

PEARL HARBOR

THE SEEDS AND FRUITS OF INFAMY

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Percy L. Greaves, Jr.
Bettina B. Greaves, ed.

Foreword by John Chamberlain

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Editor's Preface

No one can plan history. Every one of us—rich and poor, powerful and not so powerful, famous and infamous, important and unimportant—plans his or her actions in the hope of accomplishing some goal. History is the outcome of countless such purposive actions, intertwined, interconnected, interrelated. Although each action is planned by the individual actor in the hope of achieving some end, history itself is not only not planned, but unplannable. And so it is with the Pearl Harbor disaster which launched the United States into World War II. It was the unplanned, unintended consequence of countless separate pre-attack planned actions on the part of the principals concerned. And the post-attack coverup and revelations arose as the unintended consequences of the purposive actions of the principals concerned.

The goal of the historian of any historical event is to try to discover how it happened as an unintended consequence of the purposive actions of individuals. And that is the goal of this book, as it was also the goal of the post-attack investigations, to determine how and why the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor and how and why Washington officials responded as they did. My husband, Percy Greaves, became interested in the pros and cons of the December 7, 1941 attack from the moment he learned, as

research director of the Republican National Committee during the 1944 Roosevelt-Dewey presidential election campaign, that the United States had decrypted the Japanese diplomatic code in August 1940 and since then had been reading many of Japan's SECRET and SUPER-SECRET messages. That secret, of course, could not be divulged so long as the war continued and we were continuing to decipher Japanese messages and learn their secrets.

After the war ended in August 1945, Congress established a Joint Congressional Committee to investigate the attack. As Chief of the Minority Staff of that Joint Committee my husband researched the pre-attack background, the earlier investigations, and the available documents. He helped brief the Republican Committee members in questioning witnesses as to what was known in Washington about Japan's plans before the attack, what intelligence and materiel had been furnished the Pearl Harbor commanders, and whether or not they had responded appropriately, given the available intelligence, materiel, ships, planes, and men. The hearings lasted almost a full year. The Majority Report continued to place considerable blame on the Hawaiian commanders, Admiral Husband E. Kimmel and General Walter C. Short. A lengthy Minority Report held that the blame must be shared by higher-up Washington officials.

Upon the conclusion of the Congressional Committee hearings, my husband continued to research the Pearl Harbor attack. He interviewed surviving participants, wrote and lectured widely on the subject. My husband completed this manuscript and wrote the side heads. We proofed it together and checked all the quotations and footnotes against the original sources. But then he was stricken with cancer, a particularly virulent variety. He died on August 13, 1984, just over a month after the appearance of his first serious symptoms.

By the time my husband died, his efforts had yielded a massive manuscript. When I reread that manuscript after his death, I decided that, although the names, dates, and documentation were

all there, it was difficult to follow the sequence of events. Events alternated with revelations gleaned from the investigations and revelations alternated with events. Also Percy had included many lengthy supporting quotations within the text itself, interrupting the flow of events. In the hope of making the story easier to understand, I have arranged everything in chronological order and paraphrased the quotes—from FDR's inauguration and his early active intervention in international affairs through the Japanese attack on December 7, 1941, the post attack investigations, the obstacles placed in the path of investigators, down to the final reports.

He and I often talked about this book. As usual I made suggestions; some he accepted; others he rejected. He would say, "If anything happens to me then *you* can do as you please." Of course, he fully expected to finish it himself. But time was not given him to do so.

Although I have reworked my husband's manuscript, it remains his book. The research and documentation are his. The decision to present events primarily as they were viewed from Washington was his. My contribution has been to reorganize, revise, and rewrite his manuscript so as to present the events chronologically. Throughout, however, I have tried to keep the book true to his research and faithful to his interpretation. My guiding principle has always been to present the results of Percy's years of research as faithfully and accurately as possible and to describe the truth about Pearl Harbor as he saw it.

Although I am sure Percy would have had some criticism of the way I have finished his book, on the whole I believe he would have approved. I only wish he could have lived to see the research of his lifetime published in this form. Any errors or omissions in preparing his work for final publication are, of course, my responsibility alone.

MRS. PERCY L. (BETTINA B.) GREAVES, JR.
May 2007

Author's Preface

When the attack on Pearl Harbor was announced on the radio, my sister phoned. I was outdoors playing touch football with my nine-year-old boy and some of his friends. I went inside immediately and turned on the radio. From that moment on I have followed Pearl Harbor developments closely.

At dawn on December 7, 1941, the Japanese had attacked the United States U.S. Fleet stationed in Pearl Harbor in the Hawaiian Islands. Hawaii was then a territory of the United States, not yet a state. Nevertheless, that blow brought the United States into the war that had been started in Europe by Hitler's attack on Poland in September 1939. The war then exploded worldwide, with fronts not only in Europe and in the Atlantic but also in Asia and the Pacific.

The generally accepted explanation for our entry into the war was simply Japan's "unprovoked and dastardly attack" on Pearl Harbor. However, the responsibility for the extent of the disaster was attributed to a considerable extent to failures on the part of the two commanders at Pearl Harbor—Navy Admiral Husband E. Kimmel and Army General Walter C. Short. To many, this settled the matter; the two commanders were to blame, held up to public shame, relieved of their commands, and forced into early retirement.

The first hint I had that there was more to the Pearl Harbor story came in 1944. The then Republican candidate for President, Thomas E. Dewey, was trying to unseat President Franklin D. Roosevelt. Several service personnel came to the Republican National Committee—of which I was then Research Director—with reports that U.S. cryptographers had deciphered some of the Japanese codes and that Washington officials had been reading, even before the attack, many of the Japanese government's confidential communications.

Dewey proposed to make a speech on the subject, but was requested in great secrecy by Army Chief of Staff General George C. Marshall, not to do so. Our ability to decipher and read Japanese messages, he said, was still playing an important role in helping us to win the war in the Pacific and thus to save the lives of U.S. soldiers and sailors. Dewey honored that request. When Republican Senator Homer Ferguson of Michigan, unaware of the reason for Dewey's silence, also scheduled a speech on the subject, Dewey asked him not to. Thus the public was prevented from learning any of the true Pearl Harbor story at that time. And the voters gave Roosevelt a comfortable victory over his Republican rival.

After the election, I resigned from the Party and turned to freelancing as researcher and economic columnist.

1945 was an eventful year. On January 20, Roosevelt was inaugurated for an unprecedented fourth term. He died a few months later, on April 12. The war was not yet over. Vice President Harry Truman took office. The fighting finally ended in Europe when Germany surrendered on May 7. And the war in the Pacific came to an end with the surrender of Japan on August 14.

.....

Rumors had surfaced from time to time, in spite of efforts to maintain secrecy, to the effect that the attack on Pearl Harbor might not have been such a complete surprise to the officials in

Washington as the public had been led to believe. Several fact-finding inquiries were set up during the war in the attempt to learn more. A great deal of information was unearthed, although it was not then made public. Pressure continued to mount for a full-fledged investigation of the responsibility for the Pearl Harbor disaster. Finally when the war was over, Congress responded.

A Joint Congressional Committee for the Investigation of the Pearl Harbor Attack (JCC) was set up in the fall of 1945. The Democratic majority named six of the Committee's ten members, the Republican minority four. The Democratic majority controlled the appointment of the Committee's Counsel and staff. The Republican minority was not given funds for an adequate research staff. As I had earned some respect as a researcher when working with the Republican National Committee during the 1944 presidential campaign, a few persons interested in having the Joint Congressional Committee conduct a thorough and unbiased investigation arranged for me to head a small staff to assist the minority members. The JCC's reports issued in July 1946 answered some questions but raised others.

My serious interest in Pearl Harbor stemmed from my work with that Committee. For almost a full year (1945–1946) I had spent day and night studying Pearl Harbor documents and exploring Pearl Harbor leads. From that time on, I read everything I could find that bore some relevance to “Pearl” and I tried to keep current on the subject. Then, thanks to a small grant arranged by Harry Elmer Barnes I was able to travel back and forth across the country to meet and interview surviving principals. When further funds were not forthcoming, my serious study of Pearl Harbor was sidetracked for the more urgent demands of earning a living. Only in semi-retirement have I had time to concentrate on the subject again.

