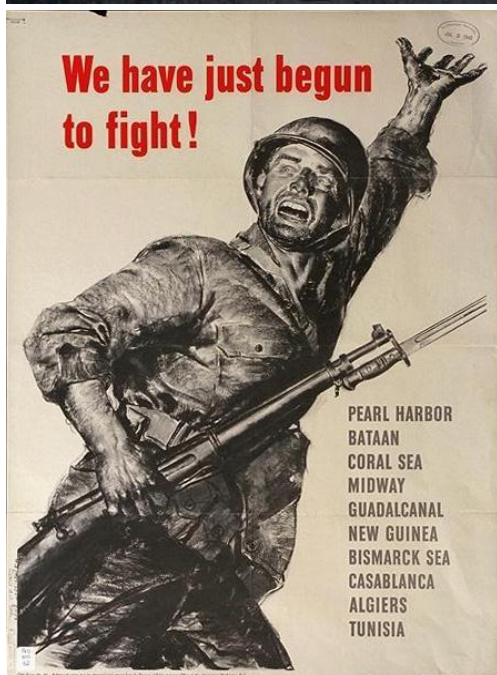


# REMEMBERING PEARL HARBOR IS: REMEMBERING, LEARNING, APPLYING, VIGILANCE



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RECOMMENDED READING: The Wall Street Journal, Opinion, December 7, 2011

## "Pearl Harbor, Iran and North Korea

Don't be surprised if one of our underestimated adversaries does the unthinkable."

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**U.S. Department of Defense**  
Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Public Affairs)

## News Release

On the Web:

<http://www.defense.gov/Releases/Release.aspx?ReleaseID=14950>

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### IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**No. 999-11**  
**December 06, 2011**

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#### **Secretary of Defense Leon E. Panetta Message to Pearl Harbor Survivors**

“Seventy years ago on a December morning, our nation sustained a cruel and destructive attack at Pearl Harbor. Our enemies thought that by this sudden and deliberate raid, they could weaken America. Instead, they only strengthened it. That day truly awoke a sleeping giant.

“As we join you in remembering the events of December 7, 1941, we honor you and your fallen comrades for your indomitable will – and we remember the sacrifice and shared purpose of the American people, as well as the strength of our elected and military leaders during the war.

“December 7, 1941 was indeed a day that will live in infamy. But in the memories of that day we continue to draw determination and conviction to protect our freedoms, to sacrifice for our fellow citizens, and to serve a purpose larger than self. You, the survivors of Pearl Harbor and of the war that followed, embody this conviction, this determination to raise high the torch of freedom and sacrifice. From your stories, posterity records for all subsequent generations the emotion, the heroism, and the tragedy of a harrowing attack and the titanic struggle that would later unfold.

“As a young boy, I remember seeing troops move through Fort Ord during the war years in Monterey, California. My parents would invite soldiers into our home for Christmas dinner, and I remember seeing young men from all over the country about to go to war. And I remember thinking in that uncertain time: “This is going to be the last opportunity these young men have to enjoy the comforts of home for a long time.

“You are the veterans of that greatest generation. You have lived full lives and witnessed years of great prosperity because of the freedom you helped to secure for America and her allies. I know you take great pride, as I do, that your legacy lives on in today’s men and women in uniform, who have borne the burden of a decade of war, and who are truly this nation’s next greatest generation. The 9/11 generation, like you, has stepped forward in your image of service and sacrifice, volunteering for military duty after another sudden and terrible attack on our shores.

“We treasure you. You have brought everlasting credit to your fallen comrades. The men and women in today’s military stand on the shoulders of your individual and combined sacrifice and service to our nation. Your example inspires those in uniform today, strengthens our nation’s moral fiber, and proves that with united resolve our country can surmount any challenge. Thank you for your service, for your sacrifice, and for your endless zeal to see to it that our children and grandchildren can pass along a better life to the next generation. This has always been the American dream, a dream we can realize because of the determination of our citizens to defend it.

“God bless you, God bless our troops, and God bless the United States of America.”



## VA Salutes World War II Vets on Pearl Harbor Day



WASHINGTON – On the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the United States’ entry into World War II, the men and women of the Department of Veterans Affairs salute the members of “America’s greatest generation” for their sacrifice, love of country and concern for their fellow Veterans.

“Pearl Harbor reminds us not only of a solemn chapter in American history, but also of the great courage and resolve displayed by stalwart defenders in fighting off the attackers that day—qualities that have continued to define each succeeding serving generation, including today’s young men and women in uniform,” said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shinseki.

Of the 60,000 soldier, sailors, airmen, Marines and Coast Guardsmen who served in Hawaii during the attack upon the U.S. fleet in Pearl Harbor and other facilities across the islands, only about 3,000 are still alive.

More than 2,000 Servicemembers died as a result of the fighting on Dec. 7, 1941, and about 1,000 others were wounded, the first casualties in a four-year tally of heroism and sacrifice that would eventually result in 400,000 U.S. deaths in uniform and nearly 700,000 wounded.

“The Department of Veterans Affairs honors the memory of those who gave their lives that day, as well as those who fought and survived. Inspired by their valor and selflessness, America emerged from Pearl Harbor determined to triumph in the ensuing battle against tyranny,” said Shinseki. “At VA, we are committed to ensuring those heroes of Pearl Harbor and other fields of struggle receive the benefits and the honor they have earned.”

“This 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary also marks the last formal meeting of the Pearl Harbor Survivors Association, which was founded in 1958 and has served all Veterans and their family members with distinction over the years. The association’s motto is “Remember Pearl Harbor—Keep America Alert,” and they have done so over the years,” said Shinseki.