

PLRC-150115

15 January 2015

Pearl Harbor: A Day that will Live in Infamy

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Political leaders have many motives for going to war. American citizens are usually reluctant to take that step until some catastrophic event charges their emotions. In this essay I will discuss the triggering events of World War II-- and illustrate how those events were used to create an overwhelming pro-war atmosphere. This event could have been stopped or mitigated but our country's leader at the time, President Franklin D. Roosevelt (FDR), chose to allow the Pearl Harbor attack to happen in order to create intensified public support for entering World War II. It seems unbelievable that a political leader could allow such a cataclysmic event to occur. 2,403 Americans died at Pearl Harbor. Yet evidence of prior knowledge is monumental.

PART 1 – DAY OF INFAMY: THE OFFICIAL STORY

Yesterday, December 7, 1941 – a date which will live in infamy – the United States of America was suddenly and deliberately attacked by naval and air forces of the Empire of Japan.

– Franklin D. Roosevelt (8 December 1941)

Totalitarian dictatorships and militarism were springing up globally during the 1930s. Joseph Stalin muscled his way in as dictator of the Soviet Union. Benito Mussolini emerged in Italy and Adolph Hitler grabbed the reins of the Nazi party in 1933 – the same year FDR took office. Japan, determined to become a great naval power in the Pacific, terminated the 12-year-old Washington Naval Treaty with the US. In the face of all this foreign activity the US was again leaning toward isolationism. Shortly after Mussolini invaded Ethiopia, Congress passed the Neutrality Act of 1935. That was followed by the Neutrality Acts of 1936 and 1937. In essence, these Acts said that when the president proclaims a foreign war, it is illegal for Americans to sail on a belligerent's ship, to sell or transport munitions to a belligerent nation, or loan money to such a nation. In applying these laws, there was to be no distinction between aggressor and victim. Of course this stand helped the new dictators who had already armed themselves to the teeth – it actually kept the US from helping the victims..

The Neutrality acts were tested during the Spanish Civil War of 1936-1939 in which Hitler and Mussolini helped General Francisco Franco overthrow the loyalist government. The success of that event further encouraged the dictators.

Isolation While War Clouds Gather

Japan had been storming China. As a newly industrialized country it needed raw materials for its industrial and war machines as well as a market for its manufactured goods. China was the obvious solution. Although the Nine Power Treaty of 1922, to which Japan was a signatory, supposedly created an “Open Door” in China, the door seemed to be more open to western powers – particularly the United States. So around 1931 Japan took military control of a large portion of northern China. This turned into full scale war following the “Marco Polo Bridge Incident” in 1937. America’s neutrality was then strained to the breaking point. Although the neutrality acts required an embargo against all belligerents when the President proclaimed them to be at war, that would hurt China the most because Japan could produce its own weapons and China could not. So FDR simply decided not to call Japan’s military excursions into the Chinese heartland a war because it had not been officially declared. Consequently, munitions supply lines continued to help China and, of course, protect America’s interests in China. Because of this activity by FDR, along with his calling for “preparedness” at home, he was denounced as a warmonger. Nevertheless, Congress in 1938 passed a billion-dollar naval construction bill.

Europe was also in turmoil during the 1930s. Hitler hated the Treaty of Versailles and proceeded to violate it. In 1935 he introduced compulsory military service for German youth. In 1936 he took over the demilitarized German Rhineland. Then he started eliminating the Jewish population. In March 1938 he occupied Austria. The world stood by, hoping that last takeover would satisfy Hitler.

It didn’t. Later in 1938 he demanded the German-inhabited Sudetenland which was part of Czechoslovakia. FDR burned up the wires with calls to Hitler and Mussolini. Britain and France managed to bring the issue to the conference table but then gave Hitler what he wanted. Still unappeased, Hitler in March 1939 took over the rest of Czechoslovakia while Europe stood agape.

Stalin had been a moderating influence on Hitler’s aggression up to now. But when Germany and the Soviet Union signed a non-aggression pact on 23 August 1939, the road was open for Germany to invade Poland without interference from Stalin. First Hitler demanded that Poland return land that had been Germany prior to World War I. When Poland refused, and without a declaration of war, in the early morning hours of 1 September 1939 German armored divisions crossed the Polish border. And, as specified in a secret agreement with Hitler, Stalin also moved in to seize the portion of Poland which had previously been Russian. In addition, he invaded Finland and conquered Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia. Britain and France, having guaranteed Poland’s security, declared war on Hitler (but not Stalin). Poland fell in three weeks. World War II was under way

Neutrality While Supporting the Allies

Most of the world was appalled at the Nazi expansionism but the US still made its formal claims to neutrality. It soon became clear, however, that the Neutrality Acts would get in the way of

helping Britain and France which were in desperate need of military equipment and munitions. So, on 13 September 1939, FDR called Congress into special session. After wrestling with the issue for six weeks Congress passed a haphazard Neutrality Act of 1939. This allowed the US to sell equipment to the Allies on a cash-and-carry basis – they paid cash when they picked up the war materials and provided their own transportation. Although all belligerents qualified for these purchases, only Britain and France could send ships to pick them up. And as historian Thomas A. Bailey expresses it: “America not only improved her moral position, but she simultaneously



improved her economic position. The boom in war goods, though at first limited to the munitions industry, ... ultimately solved the decade-long unemployment crisis.” (Bailey, p. 868)

After conquering Poland, Europe was relatively quiet as Hitler shifted his troops and equipment to the western front. Then in April 1940, the Nazis conquered Denmark and Norway. Hitler carried his blitzkrieg on to Holland and Belgium the following month – and then launched a mighty assault on France. On June 10th, anxious to claim his share of the loot, Benito Mussolini declared war on Britain and France, and attacked France from the south. France fell in late June as the new British leader, Winston Churchill, managed to evacuate his troops during the so-called “miracle of Dunkirk.”

America was shocked to realize that only Britain stood between Hitler and the end of democracy in Europe. Neutrality was abandoned and hopes were now pinned on supporting Britain.

FDR persuaded Congress into passing a whopping \$37 billion military budget.¹ He called for construction of 50,000 aircraft a year and a two-ocean navy that would also discourage Japan. A conscription bill (draft law) went into effect on 6 September 1940 and the Army started building up manpower.

As soon as he had safely won the 1940 election, and without consulting Congress or the legality under the Neutrality Act, FDR by presidential agreement with Winston Churchill transferred 50 World War I vintage destroyers to Britain in return for 99-year leases on eight strategically-located defense sites in the western hemisphere. This sparked heated debate across the nation. Finally Congress, in March 1941, opened the door for more transfers to Britain by passing “An Act Further to Promote the Defense of the United States,” more commonly called “The Lend-Lease Act.” This also geared US factories for war production. And after Germany started an undeclared war against Russia on 22 June 1941, the Lend-Lease Act was extended to Russia.

Then FDR specified certain ocean areas as neutrality zones. His final hope for peace was that Hitler would not torpedo US ships. But Hitler recognized the Lend-Lease Act as a virtual declaration of war. Torpedoing of the unarmed merchant ship *Robin Moor* in a neutrality zone on 21 May 1941 started the sinkings. That led to further US involvement when in July 1941 FDR ordered US naval vessels to guard merchant ships as far as Iceland. The British would escort

¹\$37 billion in 1940 is equivalent to \$461 billion today.

them the rest of the way. Then, when the destroyer *USS Greer* was attacked, but not sunk, in September, FDR issued “shoot on sight” orders for German U-boats.²

All of this was not without intense domestic turmoil. America was sharply divided between those who favored extreme help to keep Britain fighting and isolationists who advocated building a defense around America in case Britain was defeated. FDR was now anxious to stop Hitler but public opinion did not support him. Although a Gallup Poll in January 1941 indicated that 79 percent of the people were against negotiating a peace with Hitler, a whopping 88 percent opposed the US entering the war. Two more Gallup polls were taken on February 3rd and March 10th on whether the US should enter the war against Germany. The first was 85 percent “no” and 15 percent “yes.” The second was 81 percent “no” and 17 percent “yes.”³ FDR needed something to change that opposition. Meanwhile, turmoil was brewing in the Pacific.

On 27 September 1940 Japan became a formal ally of Germany and Italy through the Tripartite Pact signed on that date, thus completing the Germany-Italy-Japan axis – the so-called “Axis Powers.” The Pact originally provided that if any of the three were attacked by a power not presently involved in the European or Chinese wars, the other two would come to its aid. The Tripartite Pact has been described by some analysts as Hitler’s biggest blunder, because he did not want the US in the war until he had beaten Britain. But as tensions mounted in the Pacific, this Pact provided what historians have called FDR’s back door to war. On 8 December 1941, the day after Japan attacked Pearl Harbor, FDR asked Congress to declare that “since the unprovoked and dastardly attack by Japan on Sunday, December seventh, a state of war has existed between the United States and the Japanese Empire.” (Franklin D. Roosevelt’s “Day of Infamy” Speech) Then, in compliance with the Tripartite Pact and at the request of Japan, Germany and Italy on December 11 declared war on the United States. The US Congress reciprocated that same day with a declaration of war on those two countries.

²Documents found in the Modern Military Branch collection of the National Archives, and in the Operational Archives and Library of the Naval Historical Center in Washington indicate that the “shoot on sight” policy went into effect two months earlier – in July. FDR merely used the *Greer* incident as an opportune time to make the policy public. (See Gannon, pp. 84-85.)

³The way this question was framed, the people were expressing what they desired, not what they thought would happen. It would not be honest to omit the results of other polls. As Michael Gannon points out, the public was realistic. (See Gannon, pp. 76-77.) A poll on 27 April 1941 asked: “Do you believe the United States will go into the war in Europe sometime before it’s over, or do you think we will stay out?” 82 percent said we would go in. The next day it was asked: “If it appeared that there was no other way to defeat Germany and Italy except for the United States to go to war against them, would you be in favor of the United States going to war?” 68 percent said they would. - - - Regarding Japan, the most dramatic poll took place on 7 September 1941 when the public was asked: “Should the United States take steps now to keep Japan from becoming more powerful, even if it means risking a war with Japan?” 70 percent said “yes” and 12 percent didn’t know. (All these statistics cited in Gannon, pp. 76-77.) If these polls are credible, then the anti-war resolve of the American public wasn’t as strong as many historians would have us believe.

Economic Warfare

Japan was very vulnerable as an industrial power during the 1930s because it was highly dependent on foreign sources for oil and other essential raw materials. It also faced stiff competition in marketing its manufactured goods. It shocked Japan when, on 26 July 1939, the US gave the required six-months notice to abrogate the 1911 Treaty of Commerce trade agreement with Japan. Then on 5 July 1940, FDR invoked a partial export embargo on Japan.

The final economic blow came after the US intercepted and decoded a Japanese message to the Vichy government in France. It said that if that government would not allow Japan to occupy the southern half of French Indochina, Japan would take that area by force. The Vichy government consented and Japan moved into Vietnam. This further encircled the Philippines – now Southeast Asia to the west as well as Japanese-occupied Micronesia to the east. That prompted FDR to impose a complete embargo on 26 July 1941 – banning shipment of petroleum and petroleum products as well as all scrap iron and steel, closing the Panama Canal to Japanese shipping, and freezing all Japanese assets and credits in the US. British military historian J.F.C. Fuller labeled this act as “a declaration of economic war, and, in consequence, it was the actual opening of the struggle.” (Fuller, J.F.C.; *The Second World War, 1939-45: A Strategic and Tactical History* (Cambridge, MA; Da Capo Press, 1993), p. 128. Cited in Bishop) University of South Carolina foreign policy lecturer Robert Smith Townsend also commented on FDR’s “detering” Japanese aggression through economic pressure:

Here was no mere deterrence; here was deterrence that amounted to provocation. Was the provocation deliberate? Three times, twice to Lord Halifax and once to British premier Winston Churchill, Franklin Roosevelt intimated that he was trying to force “an incident” that would bring America more deeply into the fray. He may have hated war but he presided over policies that came to be undistinguishable from incitements to war. (Townsend, Robert Smith: *A Time For War: Franklin D. Roosevelt and the Path to Pearl Harbor* (New York, Prentice Hall, 1991), p. 401. Cited in Bishop)

Faced with certain economic ruin, Japan was desperate.⁴ There is no excuse for its actions before or after the economic embargo, but under US economic pressure Japan decided to strike out boldly. After the war, when on trial for war crimes, Japanese Prime Minister Hideki Tojo explained the Japanese feelings: “To adopt a policy of patience and perseverance under such impediment [the American pressure] was tantamount to self-annihilation of our nation. Rather than await extinction, it was better to face death by breaking through the encircling ring and find a way of existence.” (Cited in Bishop)

After the attack on Pearl Harbor, there were nine inquiries within the first few years. Most noted was the so-called Roberts Commission headed by Associate Supreme Court Justice Owen J. Roberts. It was commissioned by FDR in an attempt to mitigate public and congressional outrage over how such a surprise could happen. It took place from 18 December 1941 to 23 January 1942 and constructed a sequence of events leading up to the attack. The findings of the Roberts Commission follows, and were accepted as history for many decades.

⁴Japan at that time imported about 88 percent of its petroleum needs – 80 percent from the US.

Hawaii's New Commanders and How They Were Warned

Admiral Husband E. Kimmel became Commander-in-Chief of the Pacific Fleet on 1 February 1941, and Lieutenant General Walter C. Short was appointed Commanding General of the Hawaii Department on 7 February 1941. The Roberts Commission acknowledged that “the policy of the United States as to affairs in the Pacific was in conflict with the policies of other governments. It was realized ... that unless these policies were reconciled war in the Pacific was inevitable.” (Roberts Commission Report, p. 3) The report also noted that military supplies and equipment for the Hawaiian area, which were deficient due to the Lend-Lease Program for Britain, would not support a war for extended periods.⁵ Nevertheless, the Army and Navy had worked out a local joint defense plan called “Joint Coastal Frontier Defense Plan, Hawaiian Coastal Frontier,” under which both commanders would formulate their own procedures. The Army, with its Army Air Corps, would handle close-in defense.⁶ The Navy would provide defense farther out.⁷ But the commanders were to consult with each other to assure adequate protection. The plan had several levels and those levels would go into effect depending on the nature of hostilities threatened.