History is a record of step-by-step progression from the past. Any event is always the end result of a long sequence of events stretching back endlessly into the past. The historian investigating

a particular incident must always decide where to start, how far back to go. And so it is with Pearl Harbor. The Japanese attack in 1941 was the final outcome of complex, interconnected occurrences that had their origins many years before. For the purpose of this book, I have chosen to trace the conflicting forces that led the Japanese to attack Pearl Harbor in 1941, back to the 1894–1895 Sino-Japanese War.

Events happen; once they are over and done with, they are irrevocable. Learning after the fact what actually occurred is not always easy. History needs to be written and rewritten constantly in the light of newly revealed evidence and newly acquired knowledge in other fields. As previously classified and secret World War II documents have been released in recent years, considerable additional information has become available. To reconcile the conflicting testimony of the many witnesses before the several Pearl Harbor investigations, to keep abreast of new material as it becomes available, to integrate new data into the previous body of knowledge, and to separate the wheat from the chaff so as to make it all intelligible and meaningful, calls for painstaking research and analysis. The task of the historian is to try to reconstruct and report the facts as accurately as possible. As historian, I have acted as sleuth or detective trying to determine the truth. The Pearl Harbor story is like a gigantic jigsaw puzzle, the parts coming from many different sources, each part alone being of little value until fitted into the mosaic. Hopefully this book will supply a few more pieces to the gigantic Pearl Harbor jigsaw puzzle and thus make a small contribution to this period in history.

PERCY L. GREAVES, JR.

Summer 1984

Foreword

On October 28, 1944, in Washington, D.C., I attended a birthday party given by a friend of mine, the Russian-born foreign correspondent, Isaac Don Levine,¹ for his wife, Ruth. October 28 is my birthday too. So it became a double birthday party.

At that party, a loquacious colonel, assuming apparently that he was speaking “off the record,” confided that the United States had decrypted the Japanese diplomatic code a year or so before the attack on Pearl Harbor. From that time on, the top U.S. administration and military officials had been intercepting and reading many of the confidential messages that passed between the Japanese government in Tokyo and her emissaries in the United States and other countries. Thanks to this source of intelligence, the administration in Washington had been privy before the attack on Pearl Harbor to many Japanese secrets.

Republican presidential candidate Thomas E. Dewey had also learned this administration secret. But, out of patriotism, he was not exploiting it during the election campaign that was then under way. It could be that the Japanese were still using the same

¹Levine later founded and edited the anticommunist journal *Plain Talk*, a forerunner of *The Freeman* and *National Review*.

code, and Dewey did not want to run the chance of alerting the Japanese to change their code and thus destroy an extremely valuable source of U.S. intelligence.

It would have been a real scoop to report this news on the pages of *Life*, my employer at the time. But should I? I lost no time in sending a memorandum to Henry Luce, publisher of *Life*, about the colonel's disclosure. He reacted as Dewey had. He told me to file the information away; it would be useful after the war.

Right after the Japanese surrender on August 14, 1945, Luce sent me to upstate New York to interview Dewey. After an all-night train ride, I caught up with him at the Elmira Reformatory, where he was on an inspection tour. He asked me to join him in his limousine for the ride to Geneva, his next stop. We drove along scenic Lake Seneca. But I didn't glance at the beautiful Finger Lake scenery; I was enthralled with Dewey's story.

In September 1944, a tall, dark, and handsome colonel, Carter Clarke, had delivered to Dewey a letter from Army Chief of Staff General Marshall. The letter told Dewey that we had cracked the Japanese diplomatic code. We were still deriving enormous military advantages from reading and decrypting coded intercepts. American lives would be lost if the Japanese changed their code. Therefore, it was of the utmost importance that no word about that should leak out that might reach the Japanese. As a result, Dewey was persuaded to keep the issues of Pearl Harbor and the Japanese code out of the campaign. Dewey told me I could use the story of his "gagging," but he warned that I must not reveal my source. My article appeared in the September 24, 1945, issue of *Life*.

Luce then gave me the assignment of attending the hearings of the Joint Congressional Committee on the Investigation of the Pearl Harbor Attack, just then preparing to get under way. The Congressional hearings ran from November 15, 1945, until May 31, 1946, when the last witness appeared. Those hearings

revealed a great deal, but probably even more significant were some of the things that they didn't reveal. It was obvious from the testimony of some of the witnesses that they were trying not to tell everything they knew.

I recall to this day the dissimulation of one key witness, Captain Alwyn D. Kramer. As Japanese translator and Navy courier, he had played an important role in the weeks before the attack on Pearl Harbor. He had distributed to the top Washington officials many, if not most, of the secret Japanese messages intercepted during that period. He was asked at some length what he recalled about the messages he had delivered, and to whom. Kramer had testified in 1944 before the Navy Court of Inquiry. Between then and his appearance before the Congressional Committee, his recollections had been "refreshed," he said, as a result of his having been questioned by military personnel conducting other Pearl Harbor investigations.

The members of the Congressional Committee noted several significant discrepancies between his testimony to them and his frank and open statements before the NCI. Two were especially notable. One dealt with the famous "East Wind Rain" message, a false weather report bearing a coded meaning, and the other concerned the Japanese government's instructions to their Washington ambassadors asking them to deliver their reply to the U.S. State Department proposal at precisely 1:00 P.M. Washington time on Sunday, December 7.

According to Kramer's testimony before the NCI, "East Wind Rain" indicated impending trouble, perhaps even war, between Japan and the United States. Concerning the 1:00 P.M. message, he had reported to the NCI that, when delivering it on Sunday morning, December 7, he had called the special attention of some of the recipients to the fact that 1:00 P.M. Washington time was about dawn in Hawaii. However, he denied to the Congressional Committee that he had intended to imply that either of these two messages carried any serious implications. When pressed by

Committee member Senator Homer Ferguson of Michigan, he side-stepped. His earlier recollections had been “faulty,” he said; his memory had since been “refreshed.” Moreover, he flatly denied that anyone had asked him to change his testimony.

.....

Percy Greaves was hired privately to help the minority Republicans, who had no funds for a research staff. He attended every session of the Congressional hearings. In the course of fulfilling my assignment for *Life*, I saw him there regularly. He listened intently to all the testimony. Occasionally he would whisper in the ear of a Republican Committee member or write him a note, calling attention to some particular point to pursue in his questioning.

Percy’s serious interest in Pearl Harbor dated from those hearings. He continued to pursue the subject after the hearings closed. He interviewed participants, read everything he could find on the subject and researched all leads. Thus this book has been many years in the making. I talked with Percy about Pearl Harbor several times over the years.

Percy had completed a carefully documented draft when he died in August 1984. His widow, Bettina Bien Greaves, has done a noble job of reworking his materials, fleshing them out, and preparing his manuscript for publication. His revelations, as they are presented here, should help future students interpret the ramifications of the “seeds” that led to the Japanese attack, and of the “fruits” of that attack, namely the investigations and the attempted coverup.

JOHN CHAMBERLAIN

January 1991

Acknowledgments

As my husband notes in the Preface to this book, his interest in Pearl Harbor stemmed from his year-long association (1945–1946) with the Congressional Joint Committee to Investigate the Attack on Pearl Harbor. As director of the Committee’s minority staff, he studied all the documents furnished the Committee and attended all the hearings. After the hearings ended, he received a small grant from Harry Elmer Barnes to seek answers to some questions raised but not answered by the several investigations. With money from the grant, he traveled back and forth across the country in the early 1960s, interviewing individuals who had an interest in Pearl Harbor. Here they are, listed in alphabetical order: Admiral Walter S. Anderson, General Carter W. Clarke, Curtis Dall, General Bonner Fellers, Admiral Thomas L. Hart, Admiral Royall E. Ingersoll, Captain Thomas K. Kimmel, Captain Robert A. Lavender, Admiral Arthur W. McCollum, Commander Charles C. Miles, Admiral Ben Moreell, Admiral Joseph R. Redman, Admiral F.W. Rockwell, Captain Laurence F. Safford, Vice Admiral John F. Shafroth, General Albert C. Wedemeyer, and General Charles A. Willoughby. Captain Safford deserves special mention. Percy talked with him many times on his frequent visits to Washington and Safford described to him in

careful detail the Navy's pre-war system for keeping secret the very existence of the Japanese MAGIC intercepts and the information they revealed. When Barnes's funds ran out, Percy's serious study of Pearl Harbor was sidetracked as he returned to the more urgent demands of earning a living. However, he continued reading and lecturing on the subject. Only in semi-retirement, did he again have time to actually start putting the results of his research on paper.

