



USS LCS(L)(3)-53 under way in San Francisco Bay while returning home in 1946. ENS J. W. Middendorf USNR is the tall man on the bridge. Photo: from Middendorf's personal files.

## U.S. Navy Section: Dedication Ambassador J. William Middendorf II

Throughout his life, Ambassador J. William Middendorf has fought to advance the principles of American freedom both here and abroad. Over the course of his long and distinguished career, he has served as a navigator aboard the USS LCS(L)(3)-53 during World War II, an investment banker, and treasurer of the Republican National Committee and was appointed to ambassadorships in the Netherlands, the Organization of American States, and the European Union. As 62nd Secretary of the Navy, he secured a 60 percent increase in the Navy's budget at a time when those of the Army and Air Force remained flat.

Ambassador Middendorf is a prolific author. His most recent book is *The Great Nightfall: How We Win the New Cold War* (Heritage Harbor Press, 2020), which one critic has described as “a remarkable read” and a “clarion call to action.” He was also a driving force behind The Heritage Foundation

for many years and served as a Trustee from 1989 to 2022.

In a fitting tribute to this lifetime of service, Heritage Foundation supporters Philip and Patricia Bilden offered a generous gift to Heritage to dedicate the Navy section of the *Index of U.S. Military Strength* to Ambassador Middendorf for the next five years. This is the first time any section of this *Index* has been so dedicated. As chairman of the Naval War College Foundation, Mr. Bilden had the honor of presenting the foundation's highest award—Sentinel of the Sea—to Ambassador Middendorf in 2021 in tribute to his many years of distinguished service to the nation.

We are grateful for the opportunity to honor the many contributions Ambassador Middendorf has made on behalf of individual freedom, traditional American values, and a strong national defense anchored in maritime dominance.