The Battle Of Midway During WW II And  
The Impact It Had On Our Civilization

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Disclosure:  
IF I DISCLOSED AND TOLD YOU,  
I WOULD HAVE TO KILL YOU.....

Vice Admiral William Halsey, Jr.  
The smoke had barely cleared at Pearl Harbor  
when Adm. Chester A. Nimitz replaced Kimmel.  
The new Pacific Fleet commander quickly learned  
who was motivated. When a difficult job popped  
up, it often went Halsey’s way. If he was not the  
brightest admiral in the Pacific Fleet, he was eager  
to fight—an attitude that endeared him to Nimitz,  
whose own job was on the line.  
In April 1942 he was designated Commander Task  
Force Sixteen, in Enterprise to escort the carrier  
USS Hornet to within 800 miles of Tokyo to  
launch the Army planes for the initial bombing of  
Japan.

Fleet Admiral Chester Nimitz  
In December 1941, however, he was  
designated as Commander in Chief, Pacific  
Fleet and Pacific Ocean Areas, where he  
served throughout the war. On 19  
December 1944, he was advanced to the  
newly created rank of Fleet Admiral, and on  
2 September 1945, was the United States  
signatory to the surrender terms aboard the  
battleship USS Missouri in Tokyo Bay.

Rear Admiral Raymond Spruance  
He was Junior Task Force Commander during  
the Battle of Midway in June 1942, when his  
force assisted in inflicting on the Japanese Navy  
its first decisive defeat in three hundred and fifty  
years.  
He was awarded the Distinguished Service  
Medal and cited as follows: “For exceptionally  
meritorious service... as Task Force  
Commander, United States Pacific Fleet. During  
the Midway engagement which resulted in the  
defeat of and heavy losses to the enemy fleet, his  
seamanship, endurance, and tenacity in handling  
his task force were of the highest quality.”

Rear Admiral Frank Fletcher  
He was awarded the Distinguished Service Medal  
by the War Department, and cited in part as  
follows: “…In the highly responsible position of  
Commander of the United States Naval North  
Pacific Force and Area from October 1943 to  
August 1945, (he) displayed broad vision, tireless  
energy, and an unusually complete grasp of Army  
Air Force tactics and capabilities in expertly  
solving the many problems involved in combined  
Army-Navy air operations. His professional ability  
and able leadership in the vast wartime expansion  
and organization of naval installations in the North  
Pacific Area contributed much to the smooth and  
efficient accomplishment of the over-all mission of  
the United States Forces.”
Yamamoto’s plan for Midway Island was an extension of his efforts to knock the US Pacific Fleet out of action long enough for Japan to fortify its defensive perimeter in the Pacific island chains. Yamamoto felt it necessary to seek an early, offensive decisive battle.

This plan was long believed to have been to draw American attention—and possibly carrier forces—to north from Pearl Harbor by sending his Fifth Fleet (two light carriers, five cruisers, 13 destroyers, and four transports) against the Aleutians, raiding Dutch Harbor on Unalaska Island and invading the more distant islands of Kiska and Attu.

While Fifth Fleet attacked the Aleutians, First Mobile Force (four carriers, two battleships, three cruisers, and 11 destroyers) would raid Midway and destroy its air force. Once this was neutralized, Second Fleet (one light carrier, two battleships, 10 cruisers, 21 destroyers, and 11 transports) would land 5,000 troops to seize the atoll from the US Marines.

The seizure of Midway was expected to draw the US carriers west into a trap where the First Mobile Force would engage and destroy them. Afterwards, First Fleet (one light carrier, seven battleships, three cruisers and 13 destroyers), in conjunction with elements of Second Fleet, would mop up remaining US surface forces and complete the destruction of the US Pacific Fleet.

Vice Admiral Chuichi Nagumo

Nagumo launched a raid on Midway Island at first light and had been attacked by planes from the island later in the morning. While his aircraft were preparing for a second attack on Midway, Japanese scout aircraft spotted an American carrier force. Nagumo was faced with the decision he dreaded: to rearm the planes already prepared to attack Midway, or to send them on their way and fail to respond to the American threat. He chose the latter option, rearming the planes already prepared to strike Midway. The American carrier force was not engaged.

Nagumo at first refused to leave his stricken ship, but was physically dragged to safety by his staff. The battle continued throughout the day, resulting in the eventual loss of one U.S. fleet carrier, and the fourth and last of Nagumo’s fleet carriers. Yamamoto called off the Midway operation, with Nagumo’s agreement, in the early morning hours of June 5. The Japanese defeat was total, and the initiative in the Pacific War would soon turn to the Allies.

US Intelligence Detected That An Attack Was Coming

Japan’s Naval General Operational Code used book ciphers, making it significantly easier to break than the Germans’ Enigma and Lorenz codes. As a result, US troops had been alerted earlier in the year that Japan was planning an attack.

The Midway Attack Was Commanded By The Same Man Who Oversaw Pearl Harbor

Chuichi Nagumo was the vice admiral of the Japanese Navy and commander of the Japanese First Air Fleet. Following his successful attack on Pearl Harbor, he commanded all attacks in the Pacific and Indian Oceans.

It Was One Of Two Simultaneous Attacks Launched By Japan

At the beginning of the Battle of Midway, the Japanese Army was also attempting to invade the Aleutian Islands. Some believe the Aleutian attack was launched to draw US forces away from Midway, making the latter invasion easier for the Japanese.
The US Was Still Recovering From Pearl Harbor

The US Air Force and Navy were majorly depleted in the surprise 1941 attack. All eight of the navy’s battleships were damaged, with two lost completely and the rest taken out of commission. This meant that the US had none available to fight in the Battle of Midway.

American Vessels Were Seriously Outnumbered

The Japanese attack on Midway involved four aircraft carriers, seven battleships, 150 support ships, 248 carrier aircraft and 15 submarines. The US defense, meanwhile, was made up of just three aircraft carriers, 50 support ships, 233 carrier aircraft, 127 land-based aircraft on Midway and eight submarines.

The Japanese Were Expected To Win

Considering the numbers, many thought the Japanese would win the battle and invade Midway. It had been more than 50 years since the Japanese Navy had lost a battle.

Yet The US Won

Despite their vessels being vastly outnumbered, successful US intelligence and careful planning led to a decisive victory for the Americans.

The Japanese Suffered Major Losses

After four days of battle, Japan withdrew from Midway on 7 June. In their attempt to invade the US territory, the Japanese lost nearly 300 aircraft, all four of its aircraft carriers and 3,500 men.

But They Did Sink A US Aircraft Carrier

Despite its ultimate failure at Midway, Japan did destroy a number of US aircraft and naval vessels, including one destroyer and the aircraft carrier USS Yorktown.
It Was A Turning Point In The Pacific

The US had been on the defense in the Pacific theatre since the attack on Pearl Harbor. But after the Battle of Midway, Japan and the US more or less switched roles, with the former spending much of the rest of the war defending – rather than attacking – territories in the Pacific.