On 24 January 1941, just before appointment of the two commanders, Navy Secretary Frank Knox wrote to Secretary of War Henry L. Stimson that if war happens with Japan it “is believed easily possible that hostilities would be initiated by a surprise attack upon the fleet or the naval base at Pearl Harbor.” The letter warned that the “inherent possibilities of a major disaster” warranted speedy action to increase the joint readiness of the Army and Navy. Knox then said the “dangers envisaged *in order of their importance and probability* are considered to be: (1) air bombing attack, (2) air torpedo plane attack, (3) sabotage, (4) submarine attack, (5) mining, (6) bombardment by gunfire.” (Emphasis mine) (Roberts Commission Report, p. 5) He then stated that all but the first two were presently satisfactory and concluded with recommenda-

⁵Serious deficiencies were the small quantity and antiquated condition of the Army Air Corps' land-based aircraft and the crucial inadequacy of anti-aircraft guns. This required that naval carrier-based aircraft and ship anti-aircraft guns be used while in port. In return, the Army provided its scant inventory of B-17D heavy bombers and obsolete B-18 medium bombers to help the Navy on long-distance patrol because of the vastly insufficient number of PBYP patrol bombers (flying boats). Requests by both Kimmel and Short for additional supplies to adequately provide both close-in (Army responsibility) and farther out (Navy responsibility) defense were continually denied due to the lend-lease program with Britain. In addition, about one quarter of Kimmel's fleet (an aircraft carrier, three of the newest battleships and the only ones with anti-aircraft defense, four light cruisers, and eighteen destroyers) was taken from him during April and May 1941, and sent to the Atlantic. Ammunition was sparse and fuel was also in short supply. While the Pacific fleet required 25 oil tankers for proper operation, it had only eleven. Kimmel's best-trained officers were also continually siphoned from him.

⁶It should be noted that at this time the Air Force had not been established as a separate branch of the armed services. It was under the Army and was called the Army Air Corps (as distinguished from its Navy counterpart). The Air Force Chief of Staff was under the Army Chief of Staff and the Secretary of War. The Army Air Corps commanding general in Hawaii reported to Short.

⁷Although the Navy was tasked with the extended protection, the necessary long-range aircraft were not available. Kimmel only had 50 PBYP flying boats for patrolling and he was promised 300 in all. The other 250 were sent to Britain. (See Beard, p. 278.)

tions to improve the joint defense plans and placed special emphasis on coordinating Army and Navy operations against surprise aircraft raids.

War Secretary Stimson replied that he had sent a copy of Knox's letter to Lt. Gen. Short in Hawaii, suggesting that he cooperate with Admiral Kimmel in implementing it. Kimmel also received a copy. Plans were amended to comply and numerous joint exercises were conducted.

Kimmel and Short were advised by Washington on 16 October 1941 of a change in the Japanese cabinet and that hostilities between Japan and Russia were probable.⁸ It was also possible that Japan might attack Britain or the US. The commanders were warned to take appropriate preventive action. The commanders testified that they did what was possible without curtailing the training, and they didn't think the situation was grave enough to do that.

On 24 November 1941 the Chief of Naval Operations sent a message to Kimmel stating the Navy believed Japanese aggression could move in any direction, including an attack on the Philippines and Guam. The CNO added that doubts regarding the fruitfulness of negotiations (between State Secretary Cordell Hull and the Japanese envoy), statements by the Japanese government, and movement of Japan's military forces all supported this opinion. He cautioned secrecy so as not to further agitate the tense situation and said the Army requested that Kimmel share this message with Short.

A flurry of activity occurred on 27 November 1941. Both Short and General Douglas MacArthur (in the Philippines) were notified that negotiations with the Japanese appeared to be ended and there was only slight possibility that they would come back with another offer. This was the day after State Secretary Hull sent the ultimatum to Japan (to be discussed below). They were told that Japanese action was unpredictable but hostile action was possible. They were also told that it was the United States' (i.e. FDR's) desire that, if hostilities cannot be avoided, Japan should commit the first overt act.⁹ But that was not to restrict any type of defensive action Short may plan for Hawaii, and that he should immediately undertake reconnaissance and other measures he deemed necessary. In addition, Short was also ordered not to alarm the civilian population or disclose the intent of any action he might take. Secrecy was emphasized and a report of actions taken were to be reported back. On that same day the Chief of Military Intelligence directed the intelligence officer in Hawaii to inform General Short that negotiations with Japan had practically ceased, that hostilities might ensue, and that subversive action (sabotage) might be expected.

Short reported back to the Chief of Staff, as ordered, on what actions he had taken. He had interpreted these and previous messages to mean that Hawaii need only take action against sabotage -- that any aggression was expected to take place in the Philippines or elsewhere -- and

⁸On 16 October 1941, the moderate cabinet of Japan's Prince Konoye lost to the more militant faction. General Hideki Tojo became prime minister. FDR's back door to war was opening wider.

⁹When testifying before the Roberts Commission investigating the attack on Pearl Harbor, Brigadier General Leonard T. Gerow, chief of war plans for the army, in explaining the phrasing of "the US desires that Japan commit the first overt act," said that "the President had definitely stated that he wanted Japan to commit the first overt act." (Cited in Beard, p. 12, note 20.)

executed Level A of the Defense Plan by alerting his command against sabotage.^{10, 11} His interpretation of the messages and his course of action were not corrected by Washington.

Also on 27 November 1941, the Chief of Naval Operations sent a message to Kimmel and Admiral Hart (commander of the Asiatic Fleet) which was to be construed as a “war warning.” The CNO repeated the information that negotiations had ended and an aggressive move could be expected within a few days. He also said that an amphibious assault against either the Philippines or someplace in southeast Asia was indicated by the number and equipment of the Japanese troops and the organization of their naval task force. The fleet commanders were directed to execute a defensive deployment to prepare for war.¹² What was to become known as the “war warning message” read as follows:

THIS DISPATCH IS TO BE CONSIDERED A WAR WARNING X NEGOTIATIONS WITH JAPAN LOOKING TOWARD STABILIZATION OF CONDITIONS IN THE PACIFIC HAVE CEASED AND AN AGGRESSIVE MOVE BY JAPAN IS EXPECTED IN THE NEXT FEW DAYS X THE NUMBER AND EQUIPMENT OF JAPANESE TROOPS AND THE ORGANIZATION OF NAVAL TASK FORCES INDICATES AN AMPHIBIOUS EXPEDITION AGAINST EITHER THE PHILIPPINES THAI OR KRA PENINSULA OR POSSIBLY BORNEO X EXECUTE AN APPROPRIATE DEFENSIVE DEPLOYMENT PREPARATORY TO CARRYING OUT THE TASKS ASSIGNED IN WPL [WAR PLAN] 46 X ... (Cited in Toland, p. 7)

The only operational order in this November 27th warning was “EXECUTE AN APPROPRIATE DEFENSIVE DEPLOYMENT PREPARATORY TO CARRYING OUT THE TASKS ASSIGNED IN WPL 46.” It followed the phrase about an expected attack in the Philippines, Thai, or Kra Peninsula. Rear

¹⁰To understand the military focus on sabotage, and why preparations against it were part of the defense plan, one must realize that in 1941 there were some 161,000 Japanese living on Hawaii – about 37 percent of the population. About 40,000 of those were aliens. It was believed that the place was swarming with Japanese spies. As John T. Flynn pointed out: “While the General Staff felt certain the attack would come at least 3,000 miles from Hawaii, they were profoundly frightened lest an internal movement of suicide Japanese patriots would destroy planes and essential installations, crippling the base.” (See Flynn.)

¹¹Earlier on the morning of the 27th, before he had received the war warning message, Short had met with Kimmel. He learned that the latest naval intelligence placed the main Japanese carrier fleet either in home waters or proceeding south. (See Gannon, p. 139.)

¹²This so-called “War Warning” message has been used extensively by apologists for the Roosevelt administration to show that Hawaiian commanders had received adequate warning of attack. But this message must be understood in context of command responsibilities in Hawaii at that time. Contrary to general belief, it was the Army, not the Navy, that was responsible for protecting the Pacific fleet while in port at Pearl Harbor. Admiral Kimmel interpreted this “War Warning” as pertaining to the Pacific fleet’s defensive responsibilities at sea, and was carried out accordingly. Those responsibilities included support of Allies in the Far East by diverting enemy strength away from the Malay barrier, protection of sea communications of the Allies within the Pacific area, support of British naval forces south of the equator, and protection of Allied territory within the Pacific Area “by destroying hostile expeditions and by supporting land and air forces in denying the enemy the use of land positions in the hemisphere.” (Admiral Kimmel’s 16 January 1945 testimony before the Joint Congressional Committee on the Investigation of the Pearl Harbor Attack. Cited in Toland, p. 184.)

Admiral Royal E. Ingersoll, assistant CNO, said later that this operational order applied mainly to the Asiatic Fleet and Admiral Hart, who was the co-addressee along with Kimmel for this message. (See Gannon, p. 150.)

The next day, November 28th, Short received two more sabotage warnings from Washington. The adjutant general of the Army urged “that you initiate forthwith all additional measures necessary to provide for protection of your establishments, property, and equipment against sabotage, protection of your personnel against subversive propaganda and protection of all activities against espionage.” (Cited in Gannon, p. 130) The message only authorized legal protective measures and said those should be confined to what is essential for security so as to avoid unnecessary publicity and alarm. The commander-in-chief of the Army Air Corps sent essentially the same message to his subordinate in Hawaii.

On November 29th Short replied to the Adjutant General’s message, outlining in detail all the measures he had taken to prevent sabotage. He testified to the Roberts Commission that since he received no further reply from the War Department that he considered his action all that was expected.

Also on November 29th, the Chief of Naval Operations sent a message to Kimmel which was similar to the messages Short had received. But in addition Kimmel was directed to take no offensive action until Japan committed the first overt act. Then the CNO ordered certain action if hostilities did occur.

The CNO, on the 30th, sent a message to the commander-in-chief of the Asiatic Fleet with an information copy to Kimmel. It said indications were that Japan was about to launch an attack on the Kra Isthmus in southeast Asia, and directed the Asiatic commander to do a little scouting but to avoid any appearance of attacking. Kimmel testified that he interpreted this message to mean the Navy Department was not expecting an attack on Hawaii.

On 1 December the Director of Naval Intelligence issued a bulletin entitled “Japanese Naval Situation.” It said that deployment of Japanese naval forces southward from Japan were indicated clearly and that preparations were under way for hostilities. It also pointed out that troop transports and supply freighters were also moving southward and that the buildup of an extensive task force could probably be expected in a few days. The message elaborated on what appeared to be two major task groups moving south (not toward Hawaii): “Each constitutes a strong striking force of heavy and light cruisers, units of the combined air force, destroyer and submarine squadrons. ... the major capital ship strength remains in home waters, as well as the greatest portion of the carriers.” (Cited in Roberts Commission, p. 9) But were they in home waters? There were other reports that the main Japanese aircraft carrier force left home waters in late December and disappeared. Kimmel and Short were aware of that but the presumption was they were somewhere with the main invasion force. In reality, *Kido Butai* (strike force) was churning through the Pacific at 24 knots toward the aircraft launching point about 200 miles north of Hawaii. (Toland, pp. 8-9)

Three more messages from the Navy Department were received by Kimmel in December. One on December 3rd stated a belief that certain Japanese consulates were destroying their codes and burning secret documents. This is always interpreted as war within a few days. The codes have to be destroyed beforehand because enemy consulates are no longer privileged premises during

wartime. On December 4th Kimmel received an “information only” copy of a message in which the addressee was instructed to destroy all classified documents and code machines except the bare essentials for communication, and to immediately destroy those in event of emergency. The third, on December 6th, called attention to the tense situation and directed that naval commands in the outlying Pacific islands might be authorized to destroy confidential papers under condition of greater emergency, and that those essential for operation should be retained until the last minute.

The Roberts Commission Findings

The Roberts Commission summarized at this point that none of these messages created in the minds of the Hawaiian commanders “apprehension as to probable imminence of air raids. On the contrary they only served to emphasize in their minds the danger from sabotage and surprise submarine attack.” (Roberts Commission, p. 9)

The Roberts Commission also pointed out that apparently the Japanese had complete intelligence information about Hawaii. They knew that no US Navy task force was in the waters north of Hawaii and that there were no aircraft patrols around the islands. They also had maps showing exact locations of airfields and critical structures as well as pinpointing important naval vessels in the harbor. The Japanese pilots were apparently well prepared with maps and instructions on how each would attack specific targets.

At about 6:30 AM Honolulu time (noon in Washington) on December 7th, a warning message indicating an almost immediate break in relations was received. This warning was sent to Kimmel and Short but “due to conditions beyond the control of anyone concerned the delivery of this urgent message was delayed until after the attack,” which started at about 7:55 AM. (Roberts Commission, p. 9) It will be shown in Part 2 below just how much it was “beyond the control of anyone concerned.”

The first six items in the Roberts Commission Report conclusion exonerated the officials in Washington – the Secretaries of State, War, and Navy; the Chief of Staff of the Army and the Chief of Naval Operations – by stating they had fulfilled their obligations and command responsibilities. The next twelve items of the conclusion spelled out what Kimmel and Short did and what they should have done, and placed the blame on them for not consulting and cooperating with each other, and not being prepared for the attack on Pearl Harbor. That is the conclusion and belief that has been popularly accepted ever since, in spite of an abundance of evidence and subsequent reports to the contrary. That is the topic of the next chapter.

PART 2 – PEARL HARBOR: THE REST OF THE STORY

News is an overt act which juts out of the routine of circumstance. ... A good public relations man advises his client ... to carry out an overt act ... interrupting the continuity of life in some way to bring about a response.

– Edward L. Bernays (1990) (Cited in Ewen, p. 18)

During his presidential campaign of 1940, FDR promised that American boys would not participate in foreign wars *unless we are attacked*. His exact words were: “We will not participate in foreign wars, and we will not send our army, naval, or air forces to fight in foreign lands outside of the Americas, except in case of attack. ... The direction and aim of our foreign policy has been, and will continue to be, the security and defense of our own land and the maintenance of its peace.” (Cited in Beard, p. 3) Yet FDR saw a need to stop Hitler and that would not be possible without US intervention. To fulfill both the need he perceived and his moral commitment to the American people, to say nothing of overcoming the overwhelming isolationist mood of the country, an act of aggression against the US was needed. If need be, an attack had to be provoked. It was obvious that Hitler was not going to make the first aggressive move. So FDR chose Japan and the Pacific theater. He started the economic pressures described in PART 1.

The McCollum Memorandum.

In understanding FDR’s intentions and activities leading up to Pearl Harbor, it would be instructive to know something about the influence of Arthur H. McCollum. He was born in Nagasaki of missionary parents and spent his boyhood in Japan. He not only spoke Japanese fluently, but understood the Japanese people. After graduating from the US Naval Academy, McCollum was assigned as Naval Attache for the US Embassy in Tokyo. In that job he taught Crown Prince Hirohito, the future emperor, how to dance the Charleston. Later, as head of the Far East Section in the Office of Naval Intelligence (ONI), McCollum had a unique capability for formulating foreign policy suggestions for the Asia-Pacific area. He was also FDR’s routing manager during 1940 and 1941. In keeping FDR informed on Far East intelligence matters, McCollum saw every intercepted and processed report that went to the President – both diplomatic and naval.