As I have written, Percy died in 1984. His manuscript was practically finished. After his death, however, I took over the task of editing it and readying it for publication. I physically chopped up the typed manuscript and reorganized chronologically his accounts of pre-war events and post-war revelations. I also put the entire manuscript on the computer. I interviewed several persons: radioman Ralph T. Briggs, the Navy code clerk who had intercepted the elusive "East Wind Rain" message, Admiral Kemp Tolley, commander of the *Lanakai*, one of the three small ships ordered by Roosevelt to be commissioned just before the attack and to take up positions in the South China Sea in the path of the south-bound Japanese convoys, and Admiral Kimmel's son, Captain Thomas Kimmel, whom my husband had also interviewed.

As a result of my editing, the manuscript plus its footnotes became much too long for any publisher to consider. Sheldon Richman, editor of *The Freeman*, helped cut it down. Daniel Bazikian spent many hours with me proofreading the manuscript. Two Japanese friends—Toshio Murata and Kentaro Nakano—translated for me the passage in a book by Japan's chief intelligence officer in Washington, indicating that a Winds Execute ("East Wind Rain") had actually been received before the attack by the Japanese embassy in Washington; this Japanese account was in contradiction of the position of U.S. Intelligence officers who refused to admit during the Congressional hearings that such a message had been sent by Tokyo which could have

been intercepted by Safford and his crew before the war began. And Leo Blum, nephew and friend, visited me several times in Irvington encouraging me and helping with the manuscript. I have profited also from the comments made and the questions asked by many of Percy's friends and students, who had been fascinated by his account of Pearl Harbor whenever he spoke on the subject formally in lectures and informally in our living room. I can only hope he would have approved of what I have done to transform his life-long labor of love into a manuscript suitable for publication.

Bettina Bien Greaves, Editor
(Mrs. Percy L. Greaves, Jr.)

Part 1

The Seeds of Infamy

1.

U.S. International Policy: 1933–1940

FRANKLIN DELANO ROOSEVELT ELECTED PRESIDENT

March 4, 1933, inauguration day, was a gray day in Washington, a depressing day like the economic depression that then enveloped the nation. The sun broke through the clouds only occasionally as President-elect Roosevelt, exuberant over his victory, and outgoing President Herbert Hoover, gloomy and distressed not only at having lost the election but also at not having been able to stem the economic downturn, rode together up Pennsylvania Avenue to the capitol from the White House. Roosevelt took the oath of office, promising “to the best of my ability to preserve, protect and defend the Constitution of the United States.” Hoover and his entire Cabinet went out of office when Roosevelt was inaugurated and the new president appointed an entirely new cabinet.

The Democratic Party platform on which Roosevelt had run in the presidential election of 1932 had been “conservative,” calling for drastic economies in government expenditures and a sound currency. The economic crisis, sparked by the 1929 stock

market crash, had deepened between Roosevelt's election and his inauguration. Cooperation between the outgoing and incoming presidents during the interregnum would have been in order, but considerable antagonism existed between the two men: They had one inconclusive meeting. Roosevelt was apparently unable or unwilling to cooperate any further. He didn't want to share the credit with anyone for what he was going to do.

For a time the new president's energies were devoted largely to domestic economic problems. All banks in the country were closed down on March 6, two days after Roosevelt took office. It was a low point in the country's history. However, it wasn't long before the international situation would claim Roosevelt's attention. The idealism that had produced the League of Nations and the Kellogg-Briand Pact intended to outlaw war was eroding. Adolf Hitler had come to power in Germany, assuming dictatorial powers and beginning to undo the terms of the Versailles Treaty.

On November 16, 1933, the United States recognized the government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (U.S.S.R). The professed purpose of recognition was so "that our nations henceforth may cooperate for their mutual benefit and for the preservation of the peace of the world."¹ Roosevelt named William C. Bullitt to be the first U.S. ambassador to the U.S.S.R. Bullitt considered communism a harbinger for the world and was an enthusiastic proponent of the Soviet system.

U.S.—FAR EAST RELATIONS

The Asian situation was of concern. Japan had occupied Chinese territory, Manchuria. Many Japanese farmers and businessmen had moved there to settle and make it their home.

¹Franklin D. Roosevelt, *The Public Papers and Addresses of Franklin Delano Roosevelt*, vol. 1: *The Genesis of the New Deal, 1928–1932* (New York: Random House, 1938), p. 472.

Moreover, the Japanese and Chinese were fighting in northern China and Russian Communists were helping the Chinese and pestering the Japanese. Asia was not peaceful. How had conditions reached this pass?

Japan had been almost completely isolated from the civilized world until 1852 when U.S. Navy Commander Matthew C. Perry sailed into Edo (Tokyo) Bay on a mission from the United States government—to open Japan up to trade. After some time and a proper display of diplomacy, Perry succeeded in his mission. Japan westernized, industrialized and her population increased. Looking for resources to power her new industries, she expanded onto the relatively empty wilderness of the Asian mainland which China and Russia had previously claimed. Japan went to war with China (the Sino-Japanese War, 1894–1895) in order to bring Chinese-controlled Korea into Japan's sphere of influence. Then after the Boxer Rebellion in China (1899–1901) Japan cooperated with the international force of British, French, Russians, Americans, and Germans that lifted the siege of Peking. Some Japanese remained in northern China and in time Japanese traders developed a substantial textile industry there. However, Japan found herself in frequent conflict with Russia, whose vast territory extended east to the Pacific, and who wanted a warm water port. The Russo-Japanese War (1904) was sparked by Russian intrusions into Manchuria and ended with Japan's gaining control of that province. Japan's rule brought law and order to Manchuria and in time it became one of the most peaceful and stable parts of China, attracting thousands of Japanese, Chinese and Korean traders and settlers. Japan was bringing civilization and stability to the region.

Japan had been an ally of Britain and the U.S during the Great War (1914–1918) and she was included in the Washington Naval Conference (November 12, 1921–January 12, 1922) when the Allied military powers sought to reduce the worldwide arms race. The resulting Naval Limitation and Non-Fortification Treaty

cut the British-American-Japanese navies down in size to a ratio of 5:5:3 for capital ships. In the hope of maintaining peace in the Far East, an "Open Door" agreement was reached, providing that the participant nations have equal commercial rights of entry into China. Although China was not then a united nation, she was to have her integrity preserved. Japan was to be restrained from mainland adventures and to have no military planes or ships in the mandated islands. Japan resented the second-rate status to which she had been reduced by the Naval Limitation Treaty, and also the racial slur inherent when Japanese immigration was banned by the U.S. Exclusion Act (1924) and by Australia's anti-oriental "Whites Only" policy. Moreover, Japan's relations with the rest of the world deteriorated in the 1920s. Her markets for her chief export, silk, suffered as a result of worldwide protectionism and the Great Depression and yet her dependence on U.S. oil and raw materials increased.

There was an explosion on the Japanese railroad line at Mukden on September 18, 1931, which was blamed on local Chinese. One faction in the Japanese military had been pressing their government to take a more expansionist role in Manchuria. The Japanese responded harshly to the Mukden explosion, fought the "bandits" and seized several of China's northern provinces. Manchuria gained its independence and then on September 15, 1932, became a protectorate of Japan, Manchukuo.

U.S. Secretary of State Stimson held that Japan's intervention in Manchuria was a violation of international treaties and proposed, in place of the "Open Door" agreement, a "Nonrecognition doctrine" which would deny recognition to any nation which had acquired territory by aggression. Stimson wanted the U.S. to impose sanctions against Japan for her aggression in Manchuria. President Hoover vetoed the idea; he "was opposed in every fiber of his being to any action which might lead to American participation in the struggles of the Far East. In this view he had the

support of the American people.”² The League of Nations investigated the “Manchurian incident” and issued a report blaming Japan. Japan and Britain disagreed with the League’s report. However, it was accepted and in 1933 Japan withdrew from the League.

