



Commander, U.S. Pacific Fleet
Admiral Scott H. Swift
District 14 Coast Guard Ball
Honolulu, Hawaii
October 8, 2016
As delivered

Good evening and happy 226th birthday to the United States Coast Guard. Admiral Atkins, thank you for inviting Trish and me to join this celebration of Coast Guard history and heritage. It is truly an honor to share your evening with you.

I can think of no better way to highlight the enduring bond between our services as mariners, as warfighters and as guarantors of safety and security in the Indo-Asia-Pacific, than to celebrate our shared history and heritage, forged in the common environment we operate in.

For over two and a quarter centuries, the men and women of Coast Guard have distinguished themselves during peace time and in war -- saving lives, enforcing the law, and defending our nation.

For most of that time, we operated side-by-side, but that has not always been the case. The history buffs in the audience already know that the Continental Navy was disbanded shortly after the Revolutionary War, which meant that the Revenue Cutter Service's ten cutters were the only seafaring force available to protect our young nation's maritime interests. In fact, the Navy's original six frigates were put to sea nearly six years after Revenue Cutter *Massachusetts* sailed on her first patrol.

Our maritime forces were quickly put to the test fighting piracy during the Quasi-War with France, and soon after against Britain in the War of 1812. From war with Mexico through the Civil War, the Coast Guard's shallow draft vessels and experienced crews dominated coastal waters while the Navy fought further out to sea.

During the Spanish-American War, Coast Guard cutters joined Navy ships in both the Battle of Manila Bay and in the blockade of Havana, engagements half a world away from each other that highlighted the Coast Guard's expanding range.

These joint operations were organized on the fly, based on our shared understanding of our common domain, the environment that we were operating in.

Our forces worked together in every major theater in World Wars One and Two -- from countless anti-aircraft screens and anti-submarine patrols to convoy operations during the Battle of the Atlantic and amphibious landings across the Pacific.

These, unlike previous operations, were anticipated, planned and trained to. Forces were fully integrated into common command and control structures.

And it was during the Solomon Islands campaign in 1942 that Coast Guard Signaller First-Class Douglas Munro received the Medal of Honor for heroically leading the evacuation of

nearly five hundred Marines, including Lieutenant Colonel Chesty Puller, who were surrounded on a beach head on Guadalcanal.

The stories of our partnership continued during the Korean and Vietnam wars, as well as operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm. During Iraqi Freedom, Coast Guard 110-foot patrol boats were the workhorses of the Fleet in the shallow waters of the Northern Arabian Gulf.

With examples like these, it might seem like our partnership is all about warfighting, but much of the work we do throughout the year is about developing relationships with regional partners and supporting maritime governance, security and prosperity, especially here in the Pacific.

In fact, it is our long history of working together that has resulted in an overlapping maritime heritage that allows us to flow from our unique Title 10 or Title 50 missions to our shared mission of looking after United States equities around the world.

So I'd like to give you a few more local examples.

Of course Coast Guard District Fourteen draws upon the historic legacy of Revenue Cutter Lawrence's 1849 port visit to Honolulu Harbor, which began the Coast Guard's presence here and in the Pacific.

Today, District Fourteen is the leading edge of maritime safety, rescue, law enforcement and environmental stewardship in the Hawaiian Islands.

Building maritime relationships is another big part of District Fourteen's mission. This past February, Admiral Atkins and I accompanied Assistant Secretary of State Danny Russell on a trip to the Pacific Islands. Illegal fishing activities impose major economic costs on these "large ocean countries" that struggle to enforce regulations in their Exclusive Economic Zones with very modest maritime resources. In this case, our shared mission is to ensure these significant negative economic and environmental effects don't manifest themselves in the destabilization of local governance.

That is why several times each year Coast Guard Law Enforcement Detachments embark U.S. Navy ships to conduct fisheries law enforcement as part of the Oceania Maritime Security Initiative. USS *Momsen* and a Coast Guard det are conducting an Oceania Maritime Security Initiative mission right now.

All of this reflects our shared history in the Pacific and the proud heritage that continues to shape the men and women who serve in both services today.

But tonight is about you and I'd like to thank you again for the opportunity to celebrate this birthday with you tonight.