Historian John Toland, in his 1982 book, *Infamy*, seemed to paint a somewhat sincere picture of McCollum with regards to trying to get information to fleet commanders. On page 62 he indicates that McCollum believed the commanders in the Pacific should have more information, and explains how McCollum drafted a 4 December 1941 message to do that. Then how that message was never sent because Rear Admiral Richmond Kelly Turner, Chief of the War Plans Division, said the November 27th war warning message sufficed. Again, on pages 66 and 74, Toland refers to McCollum’s December 4th message which was never sent.

Toland does indicate that McCollum was aware that *Kido Butai* was being tracked and that it was close to Hawaii. On page 298, Toland places McCollum present when the location of *Kido Butai* was pointed out on the map to Dutch Captain Ranneft. (This incident will be discussed below.) But an entire new understanding of Arthur McCollum, and what led up to the attack on Pearl Harbor, emerged when a document written by him was declassified in 1994. It explained why

much information he was aware of never got to the fleet, and why he had an interest in the progress and location of *Kido Butai*.

On 7 October 1940, McCollum, then a Lieutenant Commander, composed a memorandum and submitted it to Captains Walter S. Anderson and Dudley W. Knox, two of FDR's military advisors.^{13, 14} The first few pages summed up the hostile conditions facing the US in Europe and the Pacific. British naval superiority in the Atlantic was currently protecting America from that direction. But Japan's growing hostility threatened the British supply line from the Far East through the Indian Ocean, and Japan must be diverted if British opposition in Europe is to remain effective. America's naval forces in the Pacific are adequate for that purpose and it is in US interests to eliminate Japan's threat by taking prompt and aggressive action. Since public sentiment in the US prevents taking a political offensive, additional naval forces should be sent to the orient and agreements reached with Britain and the Dutch government in exile to check Japanese encroachment in southeast Asia. McCollum, a Far East expert, suggested eight steps the US could take to fulfill this objective:

- A. Make an arrangement with Britain for the use of British bases in the Pacific, particularly Singapore.
- B. Make an arrangement with Holland for the use of base facilities and acquisition of supplies in the Dutch East Indies.
- C. Give all possible aid to the Chinese government of Chiang-Kai-Shek.
- D. Send a division of long range heavy cruisers to the Orient, Philippines, or Singapore.
- E. Send two divisions of submarines to the Orient.
- F. Keep the main strength of the US fleet now in the Pacific in the vicinity of the Hawaiian Islands.
- G. Insist that the Dutch refuse to grant Japanese demands for undue economic concessions, particularly petroleum.
- H. Complete embargo of all US trade with Japan, in collaboration with a similar embargo imposed by the British Empire. (McCollum Memorandum, pp. 3-4)

McCollum concluded his memorandum with a cross between suggestion and warning: "If by these means Japan could be led to commit an overt act of war, so much the better. At all events we must be fully prepared to accept the threat of war." (McCollum Memorandum, pp. 3-4)

¹³Captain Anderson was Director of ONI and Captain Knox was a naval strategist and head of the ONI library. Anderson was later promoted to rear admiral and became commander of battleships at Pearl Harbor.

¹⁴Jacobsen disputes that FDR knew of the McCollum Memo. He says that Captain Knox did not forward the memo on to Captain Anderson but returned it to McCollum with his (Knox's) comments. That may be true but McCollum could have sent a separate copy directly to Anderson, or resubmitted it after correcting for Knox's comments. Furthermore, Knox did not disagree with the memo. He was actually encouraging. He merely stated that first priority must be given to getting destroyers and air reinforcements to England, and nothing should be precipitated in the Orient that would interfere with that. Knox concluded with the comment: "However, I concur in your courses of action we must be ready on both sides and probably strong enough to care for both."

[See <http://whatreallyhappened.com/WRHARTICLES/McCollum/index.html>]

Over the course of 1941, FDR implemented all eight of these steps to one degree or another. Agreements were made with Britain and the Dutch (points A and B). Support for China continued through Burma and other routes (point C). As described above, Roosevelt put a complete embargo on shipping goods and supplies to Japan, and froze the holdings of Japanese in the US (point H). The Dutch started tightening the screws on selling oil to Japan (point G).

Twenty-four submarines were sent to Manila (Point E).¹⁵ The presence of the Asiatic Fleet in the Orient presumably satisfied point D. FDR also personally directed so-called pop-up cruises to antagonize the Japanese. He wrote: "I just want them to keep popping up here and there and keep the Jap's guessing. I don't mind losing one or two cruisers, but do not take a chance on losing five or six." Admiral Kimmel objected: "It is ill advised and will lead to war if we make this move." (Cited in Stinnett, *Day of Deceit*, p. 9) Three such pop-up cruises are reported on White House records.

The remaining point (point F) was to move the Pacific Fleet from San Diego to Hawaii. When Admiral James O. Richardson, Kimmel's predecessor, was told about the plan to move the fleet to Hawaii, he retorted: "Mr. President, senior officers of the Navy do not have the trust and confidence in the civilian leadership of this country that is essential for the prosecution of a war in the Pacific." (Cited in Stinnett, *Day of Deceit*, p. 19) Richardson quoted FDR as saying: "Sooner or later the Japanese would commit an overt act against the United States and the nation would be willing to enter the war." (Cited in Stinnett, *Day of Deceit*, p. 20) Shortly thereafter Richardson was relieved and Kimmel assigned Commander in Chief of the Pacific Fleet. The fleet was moved to Hawaii and, although Kimmel objected, he kept those objections to himself.

At the Atlantic Conference, on the evening of 9 August 1941, FDR made a commitment to British Premier Churchill regarding joint action in the case of Japan invading British possessions in the Far East.¹⁶ To reconcile that commitment to Britain with his promise to the American people that their boys would not fight in a foreign war unless attacked, FDR saw a need that (1) Japan must make the first overt act of war and (2) that overt act must be against some US possession (such as the Philippines, Guam, or Hawaii), not against British Singapore or the Dutch East Indies.

The Significant Quartet and Their Seniors

In 1928 McCollum was asked to teach a Japanese language course. An enduring friendship formed with him and three other officers in the class – Joseph J. Rochefort, Edwin Layton, and Ethelbert Watts. Those four names were destined to pop up frequently in the drama leading up to December 7, 1941. Rochefort became commander of Hawaii's Station-HYPO, the intelligence control center for the Pacific Fleet. Layton became Kimmel's intelligence officer and was the

¹⁵Gannon states (p. 149) that the first submarine reinforcements were sent to the Asiatic fleet in October 1939, a year before McCollum's memo. It is not clear if more were sent after the memo was issued.

¹⁶This commitment was apparently not passed down to FDR's subordinates. After the war there were no witnesses to the agreement except British. Historian Michael Gannon expressed doubts about whether the agreement was actually made or whether the British only heard what they wanted to hear. (See Gannon, p. 118.)

conduit of all intelligence to the admiral. McCollum became head of the Far East Intelligence Section of ONI and FDR's routing manager, with Watts as his assistant. In these positions, this "significant quartet," as I shall call them, significantly influenced the pipeline of intelligence information to both Kimmel and FDR

The flow of intelligence information to outlying commanders was authorized by four top military officers. General George C. Marshall, Army Chief of Staff, and Brigadier General Leonard T. Gerow, Chief of Army War Plans Division, controlled the flow of intelligence to all Army commanders including Short. Admiral Harold R. Stark, Chief of Naval Operations, and Rear Admiral Richmond Kelly Turner, Chief of Navy War Plans Division, were the gate for all intelligence to Navy commanders, including Kimmel.

This arrangement at the working level managed to keep Hawaii in the dark as far as planning for an attack. Intelligence through official channels was restricted by the two generals and two admirals. If information filtered in from other locations it could be filtered out by the "significant quartet." Of course FDR and his war cabinet had access to intelligence – including Secretary of State Cordell Hull, Secretary of War Henry L. Stimson, Secretary of Navy Frank Knox, and FDR's personal confidant and advisor Harry Hopkins. Stinnett cites about 35 people in his book who knew in advance about Pearl Harbor and says there were probably more.

With that understanding of the Pacific Fleet's command structure, and the flow of information to it, let us continue with how this facilitated the chain of events leading up to Pearl Harbor.

Intelligence Suppression at Work

On 27 January 1941, Secretary of State Cordell Hull received a message from the US ambassador in Tokyo. The ambassador had heard from Peruvian Embassy officials that Japan was planning a surprise attack on Pearl Harbor in the event of trouble with the US. As chief of the Far East section of the ONI, McCollum was assigned to evaluate the message. He discounted the message as rumor and said Japanese naval activity indicated no such plan.¹⁷

But Washington certainly knew it was not a rumor. Japanese relations were deteriorating. On 30 January 1941, an intercepted message from the Japanese foreign minister read: "In view of the critical situation between the two countries we must be prepared for the worst." (Cited in Stinnett, *Day of Deceit*, p. 29)

In August a British double agent, Dusko Popov, whose job was to feed controlled information to the Nazis, told the FBI he was being dispatched to Hawaii by the Germans to learn more about military targets on Oahu and in Pearl Harbor. The FBI said it looked too complete to be believed and could be a trap. Sir John Masterman, head of Britain's program to recruit and train double agents, said the information presented to the FBI "indicated very clearly that in the event of the United States being at war, Pearl Harbour would be the first point to be attacked, and that plans

¹⁷Jacobsen maintains that McCollum did send the message to Kimmel in Hawaii.

for this attack had reached an advanced state by August 1941.” (Cited in Toland, p. 260) The documents submitted by the double agent have since disappeared from FBI files.

The US ambassador in Tokyo apparently had an informant in the emperor’s palace. He reported a November 2nd meeting of the Imperial Liaison Conference in which the emperor authorized Admiral Yamamoto to attack Pearl Harbor and destroy the Pacific fleet if war did happen. The ambassador closed his report with the warning: “War with the United States may come with dramatic and dangerous suddenness.” (Cited in Stinnett, *Day of Deceit*, p. 143) After sending the embassy’s naval attache and his wife on a “vacation” to scout out the Inland Sea, the ambassador sent another warning on November 17th predicting sudden hostile action. In response to this message, and other intelligence about the buildup of *Kido Butai* in Hitokappu Bay, Washington declared the northern Pacific a “vacant sea.” All shipping was diverted to a southern route, possibly to prevent discovery of the Japanese task force when it sailed.

Kimmel, in the meantime, was getting somewhat concerned over the spattering of information he was obtaining. Radio tracking stations had followed the main Japanese carrier force north to their assembly point at Hitokappu Bay. Kimmel wanted to know where those carriers were headed. On November 23rd, he sent his fleet into the waters north of Hawaii – ostensibly on maneuvers to prevent an air attack but at the same time to scour the area for the Japanese carrier force. His operation was at the exact spot where the Japanese would launch their planes on December 7th.¹⁸ When Washington was informed, Kimmel was ordered to return to Pearl Harbor and sent his carriers on another mission. This cancellation of Kimmel’s exercise, and the reasons behind it, were never discussed in any of the Pearl harbor investigations.

Kimmel and Short were also kept out of the loop regarding many of the Japanese radio messages that were intercepted, decoded, and translated. In a 4 October 1940 letter from Rear Admiral Royal Ingersoll, Assistant Chief of Naval Operations, to all fleet commanders he said: “Every major movement of the Orange [America’s code name for Japan] Fleet¹⁹ has been predicted, and a continuous flow of Orange diplomatic activities has been made available.” (Cited in Stinnett, *Day of Deceit*, p 23) This means that, by intercepting and processing encrypted radio communication, the Japanese warships were being monitored and Japanese messages to embassies and consular offices overseas were being read – the US could understand both their naval and diplomatic codes. To understand how radio was used, it would be helpful to know about the radio intercept stations (listening posts) around the Pacific rim at that time.

¹⁸The US had always considered the northern Pacific as a possible launch point for an air attack on Hawaii. In 1938, during maneuvers around Hawaii, Vice Admiral Earnest J. King launched a successful simulated surprise attack on Pearl Harbor from the aircraft carrier *USS Saratoga*.

¹⁹America’s major war plan for 1940-1941 was code-named Rainbow. Each potential enemy was assigned a color. Orange designated Japan.

Pacific Rim Radio Listening Posts

There were 22 Pacific listening posts in place in 1941. Seventeen were run by the US (13 Navy and 4 Army), four by the British, and one by the Dutch.²⁰ The Dutch station, called *Kamer-14*, was situated on Java in the Netherlands East Indies (now Indonesia). It was a full-service station which could intercept coded messages, decrypt and translate them, and obtain a radio direction finding (RDF) bearing on them. The main British station was at Singapore and it was also a full-service station. The second on Stonecutter Island in Hong Kong harbor was an intercept and RDF station. The other two were at Esquimalt and Ucluelet in Canada – both on British Columbia's Vancouver Island. They were for RDF only.

The four Army monitoring stations in the Pacific were MS-2 (San Francisco), MS-4 (Panama Canal Zone), MS-5 (Oahu, Hawaii), and MS-6 (Philippines). They all operated under the Army's Signal Intelligence Service (SIS) in Washington D.C., where intercepted messages were processed.²¹

The thirteen US Navy stations were divided into three geographic regions:

- **Navy Western Pacific Network.** Station-CAST on Corregidor in the Philippines was the regional control station. It was a full service station which could intercept and process all coded messages – both Japanese Navy and diplomatic – and take RDF bearings on radio signals.
- **Navy Mid-Pacific Network.** Station-HYPO, in the basement of the 14th Naval District administration building at Pearl Harbor, was the regional control station. It had no intercept or RDF capability. It only processed messages that were sent from other stations. This network concentrated strictly on naval and maritime messages. Station-HYPO did not process diplomatic or consular intercepts.
- **Navy US West Coast Network.** Station-SAIL in Seattle (Bainbridge Island) was the regional control station. It could intercept coded messages and take RDF bearings but could not decode messages. Station-SAIL sent still-encrypted messages to Washington D.C. for processing.

These Navy stations were under the control of Op-20-G (also known as Station-US), which was the Communications Intelligence Section of US Naval Communications, Washington D.C. Op-20-G and the Army's SIS worked very closely in Washington. In fact, they would often rotate weekend duty for receiving and processing messages. These Navy geographic regions and the thirteen stations are described in Appendix-A. But let me review briefly which stations could actually decode messages intercepted by the Pacific rim network.

²⁰The Dutch government was in exile in London at this time.

²¹In this sense, the word "processing" means decoding the message and then translating it from Japanese to English.

- In Washington, both the Navy Op-20-G and the Army SIS could decipher all codes that were broken – including diplomatic/consular codes as well as navy/maritime codes.
- Station-CAST could decipher all codes that were broken – including diplomatic/consular codes as well as navy/maritime codes.
- Station-HYPO only deciphered navy/maritime codes that were broken. It could decipher the J-19 consular code but did not monitor that frequency.
- The British station at Singapore and the Dutch *Kamer-14* on Java could apparently decipher all codes that had been broken.