After the death in 1925 of Sun Yat-sen, revolutionary leader and president of the Southern Chinese Republic, Chiang Kai-shek assumed the presidency. Chiang began trying to unite the country. The communists intervened, sometimes for, sometimes against, Chiang’s nationalist forces. There was almost constant fighting by and among Chiang’s nationalists, the warlords, the Chinese communists and the Russian communists. When the Chinese boycotted Japanese textiles, the Japanese retaliated by bombarding and sending troops to the Shanghai International Settlement (January 28–March 4, 1932). Many were killed. U.S. sympathy was with the Chinese; the Japanese were portrayed as the aggressors. After fierce fighting, the Japanese retreated temporarily, and the boycott was brought to an end. Another time when Chiang Kai-shek’s nationalist forces threatened Japan’s economic and industrial interests in Manchuria, Japan called up 5,000 troops to protect her merchants there. The Russian Communists and the Chinese Communists were both heavily involved. Finally, after communist leader Mao Tse-tung told Chiang that if he stopped fighting the Red Army the Chinese Soviet government would help Chiang against Japan, Chiang finally agreed. The Kuomintang–Communist agreement (July 5, 1937) called for the nationalists and communists to cooperate in driving the Japanese out of Peking and the rest of North China. Peace prevailed there for a time. But not for long.

²Henry L. Stimson and McGeorge Bundy, *On Active Service in Peace and War* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1947/1948), p. 233.

OFFICIAL U.S. FOREIGN POLICY

During the 1930s, U.S. opinion opposed involvement in foreign wars. Congress responded in 1935 by passing neutrality legislation prohibiting trade in arms or implements of war with any belligerent nation. As FDR signed this legislation (S.J. Resolution 173) on August 31, 1935, he explained that “it was intended as an expression of the fixed desire of the Government and the people of the United States to avoid any action which might involve us in war.” “The purpose,” he said, “is wholly excellent.” Emphasizing U.S. neutrality in international conflicts still more emphatically, Roosevelt added: “The policy of the Government is definitely committed to the maintenance of peace and the avoidance of any entanglements which would lead us into conflict.”³

In spite of FDR’s professed neutrality, however, he was apparently already considering the possibility of conflict with Japan. The Office of Naval Intelligence (ONI) whose duty it was to collect and analyze pertinent information for the Navy, was then assembling material about potential Japanese and communist espionage agents. For instance, the ONI “carded” Japanese residents in the New York area for use in “corralling the individuals for internment or breaking down any system of espionage or sabotage” in the event of a conflict.⁴ In an August 10, 1936, memorandum to Chief of Naval Operations Admiral William D. Leahy, FDR sanctioned this operation. He “expressed his support . . . for locating all Japanese for possible incarceration in a ‘concentration camp’ during a crisis.”⁵

FDR was a charming, charismatic, and convincing speaker. From 1935, when he signed the Neutrality Act, until the attack

³Roosevelt, *The Public Papers and Addresses, 1935*, vol. 4, pp. 345–46.

⁴Jeffrey M. Dorwart, *Conflict of Duty: The U.S. Navy’s Intelligence Dilemma, 1919–1945* (Annapolis, Md.: Naval Institute Press, 1983), p. 65.

⁵Roosevelt, August 10, 1936 memorandum to Chief of Naval Operations, Admiral William D. Leahy. Quoted in Dorwart, *Conflict of Duty*, p. 65.

on Pearl Harbor, he reassured the American people from time to time of his steadfast commitment to peace.⁶ He delivered one of his most eloquent anti-war speeches in Chatauqua, New York, only four days after signing the August 10 memorandum about the possible incarceration of U.S. Japanese residents:

I have seen war. I have seen war on land and sea. I have seen blood running from the wounded. I have seen men coughing out their gassed lungs. I have seen the dead in the mud. I have seen cities destroyed. I have seen two hundred limping, exhausted men come out of line—the survivors of a regiment of one thousand that went forward forty-eight hours before. I have seen children starving. I have seen the agony of mothers and wives. I hate war. . . .

I wish I could keep war from all Nations; but that is beyond my power. I can at least make certain that no act of the United States helps to produce or to promote war. . . .

I speak from a long experience—the effective maintenance of American neutrality depends today, as in the past, on the wisdom and determination of whoever at the moment occup[ies] the offices of President and Secretary of State.⁷

During this period, Germany and Japan were being driven together out of fear of the expansionist and disruptive policies of their common enemy, the Soviet Union. Both Germany and Japan recognized “that the aim of the [U.S.S.R.-sponsored] Communist International, known as the Comintern, is to disintegrate and subdue existing States by all the means at its command.” They held that the Comintern “not only endangers their internal peace and social well-being, but is also a menace to the peace of

⁶Charles A. Beard, *American Foreign Policy in the Making, 1932–1940* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1946), pp. 156–75.

⁷Roosevelt, *The Public Papers and Addresses, 1936*, vol. 5, pp. 289–90.

the world.”⁸ So Germany and Japan decided to cooperate against Communist subversive activities. On November 15, 1936, they signed the German-Japanese Anti-Comintern Pact.

PROSPECTS FOR PEACE IN THE FAR EAST?

There was a turnover in the Japanese Cabinet on June 4, 1937. Prince Konoye became prime minister. Konoye desired and sought peace with the United States. But there was still turmoil and little prospect of peace in the Far East.

In 1937, the U.S.S.R. led Nationalist China to understand that “if it would undertake to offer armed resistance to Japan it would confidently expect the armed support of the Soviet Union.”⁹ Not long after receiving this assurance, the Chinese did resist the Japanese. On July 7, 1937, a Japanese soldier was missing at the Marco Polo Bridge in China. The Chinese not only refused to search for him, they also refused to let the Japanese do so. Japanese troops resorted to force and soldiers from the two countries clashed.

The inclination was to blame this incident on impetuous Japanese soldiers at the scene. However, the fault may not have been entirely on the Japanese side. The U.S. ambassadors in France, China, and Japan all cabled Secretary of State Hull denying this anti-Japanese contention. Reports had come to their attention indicating that the Chinese had the encouragement and support of the Russians in fighting the Japanese, that the Russians had been “very generous,” that they “had furnished China with munitions . . . costing 150,000,000 Chinese dollars,”

⁸U.S. House Committee on Foreign Affairs. *Events Leading up to World War II: Chronological History of Certain Major International Events Leading up to and During World War II with the Ostensible Reasons Advanced for their Occurrence, 1931–1944*, 78th Cong., 2nd sess., 1944, p. 109.

⁹Charles Callan Tansill, *Back Door to War: The Roosevelt Foreign Policy, 1933–1941* (Chicago: Henry Regnery, 1952), p. 456.

and that they had even “shipped some munitions before China had promised to pay for them.”¹⁰

U.S. Ambassador to Japan Joseph C. Grew wired Hull that “there was not sufficient evidence to justify the hypothesis that ‘either the Japanese Government or the Army deliberately engineered the [Marco Polo Bridge] incident in order to force a showdown.’” Grew also found that communist agitators contributed to the crisis by “disseminating misinformation with regard to the concentration of both Chinese and Japanese troops.”¹¹ Sino-Japanese hostilities broke out. Tokyo announced a “punitive expedition against the Chinese troops, who have been taking acts derogatory to the prestige of the Empire of Japan.” This was the beginning of the undeclared Japanese-Chinese war. Bombers struck three cities and shelled others as ground troops attacked Chinese forces all over the Peking area.

The outbreak of fighting between the Japanese and the Chinese aroused strong feelings among many in the United States who had emotional ties to China. The Neutrality Act then in force prevented the U.S. from using U.S. ships to send arms to either side. On September 14, acting under this Act, FDR forbade the shipment of arms on U.S. government-owned ships to either China or Japan, thus averting the possibility of a Japanese blockade of U.S. shipping had aid to China been allowed. Throughout this entire period, U.S. and British trade was continuing, in accord with China’s agreement to open the country to foreign traders.

In Chicago on October 5, 1937, President Roosevelt spoke out against nations that were engaging in aggression:

The peace, the freedom, and the security of 90 percent of the population of the world is being jeopardized by the remaining

¹⁰Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States: Diplomatic Papers, The Far East, 1938* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office), vol. 3, pp. 136, 165, *et passim*.

¹¹Tansill, *Back Door to War*, p. 460.

10 percent, who are threatening a breakdown of all international order and law. . . . It seems to be unfortunately true that the epidemic of world lawlessness is spreading.

