

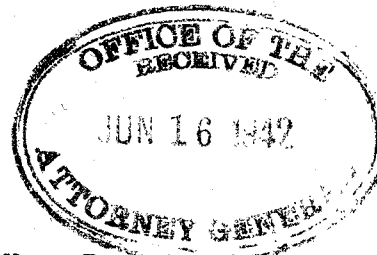
SECRETARY OF THE NAVY
OFFICE OF PUBLIC RELATIONS
WASHINGTON

OOR-D (39)

June 15, 1942

RR. 6/16

From: Lieutenant Commander R. D. Hill, Jr.
To: Mr. M. E. Gilfond,
Attorney General's Office,
Fifth Floor,
Department of Justice.



Subject: Information issued officially by the Navy Department relative to the composition of the Naval forces which attacked Midway early this month.

Enclosure: (A) Copy of communiques issued by Commander-in-Chief, Pacific Fleet, from Honolulu.

1. Enclosure (A) includes four communiques issued by the Commander-in-Chief of the Pacific Fleet relative to the action between our forces and those of the Japanese in the vicinity of Midway early this month.

2. On Sunday, 7 June, at 5 o'clock p.m., Admiral E. J. King granted an interview to the press relative to various current matters concerning Naval action. During this interview Admiral King made no mention of actual composition or disposition of enemy forces.

3. No evidence can be found in the Navy Department to indicate that the facts and figures appearing in an article headlined "U. S. Navy knew in advance all about Jap fleet", which appeared in the Washington Times-Herald on Sunday, 7 June, could have been obtained from any official announcement made by the Navy Department.

R. D. Hill, Jr.
R. D. HILL, Jr.
Lieut. Comdr., USN (Ret.)
Assistant to Director

V.

COMMUNIQUE ISSUED BY COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF, PACIFIC FLEET
(ADMIRAL CHESTER W. NIMITZ)

HONOLULU, June 4 (AP) - A communique issued by Admiral Chester W. Nimitz:

At 6:35 a.m. today, Midway time, that island was heavily raided by Japanese carrier-based planes. The attack was repulsed by local defenders in which all armed services are represented. A heavy toll of attacking planes was taken. Damage to material and installations on Midway was reported minor. No reports of personnel casualties were received.

The Japanese carriers were accompanied by battleships and cruisers. One battleship and one carrier definitely were damaged and other vessels are believed to have been hit. Our attacks on the enemy are continuing.

HONOLULU, June 5 (AP) - A communique issued by Admiral Chester W. Nimitz:

The Japanese have not followed up their initial air attack on Midway Island, except for a few ineffectual shots from a submarine during last night.

As more reports come in, it appears that the enemy damage is very heavy indeed, involving several ships in each of the carrier, battleship, cruiser and transport classes. This damage is far out of proportion to that which we have received.

The brunt of the defense to date has fallen upon aviation personnel, in which the Army, Navy and Marine Corps all were represented. They have added another shining page to their record of achievements.

One carrier, already damaged by air attack, was hit by three torpedoes fired by a submarine.

On every occasion when we have met the enemy, our officers and men have been superlative in their offensive spirit and complete lack of fear. Our country can feel secure with personnel such as this.

There were reported several instances of enemy planes machine-gunning our aviation personnel who bailed out in parachutes or were adrift in rubber boats.

While it is too early to claim a major Japanese disaster, it may be conservatively stated that United States control remains firm in the Midway area.

The enemy appears to be withdrawing, but we are continuing the battle.

COMMUNIQVES ISSUED BY COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF, PACIFIC FLEET
(ADMIRAL CHESTER W. NIMITZ)

HONOLULU, June 4 (AP) - A communique issued by Admiral Chester W. Nimitz:

At 6:35 a.m. today, Midway time, that island was heavily raided by Japanese carrier-based planes. The attack was repulsed by local defenders in which all armed services are represented. A heavy toll of attacking planes was taken. Damage to material and installations on Midway was reported minor. No reports of personnel casualties were received.

The Japanese carriers were accompanied by battleships and cruisers. One battleship and one carrier definitely were damaged and other vessels are believed to have been hit. Out attacks on the enemy are continuing.

HONOLULU, June 5 (AP) - A communique issued by Admiral Chester W. Nimitz:

The Japanese have not followed up their initial air attack on Midway Island, except for a few ineffectual shots from a submarine during last night.

As more reports come in, it appears that the enemy damage is very heavy indeed, involving several ships in each of the carrier, battleship, cruiser and transport classes. This damage is far out of proportion to that which we have received.

The brunt of the defense to date has fallen upon aviation personnel, in which the Army, Navy and Marine Corps all were represented. They have added another shining page to their record of achievements.

One carrier, already damaged by air attack, was hit by three torpedoes fired by a submarine.

On every occasion when we have met the enemy, our officers and men have been superlative in their offensive spirit and complete lack of fear. Our country can feel secure with personnel such as this.

There were reported several instances of enemy planes machine-gunning our aviation personnel who bailed out in parachutes or were adrift in rubber boats.

While it is too early to claim a major Japanese disaster, it may be conservatively stated that United States control remains firm in the Midway area.

The enemy appears to be withdrawing, but we^r are continuing the battle.

* * * * *

PEARL HARBOR, Honolulu, June 6. - The complete text of Admiral Chester W. Nimitz's communique No. 3, issued today, follows:

Through the skill and devotion to duty by the armed forces of all branches in the Midway area, our citizens can now rejoice that a momentous victory is in the making.

It was on Sunday, just six months ago, that the Japanese made their peace-time attack on our fleet and Army activities at Oahu. At that time they created heavy damage, it is true, but their act aroused that grim determination of our citizenry to avenge such treachery and it raised, not lowered, the morale of our fighting men.

Pearl Harbor now has been partially avenged.

Vengeance will not be complete until Japanese sea power has been reduced to impotence.

We have made substantial progress in that direction. Perhaps we will be forgiven if we claim we are about midway to our objective!

The battle is not over. All returns have not yet been received.

It is with full confidence, however, that for this phase of action the following enemy losses are claimed:

Two or three carriers and all their aircraft destroyed;

In addition one or two carriers badly damaged, most of their aircraft lost;

Three battleships damaged, at least one badly;

Four cruisers damaged, two heavily.

Three transports damaged.

It is possible some of these wounded ships will not be able to reach their bases.

One American carrier was hit.

Some American planes were lost.

American casualties were light.

This is the balance sheet that Army, Navy and Marine Corps forces in this area offer their country this morning.

PEARL HARBOR, Hawaii, June 7 (AP). - A communique from Admiral Chester W. Nimitz, Commander of the Pacific Fleet:

The enemy appears to be withdrawing. Contact was lost during last night.

Additional damage was inflicted on two enemy cruisers. Until all reports can be checked it is impossible to state whether these cruisers are in addition to those reported in communique No. 3 or whether they were damaged cruisers included in previous reports.

One enemy destroyer was sunk.

One United States destroyer was sunk by a submarine, but nearby ships rescued the personnel with small loss of life.

Except for minor submarine activity in the vicinity of the Hawaiian Island chain, this section of the Pacific is quiet.

* * * * *



National Security Archive,
Suite 701, Gelman Library, The George Washington University,
2130 H Street, NW, Washington, D.C., 20037,
Phone: 202/994-7000, Fax: 202/994-7005, nsarchiv@gwu.edu