For this essay I will focus mainly on the Navy’s Mid-Pacific Network and the Army’s Monitoring Station-5 (MS-5). The Mid Pacific Network concentrated on Japanese Naval communications.²² It did not monitor diplomatic and consular code frequencies – they were handled by the other two Navy networks in the Pacific and the Army’s MS-5 on Hawaii (although MS-5 could not decipher anything). On the other hand, most Japanese messages intercepted by the Army’s MS-5, located at Fort Shafter on Oahu, were those being sent to foreign embassies and consulate offices in the top diplomatic code known to as Purple, or in the main consular code called J-19.^{23, 24} MS-5 did not decode any of the messages it intercepted because it had no equipment or trained personnel for processing. It sent them to the SIS in Washington by Pan American Clipper flight for decoding.²⁵

No commanders in Hawaii knew the content of these Japanese messages until Washington had deciphered them, and then only if the information was sent back to Hawaii. The deciphered messages were known as Magic, or Magic messages.

Regarding the Purple diplomatic code, there was no Purple decoding machine in all of Hawaii. Even the Navy’s regional control station – Station-HYPO – did not have a Purple machine because the Navy on Hawaii was told to focus on Japanese Navy communications. Unlike the cooperation between Op-20-G and SIS in Washington, or between Station-CAST and MS-6 in

²²Four naval code systems were used to assemble *Kido Butai* and guide it to Hawaii: (1) the JN-25B or “five number” code, also called AN-1; (2) the radio call sign code for officials, land stations, warships, and merchant ships; (3) the ship movement (SM) code to report arrivals and departures of ships; and (4) the merchant ship (MS) code. All of these codes, except possibly JN-25B, had been cracked by the US, British, and Dutch by Fall of 1941.

²³The Japanese used Purple code to communicate with its embassies overseas. The J-series code was used to communicate with the various consulates. Japan’s Hawaiian consulate could not receive Purple.

²⁴The J-series code was changed three times in 1941 (to J-17, J-18, and then J-19). J-19 was the latest and was used in the final weeks leading up to the Pearl Harbor attack. Each time it was changed, US cryptologists cracked it within a very short time.

²⁵Toland says the Magic messages from Army MS-5 were sent to Washington by air mail. Stinnett says that Navy messages were sent to Washington by teleprinter (teletypewriter). The only explanation seems to be that the Navy messages (already decoded) could then be encrypted again in the US naval code for a faster means of transmission. (Jacobsen says no raw intercepted Japanese naval messages were sent to Washington by teletype.)

CHRONOLOGY

1941 EVENTS LEADING UP TO PEARL HARBOR

- Jan 27th – US ambassador in Tokyo warns of possible surprise attack on Pearl Harbor.
- August – British double agent warns of Japanese interest in military targets at Pearl Harbor.
- Sep. 24th – “Bomb Plot” message sent to Hawaiian spy from Tokyo.
- Oct. 16th – General Hideki Tojo becomes prime minister of Japan. Rules with militaristic cabinet.
- Nov. 2nd – US ambassador in Tokyo warns that Emperor had authorized an attack on Pearl Harbor.
- Nov. 19th – “Winds Setup” message intercepted.
- Nov. 20th – Station-H in Hawaii detects split in Japanese carrier fleet. Nov. 23rd
 - Kimmel sends task force north to look for “missing” Japanese carriers. Ordered to return to Hawaii by Washington.
- Nov. 26th – US State Secretary Cordell Hull gives his ultimatum to Japanese ambassador.
 - Kido Butai leaves Hitokappu Bay for Hawaii.
- Nov. 27th – War warning messages sent to Kimmel and Short. Indicates attack expected in Philippines.
- Dec. 1st – Director of Naval Intelligence issued bulletin on two task forces heading to Philippines.
 - No mention of Kido Butai.
- Dec. 2nd – Hawaiian spy reported information indicating Pearl Harbor is target. (Read before Dec. 7th.)
 - Kido Butai position tracked to half way between Japan and Hawaii.
- Dec. 3rd – Kimmel receives notice that certain Japanese consulates are destroying their code.
 - J-19 consulate code no longer used. Less secure PA code now used.
- Dec. 4th – Kimmel receives “info only” message that some US bases are destroying their code.
 - “Winds Execute” message received by Ralph Biggs at the Navy’s east coast intercept station.
- Dec. 5th – Sino-Korean Peoples agent warns that Pearl Harbor will be attacked this weekend.
- Dec. 6th – First 13 points of 14-point message intercepted and read in Washington..
 - Hawaiian spy reports Pearl Harbor ripe for sneak attack. (Maybe wasn’t read before Dec 7th)
 - Kimmel receives message that more Pacific US naval bases may have to destroy their code.
 - Kido Butai tracked to within 400 miles of Hawaii.
 - 14th point of 14-point message received.
- December 7th – Japanese attack Pearl Harbor**

the Philippines, there was no liaison between Station-HYPO and MS-5. They did not share intercepts. It seems evident that General Short did not even know that Station-HYPO could process the J-19 diplomatic code, which it didn't even monitor. And of course neither Hawaiian station could process the Purple code because there was no Purple deciphering machine in Hawaii.

The Bomb Plot Message

There was one known spy in the Japanese Consulate in Honolulu – a disguised Japanese naval officer. He received his instructions and submitted all his information through the Consulate office using the consular J-series code. From March to August 1941 he had been providing Tokyo with a count of the ships in Pearl Harbor. In August he was asked to plot where all the ships were anchored and other tactical details. Then on 24 September he received what has been called the “Bomb Plot Message” from Tokyo. This message in the J-19 code was intercepted by MS-5 and sent by air to Washington. It was decrypted by SIS on October 6th. The message instructed the Japanese spy to map Pearl Harbor into five areas – (A) waters between Ford Island and the



USS Arizona 7 December 1941

Arsenal, (B) waters adjacent to Ford Island on the south and west sides, (C) East Loch, (D) Middle Loch, and (F) West Loch and communicating water routes. Then the message requested the location of all vessels by type in each area, and how they were moored. This was in effect requesting a bombing grid with coordinates of all targets. Other important messages received between then and November 8th were instructions to report all ship movements, to provide special scrutiny of naval air bases, and to provide information on strategic locations around Honolulu. None of these messages were provided to Kimmel or Short. Short, who was responsible for naval vessels security while they were in port, was merely alerted to watch carefully for sabotage and espionage.

On December 2nd and 6th the spy sent messages containing information that definitely indicating Pearl Harbor would be attacked. Robert Stinnett has documents obtained from FOIA requests that show the December 2nd message was decoded and translated by December 5th. There is no proof the December 6th message was processed before the attack. (Cirignano)

When Kimmel first heard of the “Bomb Plot” messages in 1944, he said: “These Japanese instructions and reports [withheld from me] pointed to an attack by Japan upon the ships in Pearl Harbor. ... No one had a greater right than I to know that Japan had carved up Pearl Harbor. ... Knowledge of these intercepted Japanese dispatches would have radically changed the estimate of

the situation made by me and my staff [and] afforded an opportunity to ambush the striking force as it ventured to Hawaii.” (Cited in Gannon, p. 193)

Substantiating information on the Bomb Plot had reached Washington from another source in early Fall 1941. After failing to reach a responsible person in the State Department, an agent of the Sino-Korean People’s League called upon Eric Sevareid in the Washington office of CBS. The agent, Kilsoo Haan, told Sevareid that friends in the Korean underground had proof that the Japanese were going to attack Pearl Harbor before Christmas. One piece of the proof, recalled Sevareid later, was that “a Korean working in the Japanese consulate in Honolulu had seen full blueprints of our above-water and underwater naval installation – spread out on the consul’s desk.” (Cited in Toland, p. 260) In late October Haan did convince Iowa Senator Guy Gillette that the Japanese planned simultaneous attacks on Pearl Harbor and the Philippines – as well as Midway, Guam, and Wake Islands – in December or January. Gillette alerted the State Department, ONI, and SIS. Major Warren J. Clear of Army intelligence in the Far East similarly warned that Japanese attacks were planned against a chain of islands including Hawaii and Guam.

The “Winds” Messages

Another important set of intercepts were the so-called “Winds” messages – the “Winds Setup” and the “Winds Execute.” On 19 November 1941 the Japanese Foreign Office sent to all foreign representatives the “Winds Setup” message in the J-19 consular code. British intelligence decoded it on November 25th and the US on November 28th. It gave certain code words that would be broadcast in plain Japanese language over Tokyo short-wave radio, in the form of a weather report, to notify all Japanese consulate offices if diplomatic relations were being broken off with either Britain, Russia, or the US. The code words to be used (translated) were:

“West wind, clear” would indicate a break with Britain.

“North wind, cloudy” would indicate a break with Russia.

“East wind, rain” would indicate a break with the US.

This “Winds Execute” message would be broadcast during a scheduled program, and would not be encrypted. When one of these execute messages was received, the consulates in the country specified were to destroy their code books. For an embassy or consulate to destroy its code books is a sure sign that war is imminent – probably within a day or two. That is why intercepting the “Winds Execute” message was considered a critical warning.

On Java in the Netherlands East Indies (now Indonesia), the Dutch army intercepted a message in the consular code which they had broken. It described a simultaneous attack on Hawaii, the Philippines, Malaya, and Thailand which would be announced by Radio Tokyo as a weather broadcast. It was the “Winds Setup” message. Dutch General Hein Ter Poorten personally carried the decoded intercept to the American military observer, Brigadier General Elliott Thorpe. Since Thorpe didn’t have his code book with him, the senior naval attache at the American Consulate sent the message to Washington for him, in the naval code. Thorpe later sent another message to Washington on his own. General Ter Poorten also sent the information to the Dutch

military attache in Washington with instructions to pass it on to high US officials. General Marshall is reported to have said: “Can you take such reports seriously?”²⁶ The Thorpe and Poorten messages have disappeared from official files.

Early on December 4th, the “Winds Execute” message was received by Ralph Biggs at the Navy’s East Coast Intercept Station. It said “East wind, rain.” This meant war with the country to the east – the United States. Biggs made an entry in the daily log sheet describing this message. All references to these “Winds” messages disappeared shortly thereafter from US files, but there has been ample testimony that they did exist. Ralph Biggs was ordered by his commanding officer not to testify at the Joint Congressional hearing.

The “Winds” messages received a lot of attention during many of the investigations following Pearl Harbor. They indicated that war was imminent but not where the attack would take place. Those messages may have been used during the investigations as a red herring to draw attention away from other more revealing information.

A Last Minute Warning

On Friday, December 5th, three more battleships arrived at Pearl harbor. The lone aircraft carrier, *USS Lexington*, left port with five heavy cruisers. That same day in Washington, Kilsoo Haan, the Sino-Korean People’s League agent, called Maxwell Hamilton in the State Department warning that the Korean underground had discovered that Hawaii would be attacked the coming weekend. Haan immediately followed up with a written report:

Pursuant to our telephone conversation regarding our agents’ apprehensions that Japan may suddenly move against Hawaii “this coming weekend,” may I call your attention to the following relevant and pertinent information.

One: The publication of US Army Air Corps maneuvers throughout the Hawaiian Islands by the Japanese daily *Nippu Jiji*, Nov. 22, 1941. This timetable of air maneuvers is from November through Dec. 31, 1941, “every day except sundays and holidays.”

Two: The Italian magazine “Oggi” of October 24, 1941 published an article in Rome forecasting war between Japan and America. ... by air and naval attack of the Hawaiian Islands and eventually attacking Alaska, California and the Panama Canal. (Cited in Toland, pp. 289-290)

Referring to an October 1940 Japanese book -- *The Three Power Alliance and the US-Japan War*²⁷ with a chapter entitled “The Japanese Surprise Attack Fleet” – which predicted that Japan would seek advantage by striking first in a war with the US, Haan continued: “It is our considered observation and sincere belief, December is the month of the Japanese attack, and the SURPRISE FLEET is aimed at Hawaii, perhaps the first Sunday in December....” (Cited in Toland, p. 290)

²⁶Reported by Colonel Weijerman, the Dutch military attache in Washington, when he personally delivered the information to General Marshall. Cited in Toland, p. 317.

²⁷Written by Kinoaki Matsuo, published in October 1940.

The following Sunday, December 7th, after the attack, Hamilton called Haan, demanding that Haan's warning of two days ago not be released to the press. "If you do," Hamilton threatened, "I can put you away for the duration."²⁸ (Cited in Toland, p. 311)

The 14-Part Message

On December 6th, the day before Pearl Harbor was attacked, the Navy's Translation Section was deciphering the first 13 parts of a 14-part message. The 14th part was to be sent the next day. The first 13 parts of this message clearly indicated that Japan was very upset with State Secretary Hull's November 26th ultimatum to Japan's final offer during negotiations.²⁹ Both FDR and Admiral Theodore Wilkinson, Chief of Naval Intelligence, received decoded copies of the first 13 parts.. When FDR read them that evening he exclaimed: "This means war." (Cited in Toland, p. 5)

By 9:00 AM December 7th, Washington time, the 14th part of the message had been received and decoded. It said that it was "impossible to reach an agreement through further negotiations." (Cited in Toland, p. 10) That meant that negotiations had been terminated, a virtual declaration of war. The Japanese ambassador was instructed to deliver the message to US State Secretary Hull at 1:00PM (which would be 7:30 AM Hawaii time, a half-hour before the planned time of attack). Naval intelligence chief Admiral Wilkinson immediately delivered the processed message to Admiral Stark, who was CNO, and suggested that he call Kimmel immediately. But the CNO thought the November 27th "War Warning" was enough and tried to call FDR instead, but the line was busy

When Army Chief of Staff General Marshall read the message he quickly jotted a dispatch to Short, and telephoned CNO Stark. Stark offered to send the warning message to Short via the Navy's rapid transmission facilities but Marshall said he would handle it. Although Marshall had a scrambler on his telephone, he marked the message "First Priority – Secret" and sent it by Western Union. It was decoded in Hawaii seven hours after the attack.

Since no instructions were received by either Kimmel or Short since November 27th, they presumed that negotiations had resumed. Two other messages were intercepted by MS-5 the day before the attack – December 6th – but did not weave their way to Washington soon enough to be deciphered. They provided Tokyo with the current inventory of ships at Pearl Harbor, advised that there seemed to be no air patrols or barrage balloons, and that no torpedo nets were detected in the harbor. If MS-5 in Hawaii had been provided trained personnel with a decryption machine, these obvious instructions for an imminent attack would have been a cogent warning.

²⁸Haan did not release his warning until after the war.

²⁹This 26 November 1941 document is called "Hull's Ultimatum." It called for Japan to withdraw from China and Indochina. The US ambassador to Japan called it "The document that touched the button that started the war." (Quoted in Willey abstract.) Some historians and authors maintain that this ultimatum was planned by FDR to touch off the act of aggression that would take the United States into World War II.