When an epidemic of physical disease starts to spread, the community approves and joins in a quarantine of the patients in order to protect the health of the community against the spread of the disease. . . . War is a contagion, whether it be declared or undeclared. It can engulf states and peoples remote from the original scene of hostilities. We are adopting such measures as will minimize our risk of involvement, but we cannot have complete protection in a world of disorder in which confidence and security have broken down.¹²

Roosevelt had not mentioned Japan, but a State Department release the next day made it clear that he had been referring to Japan's attack on China;

Since the beginning of the present controversy in the Far East, the Government of the United States has urged upon both the Chinese and Japanese Governments that they refrain from hostilities and has offered to be of assistance in an effort to find some means, acceptable to both parties to the conflict of composing by pacific methods the situation the Far East. . . . In the light of the unfolding developments in the Far East, the Government of the United States has been forced to the conclusion that the action of Japan in China is inconsistent with the principles which should govern the relationships between nations. [The Nine Power Treaty of February 6, 1922, and the Kellogg-Briand Pact of August 27, 1928]¹³

¹²Department of State, *Peace and War: United States Foreign Policy, 1931–1941* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office), pp. 383–87.

¹³*Ibid.*, pp. 387–88.

On December 12, the United States was brought close to war when the Japanese sank the *U.S.S. Panay*, a U.S. gunboat, and three Standard Oil tankers in the Chinese Yangtze River. Several Americans were killed. However, sentiment in the United States was strongly opposed to war over the loss of a few American lives in the Far East. Therefore, when the Japanese apologized, demoted several top military officials, and paid several million dollars in indemnity, the matter was considered closed.

Serious fighting continued in China, however. In December 1937, Japanese forces took Nanking, committing mass murder and rape. Over 50,000 Chinese men were killed, many thousands more women raped, 200,000 to 300,000 civilians slaughtered. Japan was clearly the culprit.

ANTICIPATING WAR IN THE PACIFIC

In late December FDR ordered Admiral Royal E. Ingersoll, director of the U.S. War Plans Division, to London for conversations with officials of the British Admiralty. According to Ingersoll, it was generally assumed in military circles at that time that sooner or later the United States would become involved in a war against Japan in the Pacific, a war that would involve the British, the Dutch, the Russians, and possibly the Chinese. This London meeting was to explore U.S.-British arrangements in such an event for command, communications, ciphers, intelligence, etc. The conference took place during the first two or three weeks of January 1938. No firm commitments were made.¹⁴

¹⁴79th Cong., 1st sess. Joint (Congressional) Committee on the Investigation of the Pearl Harbor Attack. *Pearl Harbor Attack*, 39 vols. (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1946), part 9, pp. 4272–77. Ingersoll testimony. After the war started in Europe, the 1938 London document “became a dead cat,” as Ingersoll expressed it (p. 4273), because Germany was in the war. The London conclusions were superseded by the ABC-1 plan for military U.S. cooperation with the British, the plan which was developed in Washington in 1941.

On November 3, 1938, Japan announced a “New Order” in China, “a tripartite relationship of mutual aid and co-ordination between Japan, Manchukuo [Japan’s name for Japanese-occupied Manchuria] and China.”¹⁵ Prime Minister Prince Konoye pointed out in a public statement that the Chiang Kai-shek administration in China was little more than a local regime. Konoye declared further that Japan wanted the development and cooperation, not the ruin, of China and that she wished to establish stable conditions in the Far East without prejudice to the interests and rights of other foreign powers. However, Konoye went on: “The world knows that Japan is earnestly determined to fight it out with communism. What the Comintern intends to do is bolshevisation of the Far East and disturbance of world peace.” And lest there be any misunderstanding, he added: “Japan expects to suppress in a drastic manner the sources of the evils of bolshevisation and their subversive activities.”¹⁶ Konoye’s position was that Japan’s conflict was not with China so much as it was with the Comintern that was backing China.

Japan compared her Manchurian venture to the way England had acquired her empire—India, Hong Kong, etc.—and to the way the United States had wrested its western territory from the Indians. And Japan thought the United States’s Monroe Doctrine protecting the Western Hemisphere from foreign intervention was similar to Japan’s wish to preserve Asia for Asians.¹⁷ According to Japan’s Foreign Minister Yosuke Matsuoka (1940–1941) Japan was fighting for two goals: “to prevent Asia from

¹⁵Department of State, *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States: Japan, 1931–1941* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1943), vol. 1, p. 478.

¹⁶*Ibid.*, p. 480.

¹⁷John Toland, *The Rising Sun: The Decline and Fall of the Japanese Empire, 1936–1945* (New York: Random House, 1970), p. 56.

falling completely under the white man's domination and to save China from Communism."¹⁸

In the United States's view, Japan's "New Order" was violating the rights of Americans in China. In a note to the Japanese Foreign Minister (November 7, 1938), Ambassador Grew objected to actions Japan was taking on the mainland. He could see no reason why U.S. shipping on the Yangtze River should be restricted, since hostilities in that area had ceased. Grew also claimed (November 21) that there was no real excuse for the frequent "accidental" incidents in China involving "not only the loss of American property but the loss of American life and the desecration of our flag."¹⁹

The Japanese continued to win in China. They took Hankow and Canton. They were preventing China's access to the coast and thus making it increasingly difficult for her to obtain supplies. As a result, Chiang was forced to move his government inland to Chungking. But the Japanese "were conquering territory, not people, and by the beginning of 1939, they were still far from final victory. They had lost thousands of men, millions of yen and incurred the wrath of the Western world, and Americans in particular."²⁰

In 1937–1938, the Chinese built the Burma Road over rugged mountain terrain—a remarkable feat of engineering. The Burma Road was opened on December 2, 1938. War supplies could then be landed in Rangoon, British Burma, shipped by train to Lashio, then over the Burma Road to Kunming in China's Yunnan Province, and thence to Chungking.

Although most Americans did not want to become involved in a war, by the end of 1938, FDR was beginning to resent the Neutrality Act. His sympathies in the Far East lay with China

¹⁸Ibid., p. 48.

¹⁹Department of State, *Japan, 1931–1941*, p. 807.

²⁰Toland, *The Rising Sun*, p. 54.

in her struggle against Japan. And the Act prevented the United States from lending support. Out of his desire to aid China, FDR sought an end to the blanket embargo on shipping arms to belligerent nations. So in his January 4, 1939, message to Congress, he launched a campaign for the Act's repeal: "[O]ur neutrality laws may operate unevenly and unfairly—may actually give aid to an aggressor and deny it to the victim."²¹ Congress rejected his reasoning, and on March 20 the Senate turned down Roosevelt's proposal for repeal. FDR repeated his request. Hull also asked for its repeal.

Britain's Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain's view of the Far East situation differed from that of U.S. officials. Chamberlain did not want to prevent Japan from obtaining the military supplies she needed for her campaign in China. He recognized "the actual situation in China where hostilities on a large scale are in progress" and noted that

as long as that state of affairs continues to exist, the Japanese forces in China have special requirements for the purpose of safeguarding their own security and maintaining public order. . . . His Majesty's Government have no intention of countenancing any acts or measures prejudicial to the attainment of the above-mentioned objects by Japanese forces.

Chamberlain urged that "British authorities and British nationals in China . . . refrain from such acts and measures."²²

The United States and Japan had been trading partners for years. A commercial treaty permitting and encouraging trade between the two countries had been in effect since 1911. Under its terms, if one party wanted to terminate the treaty, it was required to notify the other party six months in advance. In accordance with that provision, Hull gave the Japanese ambassador notice on

²¹Department of State, *Peace and War*, p. 49.

²²U.S. Congress, *Events*, pp. 198–99.

July 26, 1939 of our intentions to terminate. This dealt a heavy blow to the Japanese economy—also to world trade. And it represented a significant deterioration in our relations with Japan.²³

WAR BREAKS OUT IN EUROPE

On September 1, 1939, Germany invaded Poland. Britain and France immediately notified Germany that unless it withdrew its forces, they would honor their agreement to defend Poland. Hitler did not pull out. Two days later Britain and France declared war on Germany. World War II had begun.

At this juncture, FDR again reassured the country of our neutrality. He went on the radio on September 3 and announced in his very convincing manner: “This Nation will remain a neutral nation.”²⁴ Two days later on September 5, President Roosevelt issued an official proclamation of neutrality prescribing “certain duties with respect to the proper observance, safeguarding, and enforcement of such neutrality.” It called on all persons within the jurisdiction of the United States to exercise “an impartial neutrality.”²⁵

On September 11, only a very few days later, FDR initiated a secret correspondence with “a former naval person” in belligerent Great Britain’s cabinet. This “former naval person” was Winston Churchill, newly recalled by Prime Minister Chamberlain to serve as First Lord of the Admiralty, the same position Churchill had held during World War I. (Churchill did not become prime minister until May 1, 1940.) Roosevelt, as Assistant Secretary of the Navy during World War I, had visited England and been entranced by the British espionage and intelligence services. But he hadn’t then met Churchill.

