one out of every three became a casualty by the battle's end. Their unwavering commitment to duty remains an inspiration for all who wear the uniform today.

4. Let us remember that the ideals and values that each Sailor, Marine, and Soldier fought for on Iwo Jima are just as important today as they were 80 years ago. They fought to defend our homeland, they fought to protect our freedoms, and they fought to preserve our way of life.

5. On this 80th anniversary, MCPON Honea and I encourage all commands to reflect on the significance of the Battle of Iwo Jima and to organize commemorative activities in honor of all who fought so valiantly.

6. Released by ADM L. M. Franchetti, 33rd Chief of Naval Operations and MCPON J. M. Honea, 16th Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy.

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