Tracking Kido Butai – Traffic Analysis

It seems to me that it is not necessary to depend on intelligence derived from processing Japanese codes in order to show that FDR and Washington knew that *Kido Butai* was heading for Hawaii. Such intelligence is compelling evidence of foreknowledge, and possible even provocation, but it diverts attention from the main point. The debate over cryptographic analysis never seems to end. Controversy over such things as what revision of the various Japanese codes the US was reading before Pearl Harbor, whether or not certain messages were decoded before December 7th, whether or not there was actually a “Winds Execute” message or was merely Safford’s misinterpretation, whether or not the “Bomb Plot” was unique to Pearl Harbor or other potential targets were likewise being mapped, whether or not Australian planes actually spotted *Kido Butai* steaming toward Pearl Harbor on December 6th, (See Beard, pp. 276, 277 and 280-281) whether or not the 14-point message really constituted a declaration of war or was merely a strong diplomatic statement, whether or not the Honolulu spy’s December 2nd and December 6th reports were decoded before the attack, and whether or not weather conditions prevented Marshall from using his scrambler phone on the morning of December 7th. This endless chain of rebuttals and counter-rebuttals are diverting attention from other activity which provides conclusive proof that the attack on Pearl Harbor was known beforehand and was allowed to happen. That other activity is known as “traffic analysis.” Let me explain by starting back a little earlier.

In 1930, when there were only two stations in the Pacific rim radio intercept network,³⁰ the nine newly-trained technicians at Station-Baker on Guam heard a flurry of radio messages from the Japanese fleet. By piecing together the intercept patterns alone, before messages were ever decrypted and translated, they were able to locate the entire fleet and determine that it was engaged in a massive exercise at sea. When the intercepts were finally processed months later, it became apparent that the Japanese Navy was practicing for the invasion of Manchuria the following year. The Guam operators had detected this activity months earlier without even decoding the messages. After that the US Navy began investigating ways to acquire all possible intelligence from intercepted radio signals by means other than cryptographic analysis. This eventually became known as “traffic analysis.” It included watching for all types of shipping – including supply ships and oil tankers which always accompanied a naval armada and sometimes provided a needed edge in determining the main force location.³¹ “Traffic analysis” is the one aspect of instant intelligence that cannot be refuted, and the thing that was kept out of all the Pearl Harbor investigations.

Through the use of radio direction finding (RDF), cross bearings could be provided to give the location of ships transmitting radio messages. In addition, ships could often be identified not only by its radio call sign but also by the character of its radio signal. US radio technicians became so expert that individual operators could sometimes be identified just by the manner in which they

³⁰The first shore based intercept radio station in the network was Station-Able located at the US consulate in Shanghai. It was later discontinued.

³¹In addition to aiding “traffic analysis,” the tankers accompanying *Kido Butai* routinely reported their longitude and latitude several times a day, which simplified tracking using cryptographic analysis.

used the telegraph key. There was also rudimentary electronic equipment designed to fingerprint the radio transmitter on various ships – no two transmitters have exactly the same wave pattern.³²

A cogent example of “traffic analysis” intelligence on Japanese fleet movements took place at Station-H in Hawaii – the radio intercept station for Station-HYPO and on the opposite side of the island. Homer Kisner was the Pacific Fleet’s radio intercept traffic chief and was in charge of Station-H. In April 1988 and April 1998 interviews with Kisner, author Robert Stinnett learned that on Thanksgiving Day 1941 (20 November 1941) Station-H had detected a split in the Japanese aircraft carrier fleet.³³ Two light carrier divisions (four carriers) had gone south with the Philippines invasion force. Three heavy carrier divisions (six carriers) were identified with Hitokappu Bay. (See Stinnett, *Day of Deceit*, pp. 53 *et. seq.*) This was when the negotiations between Hull and the Japanese ambassador were getting pretty heavy. It was less than a week before “Hull’s ultimatum.” The aircraft carrier force was splitting up to support both the invasion of the Philippines and the attack on Hawaii.³⁴

Captain Duane Whitlock was an enlisted operator at Station-CAST in late 1941. In his *Naval War College Review* article he describes how, by using “traffic analysis” alone, the operators at that station, and the British station at Singapore, detected a new order of battle for the Japanese Navy, including the separation of the aircraft carriers. (See Whitlock) Later, a detailed component description of two Japanese task forces approaching the Philippines was produced. The formation of *Kido Butai* at Hitokappu Bay was also monitored. “Traffic analysis” became an important technique in immediately determining the battle order (i.e. which ships are where and the composition of various enemy task forces) without decoding any messages. Whitlock indicated that this could have happened for the task force approaching Hawaii, but he vaguely implied the official line that *Kido Butai* maintained radio silence.³⁵

Rudolph J. Fabian was a Navy lieutenant at Station-CAST during that time. While testifying at the Hewitt inquiry (to be discussed in PART 3) in 1945, he concluded his presentation “by

³²Jacobsen claims these radio fingerprinting devices were useless and gathering dust on the shelves before Pearl Harbor. Even if that is true, it seems that an experienced operator, equipped with some kind of oscilloscope to plot radio wave patterns, would be able to recognize minute and unique identifiers from at least some of the transmitters.

³³Thanksgiving day 1941 was on the third Thursday of the month – November 20th. Legislation to establish Thanksgiving as the fourth Thursday in November didn’t take effect until 1942.

³⁴Homer Kisner was never called to testify at any of the Pearl Harbor investigations, including the 1995 hearing (discussed below). Neither were any of his 65 radio operators. Eighty-six percent of Station-H message sheets and intercept logs are still locked up – secret – because of “national security.”

³⁵Although Captain Whitlock seemed to perpetuate the official story of radio silence in his 1995 article, he verified in an interview with Robert Stinnett that Station-CAST had been tracking the carriers of *Kido Butai* (see Stinnett, *Day of Deceit*, pp. 185-187). Whitlock also told Stinnett that the information was sent to Station-HYPO in a US Navy code called TESTM. No testimony or evidence on TESTM dispatches were introduced at any of the Pearl Harbor inquiries. Neither was Captain Whitlock asked to testify.

acknowledging that information on the location and movements of Japanese warships was obtained by traffic analysis and not from decryption.” (Gannon, p. 208)^{36, 37}

Journalist turned historian Robert Stinnett described in his book how radio messages from *Kido Butai* were being intercepted. David Kahn wrote a book on US code breaking and he severely criticized Stinnett’s book. “Central to the surprise [attack] was the radio silence of the strike force,” Kahn said. “The Japanese commanders and radio operators alike, say unanimously they never transmitted any messages.” (Cited in *The Pearl Harbor Deception*) When Stinnett was confronted with this comment, he pulled out copies of the actual messages that were intercepted. Some 844 messages were sent by Japan’s First Air Fleet – the aircraft carrier part the *Kido Butai* moving toward Hawaii – in the 5-number (JN-25B) main operational code alone, as it prepared for the Pearl Harbor attack. (Cited in Stinnett, *Day of Deceit*, p. 76)

Station-H in Hawaii intercepted an important message on 24 November 1941. It contained the instructions from Admiral Yamamoto to his fleet about radio silence. Contrary to what most historians believe, Yamamoto’s order did not call for strict radio silence. It allowed for emergencies and the commanders’ discretion.³⁸

Kido Butai started their 12-day voyage eastward from Hitokappu Bay on 26 November 1941 (the day of “Hull’s ultimatum”). They had chosen the tossing wintry seas because other ships avoided the northern route at this time of year. But they did not observe radio silence. Immediately after the task force got under way, the admiral commanding the carriers started transmitting to converse with two other admirals – the commander of the submarine contingent of *Kido Butai* and Japan’s Central Pacific commander on the island of Truk. Extensive communication continued for several days and then tapered off – until an emergency did arise.³⁹

A strong storm hit the northern Pacific on 30 November 1941. It scattered the ships of *Kido Butai* and the radio had to be used extensively to reassemble the task force. Although the power

³⁶This is the only time (at least that I could find) that Gannon mentioned “Traffic Analysis” in his book, and even then he did not explain what it was. Omission of such an important part of history seems inconsistent with a factual report presentation.

³⁷Jacobsen claims that Fabian only had locations of ships in the southern force, not *Kido Butai*. Even if that is true, Fabian’s testimony certainly illustrates the effectiveness of traffic analysis in locating ships.

³⁸Admiral Yamamoto’s order regarding radio silence is published in Stinnett, *Day of Deceit*, p. 124. It reads: “From 26 November ships of combined fleet will observe radio communications procedures as follows. (1) Except in extreme emergency, the main force and its attached forces will cease communications. (2) Other forces are at the discretion of their respective commanders. (3) Supply ships, repair ships, hospital ships, etc., will report directly to parties concerned.”

³⁹Jacobsen disputes that the admiral commanding the carriers broke radio silence. He says it was the admiral commanding the Fourth Fleet who was doing all the talking. However, Stinnett quoted directly from a Station Hypo communication summary saying “Commander Carriers was in extensive communication ...” (Stinnett, *Day of Deceit*, p. 163) Therefore I have decided to let this paragraph stand.

was kept low for tactical communication that normally carried no farther than 100 miles, this incident happened just after the strongest solar storm in at least 100 years and the disturbed ionosphere bounced radio signals all over the Pacific. (See Stinnett Interview Transcript, answer to last question from Audience Member #15. also see Willis, Stevens, and Crothers)⁴⁰

Early in the morning on 1 December 1941, the Matson passenger liner *SS Lurline* was just out of Los Angeles on its way to Hawaii. Leslie E. Grogan, the first assistant radio operator, detected a faint signal which, as he listened, gradually became louder. He could make out the call letters of JCS, Yokohama. Grogan wrote in his journal:

The Japs are blasting away on the lower Marine Radio frequency – it is all in Japanese code, and continues for several hours. Some of the signals are loud, and others weak, but in most every case, the repeat-back is acknowledged verbatim. ... The main body of signals came from a Northwest by West area, which from our second night from Los Angeles bound for Honolulu – would be North and West of Honolulu.

Having crossed the Pacific for 30 years, never heard JCS Yokohama Japan before at 9 P.M. our time on the lower Marine frequency from some point in the Pacific.

If anyone were to ask me, I would say it's the Jap's Mobilization Battle Order. (Cited in Toland, p. 279. The actual journal entry is longer and can be seen in Toland)

The next night the signals were again heard. Grogan noted in his journal that he and his co-worker were making a concise record to turn over to Naval Intelligence when they arrive in Honolulu on December 3rd. On the final night at sea the signals were stronger yet. Grogan wrote in his journal that they provided “good Radio Direction Finder bearings, mostly coming from a Northwesterly direction from our position. ... with all the tension we've seen up to now, its safe to say something is going to happen, and mighty soon, ...” (Cited in Toland, p. 280)

The *SS Lurline* docked at 9:00 AM that morning. Grogan turned his information over to Naval Intelligence in Honolulu. The Lieutenant Commander in charge was courteous but not too enthused. He said he would forward the information on, but there is no record of it ever having gone anywhere.

When the *SS Lurline* docked in San Francisco on its return journey, it was met by Twelfth Naval District Intelligence personnel demanding the ship's log for the recent journey. Those records have since disappeared, as did Grogan's report to Naval Intelligence in Hawaii on December 3rd, but Grogan's personal journal remained in his possession.

Reports of these signals were also being reported to Twelfth Naval District Intelligence in San Francisco, which was charged with locating the missing Japanese carriers. One of their wire services reported peculiar radio signals from west of Hawaii that didn't make sense at that frequency. After checking with other services and shipping companies, the weird signals were located by plotting the RDF bearings on a great circle chart. Then the signals were reported to

⁴⁰The solar storm of 18-19 September 1941 was the strongest since at least 1847.

the commanding officer. Besides the *SS Lurline* and the 12th Naval district in San Francisco, these radio signals were intercepted by five other naval listening posts – Stations-ITEM, -CAST, -H, -KING, and -SAIL. By December 3rd, the signals indicated a place northwest of Hawaii. By December 6th the *Kido Butai* task force was positioned about 400 miles north-northwest of Pearl Harbor. All of this was also passed on to the commanding officer in San Francisco.

At the same time the *SS Lurline* was picking up radio signals, on December 2nd, Captain Johan E.M. Ranneft, the Dutch naval attache in Washington, visited the Office of Naval Intelligence (ONI) to discuss the Pacific situation. McCollum and Captain (later Admiral) Theodore Wilkinson, director of the ONI, were present. When Ranneft asked about the Japanese carriers that were supposed to be heading eastward, one of the Americans pointed to a spot on the map halfway between Japan and Hawaii and said, “This is the Japanese task force heading east.” (Cited in Toland, p. 283) An amazed Ranneft wrote in his official diary: “Conference at Navy Department, ONI. They show me on the map the position of two Japanese carriers. They left Japan on easterly course.” (Cited in Toland, p. 283) According to Ranneft’s diary there were two separate movements of Japanese ships plotted on the ONI map. One was located directly west of Hawaii, the other was a movement of aircraft carriers moving easterly from Japan. (Cited in Stinnett, *Day of Deceit*, p. 43)

Ranneft again visited the ONI on December 6th to see Wilkinson and McCollum. When he asked about the Japanese carriers this time, someone pointed a finger at the map about 400 miles north of Honolulu. (Toland, p. 298) The ONI knew exactly where *Kido Butai* was the day before the attack. But the Hawaiian commanders weren’t told.

Information concerning the tracking of *Kido Butai* has mysteriously disappeared from official files. This information was gleaned through personal interviews conducted by Robert Stinnett and sundry other documents that escaped destruction such as Radioman Grogan’s journal and the official diary of Dutch Navy Captain Johan E. Ranneft. All of these are incontrovertible evidence that cannot be dismissed with the “radio silence” claim. None of this information was introduced at any of the Pearl Harbor investigations, nor were any of the station operators asked to testify.

It was by tracking radio signals that Washington learned that *Kido Butai* consisted of two forces. The main force known as the First Air Fleet was moving across the northern Pacific toward Hawaii. It consisted of six aircraft carriers and two fast battleships escorted by two heavy cruisers, a light cruiser, and eight destroyers – followed by oilers and a supply ship.⁴¹ The second force, composed of 30 submarines and other auxiliary vessels, was moving eastward through the central Pacific. This second force consisted of the ships located directly west of Hawaii, as reported in Ranneft’s diary.

Keeping the Hawaiian Commanders in the Dark

The Army’s MS-5 listening post did not decode any messages so all information that Lt. Gen. Short received came from Washington or from Admiral Kimmel. Washington, of course, was

⁴¹The composition of the First Air Fleet and of *Kido Butai* vary with different sources. All agree, however, that there were six heavy aircraft carriers.

able to control what was sent to Short. Keeping information from Kimmel was more difficult. It seems to have depended mainly on two of the “significant quartet” – Joseph J. Rochefort, commander of Station-HYPO, and Edwin Layton, Kimmel’s intelligence officer.