²³Department of State, *Japan, 1931–1941*, p. 189.

²⁴Department of State, *Peace and War*, p. 485.

²⁵U.S. Congress, *Events*, p. 215.

FDR's first letter to Churchill began: "I want you to know how glad I am that you are back again in the Admiralty." He continued:

What I want you and the Prime Minister to know is that I shall at all times welcome it if you will keep me in touch personally with anything you want me to know about. You can always send sealed letters through your [diplomatic] pouch or my pouch.²⁶

This expression of warm friendship was hardly the "impartial neutrality" he was asking of "all persons within the jurisdiction of the United States."

U.S. "NEUTRALITY PATROL" IN THE ATLANTIC

On September 6, Roosevelt announced that the Navy would start a "Neutrality Patrol" of the Atlantic up to 200 or 300 miles offshore, ostensibly to protect U.S. merchantmen:

The patrolling ships were to report all belligerent warships, except convoy escorts, by radio. In the event of a submarine contact, "the movements of the submarine shall be observed and a surveillance patrol maintained in the general area."²⁷

And then on September 8, he proclaimed a national emergency.²⁸

Disturbed at the delay in getting the "Neutrality Patrol" underway, FDR sent a secret message on October 9, 1939, to the U.S. Navy Department: "When any aircraft or surface ship

²⁶Francis L. Loewenheim, Harold D. Langley, and Manfred Jones, eds. *Roosevelt and Churchill: Their Secret Wartime Correspondence* (New York: E.P. Dutton, 1975), p. 89.

²⁷Patrick Abbazia, *Mr. Roosevelt's Navy: The Private War of the Atlantic Fleet, 1939-1942* (Annapolis, Md.: Naval Institute Press, 1975), p. 65.

²⁸U.S. Congress, *Events*, p. 216.

sights a submarine, a report thereof will be rushed to the Navy Department for immediate action.” This report was to be submitted in English, permitting anyone capable of monitoring the Patrol’s English-language transmissions to benefit from the sightings. “The plane or surface ship,” FDR continued,

will remain in contact for as long as possible. . . . Planes or Navy or Coast Guard ships may report the sighting of any submarine or suspicious surface ships in plain English. . . . [L]oss of contact with surface ships cannot be tolerated. Signed “FDR.”²⁹

Most Americans were, of course, very much concerned about the war going on in Europe. To many it looked like a repeat of the 1914–1918 World War. Some wanted the United States to join England and France immediately against Germany. But the majority were still anxious to stay out of the struggle. FDR, always sensitive to public opinion, again reassured the people of our neutrality. At a *New York Herald Tribune* Forum on October 26, he stated most emphatically:

In and out of Congress we have heard orators and commentators and others beating their breasts and proclaiming against sending the boys of American mothers to fight on the battlefields of Europe. That, I do not hesitate to label as one of the worst fakes in current history. It is a deliberate setting up of an imaginary bogeyman. The simple truth is that no person in any responsible place in the national administration in Washington, or in any State government, or in any city government, or in any county government, has ever suggested in any shape, manner or form the remotest possibility of sending the boys of

²⁹Abbazia, *Mr. Roosevelt's Navy*, p. 68.

American mothers to fight on the battlefields of Europe. That is why I label that argument a shameless and dishonest fake.³⁰

Finally in November, after German Chancellor Adolf Hitler had attacked Poland and after Great Britain and France had declared war, Roosevelt's campaign against the Neutrality Act met with some success. Congress repealed the arms embargo, which had prohibited all sales of military supplies to any belligerent nation, and replaced it with a cash and carry policy. The Neutrality Act of 1939 permitted "cash and carry" transactions; arms and other military supplies could be sold to belligerent nations, if they were paid for in cash, not credit, and if they were not transported in U.S. vessels.³¹

Our "Neutrality Patrol" had not been in operation two months when the U.S. heavy cruiser *Tuscaloosa*, on patrol in the Atlantic, trailed and greeted by radio the German ocean liner *Columbus*. *Columbus*, on a cruise in the Caribbean when war broke out in Europe, had managed to reach Vera Cruz, Mexico. Her captain wanted to dispose of his ship there because he did not believe he would be able to run the blockade to return to Germany. However, Berlin ordered him home. He set out on December 13 and soon found his ship accompanied, in relays, by two U.S. destroyers. As *Columbus* sailed eastward, *Tuscaloosa* took over surveillance. In accordance with FDR's directive, it announced in English every four hours the position of the German ship. The British destroyer *Hyperion* heard the announcement and investigated. She located *Columbus* on December 19, about 425 miles off Cape May, New Jersey, and fired two shots. The Germans scuttled their ship. Two of her crewmen were lost. *Tuscaloosa* picked up

³⁰Franklin Delano Roosevelt, *Public Papers, 1939*. Portion of address published in Franklin D. Roosevelt, *Quotations from Franklin Delano Roosevelt* (Republican National Committee, 1940), p. 37.

³¹U.S. Congress, *Events*, p. 223.

the 555 German survivors and brought them to this country as “distressed mariners.”³²

At the president’s request, little publicity was given this incident. Admiral Harold R. Stark, U.S. chief of naval operations, radioed Captain Harry A. Badt of *Tuscaloosa* asking that he give the impression his ship had come upon the German liner by accident and, fortunately, just in time to pursue her humane role. Captain Badt was to state that the British ship had not appeared ready to commence an action. Stark noted: “We do not desire you to make public the details of the work of our . . . patrol.”³³ Nevertheless, accounts of the event did appear, although they caused little excitement; people apparently approved, considering this consistent with the Patrol’s ostensible purpose—to protect U.S. merchantmen—and to keep hostilities from invading our shores.

FDR again professed devotion to neutrality when he addressed Congress on January 3, 1940. “The first president of the United States warned us against entangling foreign alliances. The present president of the United States subscribes to and follows that precept.”³⁴ The next day, he appointed Navy Admiral J.O. Richardson to be commander-in-chief of the U.S. Fleet (CINCUS), replacing Admiral Claude C. Bloch. Richardson was an old Navy hand, well-equipped through training and experience to take over the operation of the Fleet. Command was transferred on January 6, 1940.³⁵

³²Abbazia, *Mr. Roosevelt’s Navy*, p. 74.

³³*Ibid.*

³⁴Department of State, *Peace and War*, p. 511.

³⁵*The New York Times*, January 7, 1940.

U. S. RELATIONS WITH JAPAN

The six months' notice we had given Japan of our intention to terminate our 1911 commercial treaty expired on January 26, 1940. With the cancellation of that treaty, uncertainty prevailed with respect to U.S.-Japanese trade. The Japanese were more or less assured by U.S. officials, however, that they could expect trade to continue about as usual. But the abrogation of the treaty meant that tariffs, quotas, or embargoes could be imposed at any time. The president and Congress were thus in a position to dictate the terms under which Japan might continue to trade with us.

Japan at this time was trying to establish the Greater East Asia Co-prosperity scheme "New Order" that she had announced in November. On February 1 the Japanese foreign minister invited other nations to join in this effort. Japan, he said, welcomed foreign trade and investments, and he asked us to participate. But we turned a cold shoulder on him and on Japan.

BRITISH MILITARY PROCUREMENT AND POLITICS

1940 was an election year. FDR decided to break all precedents and run for a third term as president.

