

EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 294

Declaring the Last Monday of May of Each Year as a National Holiday to be known as Memorial Day

WHEREAS, during the months of September to November 1944, the United States Armed Forces fought to capture Peleliu to neutralize the forces of the Empire of Japan stationed there; and

WHEREAS, although originally predicted to be over within four days, due to the well-crafted fortifications and stiff resistance of the Japanese forces the battle of Peleliu lasted for over two months, resulting in the highest casualty rate to the United States Armed Forces of any battle in the Pacific War; and

WHEREAS, at the end of the battle of Peleliu virtually all 11,000 of the Japanese forces lay dead, and the United States Armed Forces, originally consisting of only the 1st Marine Division, but later relieved by the Army's 81st Infantry Division, had suffered a total of approximately 9,500 casualties--6,500 by the 1st Marine Division, including 1,252 killed in action, and 3,000 by the 81st Infantry Division, including 542 killed in action; and

WHEREAS, during the month of September 1944, the United States Armed Forces also fought to capture Angaur and Ngesebus ("Ngedbus") Island from the forces of the Empire of Japan, the Army's 81st Infantry Division suffering another 260 killed in action and 1,352 wounded on Angaur, and the 1st Marine Division suffering 15 killed in action and 33 wounded on Ngesebus; and

WHEREAS, the actions of the valiant soldiers of United States Armed Forces in 1944 liberated Palau from the yoke of colonialism that had weighed heavily on our shoulders for almost one hundred years, from the time the Spanish ruled Palau from the Philippines as part of the Spanish East Indies, through the colonial era of Imperial Germany, and lastly through the era of colonial rule by the Empire of Japan; and

WHEREAS, the actions of the United States Armed Forces in 1944 set in motion events that fifty years later would lead to Palau regaining the God-given sovereignty that had been wrenched

from it without the consent of our ancestors so many years before; and

WHEREAS, since our liberation in World War II, under the immediate post-war auspices of the United States Naval Administration, subsequently under the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands through the United Nations, and now as a sovereign democratic republic in free association with the United States under the Compact of Free Association, Palau has enjoyed a close and friendly relationship with the United States, a relationship that has allowed many of our own citizens to themselves join and serve in the United States Armed Forces; and

WHEREAS, every year since 1868, since the original Memorial Day Order was issued by the Grand Army of the Republic, the United States has celebrated Memorial Day to show its respect for those who have died for it, including the sons and daughters of Palau who have served and fought alongside their American comrades in arms in Vietnam, Iraq, Afghanistan and in other theaters of war and who have given their lives, and for the many freedoms that the dauntless service of those men and women has allowed United States citizens to enjoy on a daily basis; and

WHEREAS, we, the citizens of the Republic of Palau are also proud of our freedom, which freedom we ultimately attained with the generous assistance of the United States and those who have fought so valiantly for it and, by extension, who have fought for us, including the many Palauans who have given their lives, so that we could enjoy our freedom; and

WHEREAS, in order to display our gratitude and indebtedness and to honor the memory of the courageous members of the United States Armed Forces who have given their lives for the freedom of our people and the freedom of the entire democratic world, it is fitting and proper that a day be set aside each year for all of us to solemnly reflect on some of the most sacred of human ideals: faith, family, duty, commitment, heroism and honor, to commemorate the memory of the those who have paid the ultimate sacrifice; and

NOW, THEREFORE, by virtue of the authority vested in the President by 1 PNC § 701, the President hereby declares that the last Monday in May of each year shall be a legal holiday of the Republic of Palau, to be known as Memorial Day, honoring the courageous members of the United States Armed Forces, including the many Palauans who have fought alongside their American comrades in arms in Vietnam, Iraq, Afghanistan and in other theaters of war and who

have given their lives for the freedom of the people of Palau and for the freedom of the entire democratic world.

This Executive Order shall take effect immediately.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed my official seal this 4th day of May, 2011.

/s/

Johnson Toribiong
President
Republic of Palau