As mentioned above, Hawaii did not have a machine to decode Purple messages. Sometime in April 1941, Kimmel’s intelligence officer, Lieutenant Commander Layton, learned that Station-CAST in the Philippines had a Purple machine and requested one for Hawaii. Commander Arthur McCollum sent his refusal from Washington on April 22nd, saying: “The material you mentioned can necessarily have but passing and transient interest as action in the political sphere is determined by the government as a whole, and not by the forces afloat...” McCollum concluded: “In other words, while you and the Fleet may be highly interested in politics, there is nothing you can do about it.” (Cited in Toland, pp. 57-58) Was that arrogance or humor? Maybe there was a hidden irony, considering that both Layton and McCollum belonged to the “significant quartet.” Layton’s request may have been routine, to satisfy Kimmel, knowing it would be refused. And McCollum may have been indulging in satiric humor, referring to their common knowledge of events planned.

Rear Admiral Royal Ingersoll, assistant CNO, ordered Station-CAST in the Philippines to supply processed Purple messages to both General MacArthur and Admiral Hart (commander-in-chief of Asiatic Fleet), but omitted any mention of Station-HYPO or Kimmel. Navy yeoman Robert Dowd, who worked at Station-CAST, said he was sure diplomatic messages were sent to Station-HYPO. Rear Admiral Richard Noyes, chief of the Navy’s Communication Division, told the Joint Congressional Investigation on 16 February 1946: “I knew perfectly well that they [Station-CAST] could decipher the diplomatic traffic and send it to Honolulu.” (Cited in Stinnett, *Day of Deceit*, p. 112) But no Purple messages got to Kimmel.

Intrigue deepened when the Bomb Plot message was intercepted. It was in the J-19 consular code, which Station-HYPO could process, had they been monitoring that frequency. Nevertheless, this message should also have been sent to Hawaii from Washington. Kimmel never received it. But Brigadier General Sherman Miles, the Army intelligence chief, dismissed the “Bomb Plot” type of communications as “chitter chat.” (Cited in Stinnett, *Day of Deceit*, p. 102) It was not sent to either Kimmel or Short.

For one reason or another (see Appendix-B) processing the “B” revision of the JN-25 main Japanese Navy operational code was not done in Hawaii prior to December 7th. During the 1995 Congressional hearings (discussed below) Edward Kimmel, the admiral’s son, said: “Sometime after July 1941, the Navy High Command, without telling Admiral Kimmel, began withholding from him important, secret Japanese messages. ... The only explanation given for this appears to be the action of Admiral Richard Kelly Turner, Chief of the Navy’s War Plans Division. Admiral Turner took the position that no intelligence should be sent to the fleet except that which had been evaluated by him since intelligence could directly affect fleet operations and he had responsibility for giving operational orders to the fleet.” (1995 Hearings)

Rear Admiral Donald M. Showers (retired) also testified at the 1995 hearings that critical errors made by Washington “were compounded by inept interpretations of available intelligence by such persons as Admiral Turner, who lacked understanding of intelligence and analysis. The Director

of Naval Intelligence, on the other hand, was forbidden by directive from providing his professional intelligence interpretation to the fleet. To claim that Admiral Kimmel was uninformed ... is too mild. He was in fact misled, ..." (1995 Hearings)

FDR made arrangements with RCA Wireless – the commercial telegraph company in Honolulu that was transmitting the encrypted Japanese Consulate messages in December – to provide copies immediately to Station-HYPO. But for some reason the messages sent by the spy at the Japanese Consulate never got decoded. Rochefort, Station-HYPO's commander, said there was too much of a work load to decode them. Yet the designator known to be that of the Japanese spy was clearly stamped on those messages, and that was supposed to flag them as top priority. Other lower-priority messages were processed instead, according to Rochefort.

Rochefort and Layton were obviously screening messages from the Hawaiian commanders. But Captain Irving Mayfield, intelligence officer for the 14th Naval district, was apparently not in on the conspiracy. His potential interference with a cover-up was apparently solved by a ruse that got him out of the picture. Walter Anderson, now a rear admiral and commander of battleships for the Pacific Fleet, called Mayfield to serve on a court marshal board on one of the battleships.⁴²

Two lieutenants who worked under Mayfield did the translating for Station-HYPO, but they did not know how to decipher the messages. That is a logical reason why many of the critical messages bearing the designator of the Japanese spy were not decoded – to prevent these two men from learning the contents and sounding the alarm. And some that were decoded contained errors to mask their critical significance. The Japanese spy's message of December 2nd was an example. According to Japanese records and testimony by Japanese naval personnel after the war, this message (identified by a Japanese Consulate file number) said the US had not been alerted and gave the all clear for the attack. Station-Hypo's translation was quite different. The discrepancy cannot be resolved because the original coded message received from RCA Wireless has never been released by the US. (See Stinnett, *Day of Deceit*, pp, 108-109)

Kimmel was apparently informed about the submarines and that some carriers were reported early in their journey. On December 1st he read a document from Rochefort about a radio broadcast from one of the carriers in the task force, but he was not informed about the "Traffic analysis" of *Kido Butai*.⁴³ On December 2nd, Kimmel asked his intelligence officer, Edwin Layton, where those missing carriers were, and was incorrectly told they were still missing. Kimmel exclaimed "What, you don't know where [the heavy carriers] are?" The officer replied, "No sir, I do not. I think they are in home waters but I don't know where they are. The rest of these units, I feel pretty confident of their location." (Cited in Toland, p. 283) On December 3rd, Admiral Kimmel received two dispatches but nothing about the Japanese carriers. Between the 1st and 6th of

⁴²Robert Stinnett made it abundantly clear in his book, *Day of Deceit*, that Rear Admiral Anderson declined officer living quarters at the Pearl Harbor base and took up residence on the far side of Diamond Head. That is where he safely was on the morning Pearl Harbor was attacked.

⁴³Since 1 November 1941, RDF reports were omitted from the intelligence summaries Rochefort prepared for Kimmel.

December, the Japanese spy in Honolulu dispatched ten messages which were immediately in US hands. None of the information went to Kimmel or Short.

On December 3rd, a message was intercepted which ordered Japanese embassies and consulates in the Pacific and in Washington to destroy their code books. This was a sign that war was imminent because destroying codes is done only days before war is to break out. But this message had a more specific indicator. All were ordered to destroy all codes **except** the consulate in Hawaii and the embassy in Washington. They were instructed to keep certain codes for last minute instructions. That could mean only one thing – that the attack was going to be against the US, and specifically against Hawaii. Kimmel was informed of this message by Edwin Layton but didn't grasp its full significance.

When the Japanese consulate in Hawaii stopped using the J-19 code on December 3rd, messages were sent in a less secure code which the US called PA. Between December 3rd and 6th, RCA furnished all messages in the PA code to Station-HYPO where they were shelved. The radio intercepts of these messages were sent to Washington by other stations, where they were buried.

These messages would have been cogent warnings to Kimmel and Short had they received them. The last one from the Honolulu spy on December 6th, for instance, discussed the absence of barrage balloons and ended: "I imagine that in all probability there is considerable opportunity left to take advantage for a surprise attack against these places." (When this message was decoded by Rochefort's assistant a few days after the attack, the translation of that line read: "The whole matter seems to have been dropped." (Cited in Stinnett, *Day of Deceit*, p. 115) The lieutenant who translated the message could not explain the discrepancy.

It was not until the 4 July 1945, during the Hewitt inquiry (discussed in PART 3 below), that the reason was found. The message had been incorrectly decoded by Rochefort and his assistant, There were 88 decryption errors in that one incriminating message. It was the only message of all that were decrypted after December 7th that contained errors. Coincidence? More likely the first step in a cover-up that has lasted over 65 years.

Not only was Kimmel not informed about critical information derived from coded message intercepts, he was not told about locating Japanese warships by radio direction finding and the other aspects of "traffic analysis." He did not know that Station-H, right there on the same island, had detected a split in the Japanese carrier force on Thanksgiving day. Kimmel did not even know about the spy in Honolulu. Rochefort's daily intelligence summaries to Kimmel during the first week of December made no mention of the aircraft carrier component of *Kido Butai*.⁴⁴ Admiral Kimmel and Lieutenant General Short were kept in the dark.

⁴⁴Rochefort knew of the new radio call signs for which Station-CAST had cracked, and of Admiral Yamamoto's seven messages on December 5th to the carriers in *Kido Butai*. The only report to Kimmel on Saturday morning, December 6th, was that Admiral Yamamoto had "originated several [radio] messages to the carriers." (Cited in Stinnett, *Day of Deceit*, p. 183.) Kimmel apparently took this to mean the carriers with the forces approaching the Philippines.

PART 3 – PEARL HARBOR INVESTIGATIONS: PERPETUATING THE COVERUP

*Skepticism, like chastity, should not be
relinquished too readily.*

– George Santayana
American poet and philosopher (1863-1952)

The first Pearl Harbor investigation was by Navy Secretary Frank Knox. He conducted it in Hawaii four days after the attack. When Knox asked Kimmel if he had received the dispatch the night before the attack, he said he had not.

First Investigation – The Knox Inquiry

In his report, Knox was pretty sympathetic with Kimmel and Short because they had not been privy to the Magic messages. Kimmel had prepared adequately against submarine attack which he believed to be the main threat. Short had taken steps to prevent sabotage. FDR did not like the report and did not allow it to be published. Instead, he wrote down what both the Navy and War Departments were to make public. They were only to say that the US military was unprepared for the attack but fought bravely once it had begun. Nothing more was to be released because mentioning decoded messages would tip off the Japanese and they would change their code. Of course this slimmed-down press release inferred that Kimmel and Short were culpable.

Second Investigation – The Roberts Commission

The second Pearl Harbor investigation was the FDR-appointed Roberts Commission which was discussed in PART 2 above. Kimmel and Short could not call witnesses on their behalf nor could they cross examine witnesses that were called. None of the Magic messages were introduced except for the 14-part messages of December 6th and 7th. No “Winds” messages were introduced. Nothing on “traffic analysis” was introduced. Testimony of the numerous radio operators in the Pacific was not heard. The commission simply did not know how well informed Washington was before the attack. The Roberts Commission ended on 23 January 1942 and FDR approved the findings the next day. Criticism of the Roberts Commission report began immediately and was strong. The *New York Times* on 26 January 1942 said: “However grave the responsibilities of each of these commanders may have been, the Roberts Commission seem too sweeping in exculpating their superiors in Washington ...” (Cited in Beard, p. 222) And the *New York Herald Tribune* editorialized: “The want of foresight at Pearl harbor was paralleled higher up.” (Cited in Beard, p. 223) Admiral James Richardson’s comment was the most condemning: “It is the most unfair, unjust, and deceptively dishonest document ever printed by the Government Printing Office. I cannot conceive of honorable men serving on the commission without greatest regret and deepest feelings of shame.” (Cited in Stinnett, *Day of Deceit*, p. 255)

Third Investigation – The Hart Inquiry

A little over two years later, on 12 February 1944, Navy Secretary Knox ordered retired Admiral Thomas C. Hart⁴⁵ to examine witnesses under oath – and to notify Kimmel that he could be present with counsel, and could introduce and cross-examine witnesses. This was the third investigation which began on February 22nd.

Kimmel was approached by Captain Laurence Safford. Safford had founded the Navy's cryptographic organization and had designed the machines used to decipher Japan's Purple code. He informed Kimmel that he was shocked to discover the Roberts Commission report made no mention of the hundreds of Magic messages, with which he was so familiar, or of the "Winds Execute" message, and he offered to testify for Kimmel. This was the first time Kimmel had heard of the Magic messages. Safford testified under oath that he had last seen the "Winds Execute" message on 14 December 1941, just before turning it over to the Director of Naval Communications for use by the Roberts Commission. It was never used and it has never been seen again.

Fourth and Fifth Investigations – Navy Court of Inquiry and Army Pearl Harbor Board

The fourth and fifth investigations were the Navy Court of Inquiry and the Army Pearl Harbor Board. They took place almost simultaneously between July 24th and October 6th of 1944. At the Navy Court, Safford testified in detail regarding the "Winds Execute" message but he could not locate a copy in all the files, and charged that they must have been destroyed. Other crucial Magic messages were introduced as evidence.

Harbor Board. They took place almost simultaneously between July 24th and October 6th of 1944. At the Navy Court, Safford testified in detail regarding the "Winds Execute" message but he could not locate a copy in all the files, and charged that they must have been destroyed. Other crucial Magic messages were introduced as evidence.

The Navy Court's findings completely reversed the Roberts Commission and stated that Kimmel had not received all information available. It charged that CNO Admiral Stark had "failed to display the sound judgment expected of him in that he did not transmit to Admiral Kimmel ... important information which he had regarding the Japanese situation." (Cited in Toland, p. 107. Also see Bartlett, p. 78)

The Army Board also nullified the value of the Roberts Commission. After giving Short a mild hand slap for not being more alert, the report castigated Army chief of Staff General Marshall for failing to keep Short fully informed about the imminence of war, failing to correct Short's interpretation of warnings as referring to sabotage, failure to alert Short about a break in diplomatic relations on December 6th and 7th, and failure to determine the readiness of Short's command. (See Bartlett, p. 7) A supplemental top secret report was more scorching. It censured Marshall and the War Department: "The messages actually sent to Hawaii by either the Army or

⁴⁵ Admiral Hart was Commander-in-Chief of the Asiatic Fleet at the time Pearl Harbor was bombed and the Philippines were invaded.