For most of FDR's time in office, his treasury secretary was Henry J. Morgenthau, Jr. Morgenthau was Jewish and thus understandably strongly anti-Hitler, eager to help England and to get the United States into the war against Germany.³⁶ Morgenthau

³⁶As financial editor from 1934–1935 of the *United States News* (predecessor to *U.S. News & World Report*), I covered Morgenthau at the Treasury Department and came to know him well. Morgenthau was a good friend, confidant, and great admirer of FDR's. He could walk unobserved through an underground passageway that connected the Treasury to the White House, and he often did so, to report to FDR or to assume confidential assignments. Morgenthau had a residence in New York State, not far from FDR's Hyde Park home. He was undoubtedly closer to FDR personally than any other member of the cabinet and didn't hesitate at times to try to influence him.

served as Roosevelt's "designated agent from September 1939 to April 1940, for dealing with the Anglo-French Purchasing Mission," newly established to handle British and French procurement. His sympathies clearly lay with the Allied cause. He felt frustrated by the Neutrality Act, which put all purchases on a "cash and carry" basis, thus limiting the assistance that could be given England and France. "It was his [Morgenthau's] intention to help the democracies as much as possible." He "was making an unparalleled effort to supply the Allies"³⁷ and "he encouraged the British and French to make purchases as large as possible, for he believed they were not arming fast enough."³⁸

Although the United States was still officially neutral in the conflict between Germany and Great Britain, Morgenthau, as FDR's intermediary, was seeking for the "allies" some of the newest superchargers developed by the U.S. armed forces, but not yet released, as well as certain engines and designs classified as secret. Secretary of War Harry Hines Woodring, who had assumed that post in 1936, and Commanding General of the Army Air Corps Henry Harley ("Hap") Arnold refused the necessary permission. "Morgenthau had therefore once again to take the Allies' case to the president."³⁹ At a White House conference March 12, 1940, he told the president "if he wanted me to do this job [the Anglo-French Purchasing Mission] . . . he would just have to do something"⁴⁰ to halt the opposition coming from the War Department and the military. Roosevelt then announced that, in Morgenthau's words, "there was to be no more resistance from the War Department. . . . Uncooperative officers would find themselves assigned to duty in Guam. . . . 'Well, [FDR said] if Arnold

³⁷John Morton Blum, *From the Morgenthau Diaries: Years of Urgency, 1938–1941* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1965), p. 109.

³⁸*Ibid.*, p. 113.

³⁹*Ibid.*, p. 117.

⁴⁰*Ibid.*, p. 118.

won't conform, maybe we will have to move him out of town.'” The president continued: “Arnold has to keep his mouth shut. He can't see the press any more.” Morgenthau was delighted; he reported to his staff later, “Oh boy, did General Arnold get it!”⁴¹

At that White House conference FDR revealed that the British and French were not his only worries. He was also concerned about the U.S. economy. The New Deal programs had not solved the unemployment problem. There were as many people unemployed in 1938 as there had been when he took office. The only way FDR knew to provide jobs to U.S. workers was by government spending and the European “cash and carry” war orders were putting people to work. “These foreign orders,” he told Morgenthau, “mean prosperity in this country and we can't elect a Democratic Party unless we get prosperity.” Secretary Morgenthau agreed, “And he's right.”⁴²

In May, FDR asked Congress for more funds—over a billion dollars—to pay for 50,000 planes.⁴³ He was impatient. Only two weeks later he urged Congress to hurry up with the funds.⁴⁴ Thus in that election year FDR sought to solve his political problem by putting workers to work on war orders. The manufacture of 50,000 planes would create jobs. FDR probably gave little thought to the fact that the cost of these 50,000 planes would be added to the federal debt and thus to the problems of future presidents.

On April 17, 1940, Secretary of State Cordell Hull warned Japan that the U.S. would oppose “Intervention in the domestic

⁴¹Ibid., pp. 117–18.

⁴²This description of the March 12, 1940, White House meeting is based on Blum, *From the Morgenthau Diaries*, pp.109–18. Morgenthau quote appears on p. 118.

⁴³Roosevelt's message to Congress, May 16, 1940. See U.S. Congress, *Events*, p. 239 (May 16, 1940 entry). See also H. Duncan Hall, *North American Supply* (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office; Longmans, Green, 1955), p. 127 (the official British history of World War II).

⁴⁴Ibid., p.127.

affairs of the Netherlands Indies or any alteration of their status quo by other than peaceful processes.”⁴⁵

British procurement of military supplies from the United States in that election year was precarious. FDR wanted to help, but the American public did not fully approve of the administration’s partiality for the British and French. Since Roosevelt was anxious to avoid arousing the opposition of the voters who wished the United States to remain neutral, the administration’s non-neutral agreements had to be made in secrecy.

This was the dilemma that was continuously in the mind of the president and of the Secretary of the Treasury. The Anglo-French Co-ordinating Committee was thus made aware that in the then state of American public opinion the Administration could not give the Allies all the help it would wish to give.⁴⁶

The assistance Morgenthau could give the British fluctuated with public opinion.

EUROPEAN WAR IMPACTS ASIAN SITUATION

At this time, the Battle of Britain was in full force over England with German planes flying hundreds of sorties almost nightly over London, British airfields and airplane factories. She was also losing ships to German submarine attacks in the Atlantic faster than they could be replaced. Her situation was desperate; she had no ships to spare for the defense of Singapore and could not afford to expand the war into the Far East. So when pressured by Japan to close the Burma Road, she agreed. Thus, the main route by which China’s Nationalist Army had been able to receive war materiel was closed for three months from July 18, 1940 to October 18, 1940.

⁴⁵Department of State, *Peace and War*, pp. 515–16.

⁴⁶Hall, *North American Supply*, p. 92.

Upon the defeat of France in June 1940 by the Nazis, the Japanese began negotiations with the Vichy government of unoccupied France to obtain permission to send troops to French Indochina in order to prevent aid from reaching China by that route. The weak Vichy government, in no position to protest, finally gave permission on September 23. The Japanese occupation of French Indochina then began with the arrival of 6,000 Japanese soldiers.

Japan joined the Axis Powers on September 27, 1940, when she entered into a Tripartite Pact with Germany and Italy. All three nations pledged total aid to each other if any one of the three were attacked by a third party with which they were not then at war. German and Japanese relations with the U.S.S.R. were not to be affected.

The British were anxious to avoid war with Japan at almost any price. They realized their territories in southeast Asia were vulnerable if Japanese forces should move into Indochina. But rather than trying to appease Japan into not striking, which they felt would be interpreted as weakness, they determined to show firmness. Both the United States and Britain decided that the best way to oppose Japan was to strengthen and encourage China. Britain decided in January 1941 to enter into closer relations with Chiang so that, if war came, Chiang would help Britain in Burma and Hong Kong.⁴⁷

The U.S. government made \$100 million available to Chiang in December 1940 and promised him also a supply of up-to-date fighter planes. Britain even though strapped financially, contributed £5 million to the Chinese Currency Stabilization Fund and granted export credits to China up to a maximum of £3 million.⁴⁸

⁴⁷S. Woodburn Kirby, Major-General, *The War Against Japan: The Loss of Singapore* (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1957), vol. 1, p. 53.

⁴⁸*Ibid.*, p. 58.

U.S. FLEET STATIONED IN PEARL HARBOR

On April 2, 1940, the U.S. Fleet left the west coast for maneuvers in Hawaiian waters. Since the fleet was scheduled to return in early May for war games, the families of the Navy personnel remained on the U.S. mainland. Then on May 4, the newly appointed Commander-in-Chief of the U.S. Fleet, Admiral Richardson, received a dispatch from the Chief of Naval Operations Stark:

IT LOOKS PROBABLE BUT NOT FINAL THAT THE FLEET WILL REMAIN IN HAWAIIAN WATERS FOR SHORT TIME AFTER MAY 9TH.⁴⁹

Then on May 7, Stark again cabled Richardson from Washington asking him to issue a press release saying:

I HAVE REQUESTED PERMISSION TO REMAIN IN HAWAIIAN WATERS TO ACCOMPLISH SOME THINGS I WANTED TO DO WHILE HERE. THE DEPARTMENT HAS APPROVED THIS REQUEST.

Richardson was told to delay the fleet's departure for a couple of weeks and to carry out regularly scheduled overhauls and movements. At the end of that time he could expect further instructions.

Richardson was disturbed at being asked to make a request for which there was no logical reason. As he explained later, "The Fleet had just completed its annual Fleet Problem, the culmination of a year's tactical training."⁵⁰ Further, although tactical training of senior officers could be accomplished in Hawaii, training in air and surface gunnery, which was also necessary, needed large-scale facilities not available there. To use the extra two weeks to

⁴⁹James O. Richardson, *On the Treadmill to Pearl Harbor* (Washington, D.C.: Naval History Division, Department of the Navy, 1973), p. 308.

⁵⁰*Ibid.*, p. 309.

advantage called for making adjustments that would result in losing three to six weeks out of a tightly scheduled training year.

Richardson felt that the Navy Department had placed him, the commander-in-chief of the United States Fleet, “in a completely false position, with a requirement that he announce to the public something which, on its very face, every tyro ensign would recognize as a phony.”⁵¹ He was even more disturbed by the cable he received from Washington a week later reporting on the war in Europe and concluding:

PRESENT INDICATIONS ARE THAT FLEET WILL REMAIN HAWAIIAN WATERS FOR SOME TIME.⁵²

Richardson was very much opposed to retaining the fleet in Hawaii. He went to Washington several weeks later to explain his reasons to the president in person.