PEARL HARBOR INVESTIGATIONS

1. Knox Inquiry
11-12 December 1941
Navy Secretary Frank Knox personal inquiry. His report defended Kimmel. FDR squelched it.
2. Roberts Commission
18 December 1941 to 23 January 1942.
Chaired by Associate Supreme Court Justice Owen T. Roberts. Report exonerated Washington and placed the blame on Kimmel and Short.
3. Hart Inquiry
22 February to 15 June 1944.
Conducted by retired Admiral Thomas A. Hart. He wrote that what he had learned threw some suspicions on the Navy Department's role.
4. Navy Court of Inquiry
24 July to 27 September 1944.
Chaired by retired Admiral Orin G. Murfin. While not exonerating Kimmel, the findings were critical of the Navy Department.
5. Army Pearl Harbor Board
7 August to 6 October 1944.
Chaired by Lieutenant General George Grunert. While not exonerating Short, the findings were critical of the War Department.
6. Clarke Investigation
20 September 1944 to 4 August 1945.
Conducted by Army Colonel Carter W. Clark. Sought information to water down Army Pearl Harbor Board findings.
7. Clausen Investigation
24 January to 12 September 1945.
Conducted by then Army Major Henry C. Clausen. Findings mitigated Army Pearl Harbor Board report in order to protect the War Dept.
8. Hewitt Inquiry
14 May to 11 July 1945.
Conducted by Admiral H. Kent Hewitt. Findings tended to mitigate the Navy Court of Inquiry findings and exonerate the Navy Dept.
9. Joint Congressional Committee on the Investigation of the Pearl Harbor Attack.
15 November 1945 to 31 May 1946.
Chaired by Senator Albin Barkley. Majority report, with some disclaimers, tended to exonerate Washington and blame Kimmel and Short.
10. Thurmond-Spence Joint Congressional Probe
27 April 1995.
Chaired by Senator Strom Thurmond. Report found that Kimmel and Short were not derelict in their responsibilities and recommended that They be posthumously restored to their highest wartime rank.
11. Dorn Report
Submitted 15 December 1995.
Prepared to rebut the Thurmond-Spence Probe findings by Undersecretary of Defense Edwin Dorn, after a piecemeal Pentagon study. Report said that although Kimmel and Short were not derelict in their duties, and others should share the blame, the Hawaiian commanders should not have their wartime rank restored. Report did not mention who else was to blame or why they weren't likewise discredited.

Navy gave only a small fraction of the information. No direction was given the Hawaiian Department based on this information except the ‘Do-Don’t’ message of November 27, 1941. It would have been possible to have sent safely information, ample for the purpose of orienting the commanders in Hawaii. ...” (Cited in Toland, p. 107)

The Navy and War Departments were furious. These reports would have to be turned around in some manner. FDR remarked: “I think the less said the better.” (Cited in Toland, p. 127) For the time being, the press was told, these reports would be kept confidential. Stimson and James V. Forrestal (now Secretary of Navy) wrote press statements which summarized and mitigated the Army and Navy reports. The media didn’t buy it. They accused the administration of suppressing the Pearl Harbor story.

Sixth Investigation – The Clarke Investigation

The War and Navy secretaries then carried out further investigations in an effort to refute the Army Board and Navy Court findings. General Marshall initiated the one-man sixth investigation – the Clarke investigation – to discredit Captain Safford’s earlier testimony that the “‘Winds Execute’” message must have been destroyed. Colonel Carter Clarke did this by simply obtaining a denial from the ones accused of destroying those records.

Seventh Investigation – The Clausen Investigation

Another one-man investigation – the Clausen (seventh) investigation – was carried out by Lieutenant Colonel Henry C. Clausen of the Army’s Judge Advocate General department. He succeeded in getting several former witnesses to reverse their testimony about seeing the “Winds Execute” message. Bruce Bartlett sums up about the Clarke and Clausen investigations: “Their ostensible purpose was to follow unexplored leads and dig up new evidence. Their real purpose seems to be to discredit testimony damaging to [General] Marshall.” (Bartlett, p. 79)

Eighth Investigation – The Hewitt Inquiry

The eighth investigation was the Hewitt Inquiry conducted by the Navy. Admiral H. Kent Hewitt⁴⁶ and counsel John F. Sonnett, a special assistant to Forrestal, focused on getting Captain Safford to change his former testimony about the “Winds Execute” message, or to admit that he had confused one of the other “Winds” code messages with the “East wind, rain” message he had been expecting. Safford wrote in a Confidential Memorandum for the record that Sonnett’s purpose “seemed to be to refute testimony (before earlier investigations) that was unfavorable to anyone in Washington, to beguile ‘hostile’ witnesses into changing their stories, and to introduce an element of doubt where he could not effect a reversal of testimony. Above all, he attempted to

⁴⁶Hewitt was not the first choice to conduct this investigation. Admiral James O. Richardson, Kimmel’s predecessor who FDR fired as commander of the Pacific Fleet, was asked first. He declined, saying: “I do not consider myself available because I am prejudiced. I believe Mr. Franklin Roosevelt is primarily responsible for the disaster at Pearl Harbor and [CNO] Stark is most culpable. I am greatly prejudiced against Stark and against the President so I therefore disqualify myself as an impartial investigator.” (Cited in Bartlett, p. 80)

make me reverse my testimony regarding the “Winds Execute” message and to make me believe I was suffering from hallucinations.” (Cited in Toland, p. 135)

The badgering did not make Safford alter his testimony. But the tactic did work on another key witness to the “Winds Execute” message. Captain Alan Kramer finally gave in and said he saw a “Winds Execute” message but it may have been one of the other codes for Britain or Russia, rather than the US. Hewitt wrote in his final report that “no message was received prior to the attack which used the code words relating to the United States [East wind, rain].” (Cited in Toland, p. 137)

After the surrender of Japan, it was no longer possible to hide the Army Board and Navy Court reports on the grounds of national security. President Truman released them on 29 August 1945, nine months after they were filed, but they were released simultaneously with the endorsements and later “findings” of the War and Navy Departments which reversed and discredited the Army Board and Navy Court reports. Although the endorsements were designed to overshadow the reports, some insightful editors and news commentators were not fooled. John Flynn’s scathing essay published in the 2 September 1945 issue of the *Chicago Tribune* had a strong effect.⁴⁷ All of this clamor led to the Joint Congressional Committee to Investigate Pearl Harbor – the ninth investigation which began on 15 November 1945 and went to the end of the following May.

Ninth Investigation – The Joint Congressional Committee to Investigate Pearl Harbor

The Joint Committee was composed of five senators and five representatives which were split along party lines – two of each were Republicans and three of each Democrats. In the 6½ months of hearings the minority Republicans were able to bring out some good testimony about how much Washington knew and how much Hawaii didn’t, but the pro-administration Democrats were able to limit evidence considerably.

For instance, the Joint Committee tried to obtain information on whether Hawaii was furnished with the decrypted JN-25 code messages. The Navy was asked to produce the JN-25 intercepts but, instead, introduced the “Winds” code.⁴⁸ Safford was grilled about the “Winds Execute” message. He stayed firm with his insistence that one had existed. But he was the only one to say that. Captain Kramer said he had probably confused it with another message. Chief Warrant Officer Ralph T. Biggs distinctly remembered hearing it the night it was intercepted, but his commanding officer forbade him to talk to Safford or to testify before the Joint Committee.

⁴⁷ John Flynn’s essay, *The Final Secret of Pearl Harbor*, is published in its entirety as Appendix-III of Bartlett.

⁴⁸ The JN-25, revision B intercepts were fully translated while the joint Congressional Committee was still in session. Michael Gannon states: “It is hard to think ill of Admiral Nimitz [then CNO] ... but someone in his department made the decision to keep the translations away from the eyes of the committee. The cover-up prevented the [Joint Committee] and the general public from knowing that, prior to Pearl Harbor, the Navy was in possession of intercepts that, if decrypted, would likely have warned the country of Japan’s impending attack.” (Gannon, p. 209.)

Edward Kimmel (son of the admiral) pointed out in later 1995 Congressional hearings (discussed below) that when the 1941 JN-25 intercepts were decoded, “a report of the information they contained was prepared for the Chief of Naval Operations and delivered to him in early 1946. He did nothing with it and failed to submit it to the Congressional Committee which was still sitting investigating the Pearl Harbor attack. This was a cover-up if there ever was one.” (1995 Hearings)

The Joint Committee majority report by the six Democrats was similar to the Roberts Commission report. But the minority Republican report was more damaging to Washington and FDR. However, two Republicans were persuaded to sign the majority report and that gave it unshakable nonpartisan flavor. Representative Gearhart was from a district in California which was avidly anti-Japanese, so he had to go with the majority or face losing his seat in Congress. Representative Keefe had persuading the democrats to change some language and he signed with the reservations that his “additional views” be appended. But the majority report overshadowed that supplemental disclaimer. The secret about how FDR withheld information was once again stifled.

Tenth Investigation – The Thurmond-Spence Joint Congressional Probe

Kimmel and Short are now dead but their families continue the struggle to clear their names and restore their rank held 7 December 1941. Another one-day Congressional investigation was held on 27 April 1995, initiated by Republican Senator Strom Thurmond, then chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, and Representative Floyd Spence, head of the House Armed Services Committee. At that hearing, Edward R. Kimmel, son of the admiral, presented a petition signed by 37 retired flag officers (generals and admirals) supporting the exoneration of Admiral Kimmel and Lt. Gen. Short. Among them were two former Chairmen of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, four former Chiefs of Naval Operations, 28 other four-star admirals, three vice admirals (three-star), and one rear admiral (two-star).

Eleventh Investigation – The Dorn Report

In response to the April 1995 joint investigation, Undersecretary of Defense Edwin Dorn concluded his own investigation with these comments: "I cannot conclude that Admiral Kimmel and General Short were victims of unfair official actions and thus cannot conclude that the remedy of advancement on the retired list is in order." (Cited in Perloff) The Pentagon submitted Dorn's report to the Thurmond-Spence panel on 15 December 1995. It confirmed that Kimmel and Short did not receive full information before the attack, and said that others should “share the blame.” (Cited in Young) Nevertheless, it did not absolve Kimmel and Short.⁴⁹

⁴⁹The Dorn Report seems to have disappeared from the internet. The link to it which appears in the transcript of the 1995 hearings (see References) brings up a message saying the page is no longer available. Further search of the internet failed to locate the report.

Secrets Remain As Investigations Continue

Congress in October 2000 passed a resolution clearing Kimmel and Short of any blame and recommended they be posthumously restored to their former rank. Former President Bill Clinton did not sign the bill into law before he left office.

In a letter to the Pentagon's Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) director, Vice Admiral David C. Richardson, US Navy (retired) and former Commander of the Sixth Fleet as well as Deputy Commander-in-Chief of the Pacific, pointed out that the Dorn Report said others should share the blame regarding Pearl Harbor. He asked who those others were, what errors they committed, and how those errors may have contributed to those allegedly committed by Kimmel and Short. He also pointed out that the Dorn Report was prepared by Navy lawyers with no experience with Naval forces and their limitations – and that one of those lawyers had expressed regret that they, the lawyers, had not sought expert help. (See Colan)

The endeavor to exonerate Kimmel and Short continues. On 5 September 2002 Captain Vincent J. Colan, US Naval Reserve (retired), submitted a FOIA request to the Pentagon for release of papers still secluded from the public. It was denied except for providing the Dorn Report. On 26 February 2003, Captain Colan re-submitted his FOIA with modifications. He pointed out how fallacies in the Dorn Report had been identified and submitted to the Pentagon by Vice Admiral David C. Richardson. He also referred to other documents he had been told about which have no bearing on national security, and requested information of those as well as any others of similar nature. In concluding this second FOIA request, Captain Colan stated:

The above asserts what legal research indicates I am entitled to under the law. However, I cannot leave this subject without commenting that it seems preposterous to me that in a democracy, information of the kind I have requested dealing with a subject over 61 years old cannot be made freely available for examination by those principally affected. One can only surmise that there is some information contained in these 66 pages that would be embarrassing to the author or the DOD and not supportive of the DOD's position on this subject.

It simply flies in the face of our democratic institutions to retain this information secret. (See Colan)

PART 4 – SUMMARY ON PEARL HARBOR ATTACK

... the process of transformation, even if it brings revolutionary change, is likely to be a long one, absent some catastrophic and paralyzing event – like a new Pearl Harbor.

- “Rebuilding America’s Defenses,” p. 51. Discussing how to create a dominant military force to give the United States preeminent control of global resources.⁵⁰

Both the Army and the Navy had listening posts in Hawaii. Navy listening posts only monitored frequencies used by the Japanese Navy and normally intercepted four codes – the JN-25 or “five-number” code (the top Japanese Navy operation code), the MS code (used by merchant ships), the ship movement (SM) code (to report ships going in and out of ports), and the radio call sign code (designations for officials and commanders, warships, merchant ships, and land stations). They could also intercept the Purple diplomatic code and the J-19 counselor code but normally didn’t. Station-HYPO could process (decode and translate) Japanese intercepts if it had the latest code-breaking information to do so. But Hawaii’s Purple machine went to the British and the latest decoding key for the important JN-25B code, if it were available at all in 1941, had not been received by Station-HYPO.⁵¹ Consequently, in the months leading up to the Pearl Harbor attack, the Navy on Hawaii was not processing Purple or JN-25B intercepts.

In early December 1941, when Admiral Kimmel asked his intelligence officer, Edwin Layton, the location of the missing carriers, he was deceptively told they are still missing. Kimmel did not receive the key information which was obtained by both cryptographic analysis and traffic analysis. Even though Hawaii wasn’t decoding the JN-25B code, much had been learned from other codes and from traffic analysis but the pertinent information was not given to Kimmel.⁵² Washington, and probably Station-CAST, knew all of the available intelligence from both cryptographic and traffic analysis, but that information didn’t get to Kimmel.

The Army monitored only the Japanese diplomatic frequencies, mostly in Purple (the top diplomatic code used to communicate with embassies overseas, such as in Washington D.C.) and J-19 (used to communicate with consular offices, which are on a lower level than embassies, such as in Honolulu). But the Army in Hawaii had no decoding capability and had to send their

⁵⁰The document *Rebuilding America’s Defenses: Strategy, Forces and Resources for a New Century* is a report by a neoconservative organization called “The Project for the New American Century.” It is a blueprint for taking control of America and making it the dominant nation on earth.

⁵¹There is controversy over whether any of the US decrypting stations were processing the JN-25 five-number code. For a discussion of this, see Appendix-B. Because of this seemingly unresolved controversy over when the US was reading the JN-25B code, that information will not be given high priority. The purpose of this essay is to show that FDR had prior knowledge of, possibly even provoked, that “overt act” which would interrupt the continuity of American life and get the US into World War II. That can be shown without relying on the JN-25B code.

⁵²Even though much information could be gleaned from the MS, SM, and radio call sign codes, these intercepts were never introduced at any Pearl Harbor investigation, including the 1995 Congressional hearings.

intercepted messages to Washington to be processed. The Navy could have processed J-19, but the Army apparently didn't know that. Consequently, the Army in Hawaii was entirely dependent on Washington for information and was also kept in the dark.

Rear Admiral Robert A. Theobald, commander of the Pacific Fleet's destroyers at the time of the Pearl Harbor attack, denounced the blackout of information at Hawaii. In his documentation of events he wrote:

... the recurrent fact of the true Pearl Harbor story has been the repeated withholding of information from Admiral Kimmel and General Short ... the denial to the Hawaiian Commanders of all knowledge of Magic was vital to the plan for enticing Japan to deliver a surprise attack upon the Fleet ... because as late as Saturday, December 6, Admiral Kimmel could have caused that attack to be cancelled by taking his fleet to sea and disappearing beyond land-based human ken. (Theobald, Robert A.; *The Final Secret of Pearl Harbor: The Washington Contribution to the Japanese Attack*. Cited in Lutton)

What was not brought out at any of the investigations, including the 1995 hearings conducted by Senator Strom Thurmond, was that the US was also intercepting and processing other Japanese naval codes that were being used extensively. And what is still really scary is that many documents that would shed light on the true story about Pearl Harbor are still classified secret and locked up – out of reach of public knowledge and the Freedom of Information Act. The coverup continues today.

It is not the purpose of this essay to show that Kimmel and Short should be exonerated,⁵³ although I am convinced they should be, but to show that FDR and his administration knew the attack on Pearl Harbor was coming and that they deliberately let it happen. As has been shown above, Washington had processed all the intercepts and knew exactly where *Kido Butai* was at all times. Washington never alerted Hawaii or advised the commanders that a sabotage alert was not sufficient. On the contrary, vital intelligence information needed to effectively defend Hawaii was deliberately withheld. But Washington knew everything that was going on. As Colonel William Friedman, top cryptologist at the Army's SIS, exclaimed repeatedly to his wife as he paced the floor that December 7th morning: "But they knew, they knew, they knew." (Cited in Toland, pp. 310-311)

FDR was in the thick of it. He met frequently with his "war cabinet" – Secretaries of State, War, and Navy (Hull, Stimson, and Knox) along with the Army Chief of Staff and the CNO (Marshall and Stark).⁵⁴ He not only met with them, he directed them. This can be seen by his orders for "pop-up" cruises and moving the Pacific Fleet to Hawaii. On the eve of Pearl Harbor he read the first thirteen parts of the 14-part message and told Harry Hopkins that "this means war." FDR's complicity was also evident when he instructed Knox and Stimson what to release to the public after Knox had completed the first Pearl Harbor investigation.

⁵³ Admiral Kimmel and Lt. Gen. Short were never formally charged with dereliction of duty and court marshaled. They had requested that they be charged formally so they could bring out all the facts. Rather, they were relieved of their command, demoted, and allowed to retire.

⁵⁴ Secretary of War Stimson's diary indicated there were nine people in FDR's war cabinet.

Michael Gannon and Theodore O’Keefe, in their writings (see references), berate Robert Stinnett for saying that McCollum’s memorandum influenced FDR’s actions. It could be entirely possible that some of the events that seemed to fulfill McCollum’s eight points were prompted by other criteria. The bottom line is that those events did occur. And they did fulfill – intentionally or otherwise – the strategy laid out by McCollum. They did provoke the Pearl Harbor attack and the record of intelligence so far available clearly indicates that Washington knew the attack was coming.

FDR didn’t just know in advance about the Pearl Harbor attack and let it happen, he actually provoked aggression. Having invaded China, the Japanese military was heavily dependent on shipments of steel, scrap iron, and 80 percent of its petroleum (including oil and aviation gasoline) from the US. In spite of internal protest, FDR did not immediately declare an embargo against Japan until late in 1940, when the US finally imposed the first embargo. Even this was only a partial embargo which still allowed enough petroleum to fuel Japanese warships. In July 1941 FDR really cracked down when he imposed a total embargo of petroleum, metals, and other war-making supplies, and froze all Japanese assets in the US. He also closed the Panama Canal to Japanese ships. Japan faced the stark choice of kowtowing to US demands to get out of China or taking over oil-rich southeast Asia. Tensions between the US and Japan mounted rapidly. In an ostensive effort to show US good will, negotiations between Secretary of State Cordell Hull and a special Japanese envoy were commenced in November 1941. Those failed and the rest is history.

Perhaps war was inevitable anyway. And perhaps there were other options than a war with Japan, as some historians have suggested. But the general public didn’t have the opportunity or information to explore potential options. America made a grave mistake – the mistake of adopting a mob mentality to seek blood and vengeance. America fell prey to an orchestrated response.

The words of American poet and philosopher George Santayana are most cogent: “Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it.” That bit of advice raises several questions. Are we properly remembering the past? Do we really understand what happened at Pearl Harbor or are we letting it happen again? Has America again been orchestrated to high hysteria and the mob mentality regarding the terrorist threat as we were regarding Pearl Harbor? In short, are we letting government officials lead us blindly or are we exercising our rights in a democracy to question and find answers?.

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GLOSSARY

a.k.a	Also known as.
CNO	Chief of Naval Operations.
FDR	Franklin Delano Roosevelt.
J-19	Japan's consular code.
JN-25	Japan's top naval operational code. JN stands for Japanese Navy.
Magic	Code name for Japanese diplomatic and consular messages intercepted by the US.
MS-5	Monitoring Station-5 (US Army, in Hawaii).
MS Code	Merchant Ship Code (Japanese)
ONI	Office of Naval Intelligence.
Op-20-G Station-US.	The Security Intelligence Section of US Naval Communications. Also known as Station-US.
Purple	Japan's top diplomatic code.
RDF	Radio Direction Finding.
SM Code	Ship Movement Code (Japanese)
SIS	Signal Intelligence Service (US Army).
US	United States

APPENDIX-A – US NAVY RADIO INTERCEPT REGIONS IN THE PACIFIC

NAVY WESTERN PACIFIC NETWORK: (All categories of Diplomatic & Japanese Navy communication.)

Corregidor, Philippines – Station-CAST	Regional Control Center Full service (interception, processing, RDF) An exchange center with Dutch (Java) and British (Singapore and Hong Kong harbor) stations. Cooperated well with Army station MS-6 in Philippines.
Guam – Station-BAKER	Fed into Station-CAST – Interception and RDF
Wake Island	Fed into Station-CAST – RDF

NAVY MID-PACIFIC NETWORK: (Focused mainly on Japanese Navy communication.)

Honolulu (Oahu), Hawaii – Station-HYPO	Regional Control Center In basement of administration building at Pearl Harbor. Processing only (no interception or RDF) Coast Guard cryptographers fed into Station-HYPO. No liaison with Army station MS-5 in Hawaii.
Oahu, Hawaii – Station-H	Fed into Station-HYPO – Interception and RDF
Oahu, Hawaii – Lualualei Station	Fed into Station-HYPO – RDF only
Dutch Harbor, Alaska – Station-KING	Fed into Station-HYPO – Interception and RDF
Midway Islands – Station-AF	Fed into Station-HYPO – Interception and RDF
Pago Pago, Samoa – Station-VICTOR	Fed into Station-HYPO – Interception and RDF

NAVY AMERICAN WEST COAST NETWORK: (All categories of Diplomatic & Japanese Navy communication.)

Seattle, Washington – Station-SAIL	Regional Control Center Intercept and RDF only (Op-20-G in Wash. D.C. did processing) Cooperated well with Army Monitoring Stations Received help from two British RDF stations on Vancouver Island Received help from commercial radio stations
Sitka, Alaska – Station-AE	Fed into Station-CAST – Interception and RDF
San Francisco, California – Station-FOX	Fed into Station-CAST – Interception and RDF At 12 th Naval District headquarters
Imperial Beach, California – Station-ITEM	Fed into Station-CAST – Interception and RDF

APPENDIX-B – THE JAPANESE NAVY CODE DESIGNATED JN-25

The main Japanese Navy Operational Code used in the 1940s has been designated by the US as JN-25. JN stands for Japanese Navy. It was formerly called the five-number code because it uses a system of five numbers to designate letters and phrases. Sometimes it is referred to as the AN-1 code. The Japanese called it Code Book D – a combination of a code book of over 30,000 words and additive tables (to make it more complex).

Confusion has arisen over the designation JN-25 because that designation wasn't assigned until later. You won't find the designation JN-25 in 1941 records. During 1941 this code was known as the five-number code or AN-1 code. The five-number code was first used by the Japanese in 1939. The US first broke it in October 1940. After that it was updated periodically but was subsequently broken again by US cryptographers. (See Stinnett Interview Transcript)

The evidence is also confusing as to whether Hawaii could decode the latest revision to JN-25 code – JN-25B – in the months leading up to Pearl Harbor. The different interpretations seem to fall into three categories: 1) the US did not break enough of the JN-25B code to be useful before Pearl Harbor, 2) the JN-25B code was broken before Pearl Harbor but Station-HYPO did not have the key to decipher it, or 3) the JN-25B code was broken before Pearl Harbor but the US Navy was ordered to stop deciphering JN-25 during 1941.

The US did not break enough of the JN-25B code to be useful before Pearl Harbor.

Robert Stinnett says: "Japan's main naval radio system, the 'Operations Code' (the 5-number code) remained a problem for cryptographers. A full solution was expected by April 1941." (Stinnett, *Day of Deceit*, p. 23) But Stinnett also says in an endnote: "There is no reliable evidence, found by the author, that establishes how much of the 5-num. text could be deciphered, translated, and read by naval cryptographers in 1941." (Stinnett, *Day of Deceit*, p. 324, note 18, last sentence. This was pointed out in O'Keefe) He doesn't say the US could not read any of it, just that he couldn't find verification of how much they could read. So there is no real clue here if JN-25B was useful to US intelligence personnel prior to December 1941, except for getting radio direction finding (RDF) bearings on the signal.

Chuah is a little more definitive, stating: "By April of 1942, the Station-HYPO team had figured out 30 percent of the JN-25[B] system. Though this seems like a small amount, it included the most common words and covered a much larger percentage of the messages sent." (Chuah) But that was at least four months after Pearl Harbor and gives no indication how much could be read in 1941.

Rudolph Fabian, a lieutenant at Station-CAST just before December 7th, disagrees with Chuah. Fabian said they were working on JN-25 code and cipher recoveries "but we had not developed either to the point we could read enemy intercepts." (Testimony at Hewitt inquiry in 1945. Cited in Gannon, p. 208)

A collection of articles edited by Ed Zotti says the US only broke Japanese diplomatic codes so Washington only knew in general that something big was coming, and that a certain message was to be delivered to the US at 1:00 PM on December 7th. (Zotti) Consequently, according to Zotti's collection, the US did not know the detail plans for Pearl Harbor and could not have sent more definite warnings. This is not strictly true because the US had broken other Japanese naval code and those, combined with RDF bearings, provided a lot of information. However, this does imply that the US had not broken the JN-25B.

Another Washington apologist, author and historian Thomas Allen, wrote: "On December 1, 1940 ... the Japanese changed [their] code drastically. From December 1, 1940 through at least 1942 there was very, very little deciphering of Japanese naval messages." (Cited in Yanovitz) That is a little confusing because it was only the JN-25B code that was revised on that date, not all the Japanese naval codes.

The JN-25B code was broken before Pearl Harbor but Station-HYPO did not have the key to decipher it.

Mark Willey's exhaustive book on pre-Pearl Harbor Japanese code messages shows that, besides the Purple and J-19 diplomatic/consular codes, US cryptologists also cracked the JNA-20 (used by Japanese naval attaches) and the JN-25/JN-25B codes which were the Japanese fleet's cryptographic systems. (See Willey abstract)

Willey points out: "JN-25 ... has a dictionary of 5,600 numbers, words and phrases, each given as a five figure number.⁵⁵ These were super-enciphered by addition to random numbers contained in a second code book [the additive tables]. The dictionary was only changed once before Pearl Harbor, on December 1, 1940, to a slightly larger version 'B,' but the random book was changed every 3-6 months. ... The Japanese blundered away the code when they introduced JN-25B by continuing to use, for 2 months, random books that had been previously solved by the Allies. ... in 1994 the [National Security Agency] published that JN-25B was completely cracked in December 1940." (See Willey abstract) Other reports say Autumn of 1941 but, again, this probably referred to cracking the latest additive tables, not the main code book. Additive Version 7 was in use from 1 July 1941 to 4 December 1941. At midnight of December 4th, three days before the attack, Additive Version 8 was put into effect. (Stinnett, *Day of Deceit*, p. 331) Obviously, Version 8 could not have been cracked prior to December 7th. It could have been this Version 8 that contributed to the confusion that the code was not readable until 1942.

Declassified documents support Willey's statement, in that "the US Navy was able to give [the British] reconstructed JN-25[B] code books, even though incomplete, in January 1941, with current additive tables, and to show them how to continue to break the system." (JN-25 Revisionist History) The "current additive tables" were apparently the "random books" that the Japanese continued to use for two months. Discussion on when JN-25B was readable by the US, after the

⁵⁵This disagrees with the 30,000 number cited by Chuah, above.

additive tables were last changed in 1941, don't seem to address when the British could read that code. They were also hard at work breaking JN-25B and other Japanese codes.

Robert Stinnett's research revealed a Navy document which "admits that the solution of elements of the 5-num. code was sent to HYPO from Station-US [Op-20-G] in the autumn of 1941." (Stinnett, *Day of Deceit*, p. 76) Stinnett said it must have been sent by the slowest boat in the Navy because it didn't arrive until after December 7th. The Navy will only say that on "an undisclosed date, wrapped in an undisclosed package, carried by an undisclosed officer-courier, the 5-num. secrets were transported to Hawaii on an undisclosed vessel." (Stinnett, *Day of Deceit*, p. 76)

The JN-25B code was broken before Pearl Harbor but the US Navy was ordered to stop deciphering JN-25B during 1941.

Historian Thomas Allen says: "Many of the JN-25B coded messages were not decoded until 1945 or 1946." (See Yanovitz) That is apparently true but the reason for that seems to be that the US Navy was told to stop decoding JN-25B and concentrate on Purple.

In testimony before the 1995 Congressional hearings, Edward R. Kimmel (son of the admiral), said: "In addition, in 1941, [the Washington High Command] did not direct its decoding unit to decode messages in the Japanese Navy Operation Code JN-25, which, when the 1941 messages in this code were decoded for a study in 1945, revealed the Japanese plans to attack Pearl Harbor and the nature and size of the task force, *Kido Butai*." (1995 Hearings) It can be safely assumed that Edward Kimmel did his homework, and that he was thoroughly familiar with the evidence regarding the JN-25B decrypting. If he is correct, and the reason the JN-25B code wasn't being read before 7 December 1941 was because Navy cryptographers were ordered not to decode it, then that adds more evidence to support the allegation of an intentional blackout of intelligence information for the Hawaiian commanders.

When all is considered, the JN-25B code wasn't necessary to US intelligence except for possibly fine details. Breaking the radio call sign code, which was done by Station-CAST just before *Kido Butai* started its journey across the "vacant Sea." provided the identity of specific Japanese commanders and ships. RDF bearings furnished their exact location and a means of tracking. All of this can be accomplished without understanding the message itself. But stopping the decoding of JN-25B would eliminate the possibility that a decrypted message would get into Kimmel's hands. He then would prepare a defense and that could have mitigated the "overt act" FDR was striving for that would put America in a war mood.

Because of the seemingly unresolved controversy over when the US was reading the JN-25B code, that information will not be given high priority in this essay. The purpose of this essay is to show that FDR had prior knowledge of, possibly even provoked, that "overt act" which would interrupt the continuity of life and get America into World War II. That can be shown without relying on the JN-25 code.