⁵¹Ibid.

⁵²Ibid., p. 311. The complete cable read as follows:

FROM: OPNAV [Office, Chief of Naval Operations]

TO: CINCUS [Commander-in-Chief, U.S. Fleet]

SOME BRITISH AUTHORITIES FEEL THAT ITALY MAY JOIN GERMANY IN ACTIVE PARTICIPATION IN IMMEDIATE FUTURE x THIS FEELING IS NOT SHARED BY OTHER CLOSE OBSERVERS x OUR STATE DEPARTMENT INCLINED TO DISAGREE x REGARDING DUTCH EAST INDIES JAPAN HAS MADE TWO STATEMENTS WHICH IF TAKEN AT THEIR FACE VALUE STATE THEY WISH STATUS QUO PRESERVED x GREAT BRITAIN HAS STATED SHE HAS NO INTENTION OF INTERFERING WITH STATUS QUO AND THERE IS AN UNCONFIRMED REPORT THAT THE FRENCH FOREIGN OFFICE HAS ISSUED A SIMILAR STATEMENT x PRESENT INDICATIONS ARE THAT FLEET WILL REMAIN HAWAIIAN WATERS FOR SOME TIME x HOPE TO ADVISE YOU MORE DEFINITELY NEXT WEEK x

2.

Foreign Relations in an Election Year

U.S.-BRITISH COOPERATION

On May 10, 1940, Winston Churchill became prime minister of England. He wrote Roosevelt on May 15: “Although I have changed my office, I am sure you would not wish me to discontinue our intimate, private correspondence.”¹ The two men continued to enjoy the close relationship begun shortly after Britain and France went to the defense of Poland against Hitler in September 1939. Also about this time, Roosevelt established the first “hot line” telephone in the White House,² enabling him, president of an officially neutral nation, to communicate privately with Churchill, head of government of a nation at war. The hot line left no paper trail, no printed record, of their conversations.

¹Francis L. Loewenheim, Harold D. Langley, and Manfred Jonas, eds., *Roosevelt and Churchill: Their Secret Wartime Correspondence* (New York: E.P. Dutton, 1975), p. 94.

²Richard T. Loomis, “The White House Telephone and Crisis Management,” *U.S. Naval Proceedings*, December 1969, p. 63.

Churchill's May 15 letter pleaded to the United States for help:

I trust you realise, Mr. President that the voice and force of the United States may count for nothing if they are withheld too long. . . . All I ask now is that you should proclaim nonbelligerency, which would mean that you would help us with everything short of actually engaging armed forces.

Churchill listed Britain's "immediate needs":

[F]irst of all, the loan of forty or fifty of your older destroyers. . . . Secondly, we want several hundred of the latest types of aircraft. . . . Thirdly, anti-aircraft equipment and ammunition. . . . Fourthly . . . to purchase steel in the United States.

Churchill continued: "We shall go on paying dollars for as long as we can, but I should like to feel reasonably sure that when we can pay no more, you will give us the stuff all the same." Churchill's fifth "need" was to have a U.S. squadron visit Irish ports, where there had been reports of Germans dropped by parachutes.

Then Churchill added: "Sixthly, I am looking to you to keep that Japanese dog quiet in the Pacific, using Singapore [in Southeast Asia] in any way convenient."³

Roosevelt assured Churchill the next day that he was "most happy to continue our private correspondence. . . . I am, of course, giving every possible consideration to the suggestions made in your message." Then he took Churchill's several requests up one by one.

With respect to the destroyers, FDR was "not certain that it would be wise for that suggestion to be made to the Congress at this moment." As for the aircraft, he wrote "[w]e are now doing everything within our power to make it possible for the Allied

³Loewenheim, et al., eds., *Roosevelt and Churchill*, pp. 94–95.

Governments to obtain the latest types of aircraft in the United States.” Concerning anti-aircraft equipment and ammunition, “the most favorable consideration will be given to the request.” And with respect to steel, he understood “satisfactory arrangements have been made” for its purchase. FDR was also willing to consider a visit of a U.S. squadron to Irish ports.

To the request that the United States keep Japan quiet, FDR responded, “As you know, the American fleet is now concentrated at Hawaii, where it will remain at least for the time being.”⁴

Churchill’s letter was dated May 15, British time. Given the ten-hour difference between London and Hawaii, some 15 to 20 hours could have lapsed by the time, “late on the 15th of May,” when Admiral Richardson, commander of the fleet in Hawaii, received the OPNAV (Chief of Naval Operations) cable advising him that the fleet was to remain in Hawaiian waters “for some time”⁵ (see pp. 27–28). In view of the timing, it is not inconceivable that the OPNAV cable was prompted, at least in part, by Churchill’s urging.

THE EUROPEAN SITUATION WORSENS AS FRANCE FALLS

William C. Bullitt, whom FDR had sent to the U.S.S.R. in 1933 as the first United States ambassador to that country, left Moscow in 1936 to become U.S. ambassador to France.

By the spring of 1940, Britain’s troops were being hard-pressed on the continent by the Nazi military forces. In May they were retreating to Dunkirk on the English Channel. From there they were evacuated to England, thanks to their heroic and dramatic rescue by a hastily mobilized British fleet of 850 ships,

⁴Ibid., pp. 95–96.

⁵James O. Richardson, *On the Treadmill to Pearl Harbor* (Washington, D.C.: Naval History Division, Department of the Navy, 1973), p. 311.

large and small, military and private (tugs, yachts, fishing smacks, launches). Thus, more than 200,000 British, French, and Belgian troops eluded the encircling Germans (May 26–June 4).

By June, the German Blitzkrieg was bearing down on Paris. Reynaud described France's desperate plight to Roosevelt on June 10: "For 6 days and 6 nights our divisions have been fighting without one hour of rest. . . . Today the enemy is almost at the gates of Paris."⁶

Bullitt wrote Roosevelt (May 31, 1940) on behalf of French Foreign Minister Paul Reynaud that the French were

most grateful for the presence of your fleet in the Pacific. Without firing a shot, it is keeping the war from spreading to the French and British Empires in the Far East. We hope it will stay there.

Reynaud requested that the U.S. Atlantic Fleet be sent to the Mediterranean. By keeping the enemy at bay there, "Your [Atlantic] fleet," he said, "can play exactly the same role in the Mediterranean" as the U.S. Fleet is now playing in the Pacific. "Incidentally," FDR wrote Reynaud in longhand, "further strong steps were taken yesterday by me in regard to the Mediterranean threat."⁷

Roosevelt again, on June 13, appeared to hold out hope to Reynaud: "[T]his Government is doing everything in its power to make available to the Allied Governments the material they so urgently require, and our efforts to do still more are being redoubled."⁸

⁶Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States: Diplomatic Papers, 1940* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office), vol. 1, p. 245.

⁷*The New York Times*, April 26, 1970, pp. 30–31.

⁸Department of State, *Diplomatic Papers, 1940*, p. 248.

When Churchill saw a copy of this secret message, he wired Roosevelt that he considered it “absolutely vital that this message should be published tomorrow, June 14, in order that it may play the decisive part in turning the course of world history.”⁹ Then Roosevelt must have realized that he had exceeded his authority in giving such an assurance to a belligerent nation. He wired Ambassador Kennedy in London:

My message to Reynaud not to be published in any circumstances. . . . It was in no sense intended to commit and does not commit this Government to the slightest military activities in support of the Allies. . . . There is of course no authority except in Congress to make any commitment of this nature.¹⁰

German troops entered Paris on June 14, 1940. On June 17 the French sued for peace. France and Germany signed an armistice five days later. France had fallen.

FDR MOVES TOWARD A THIRD TERM AS PRESIDENT

Since February 1940, FDR had been hinting to various friends and confidants that he might run for a third term, thus breaking with the precedent set by George Washington and followed by all succeeding U.S. presidents. He made no public announcement, but he had apparently settled the matter in his own mind by June.

Because of the international situation, the fall of France, and his unannounced intentions, FDR considered it important to have a united country. He decided to replace the two cabinet officers who had obstructed some of his foreign-policy initiatives and make his cabinet bipartisan. Roosevelt maneuvered the

⁹Joseph P. Lash, *Roosevelt and Churchill, 1939–1941: The Partnership That Saved the West* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1976), p.185.

¹⁰Department of State, *Diplomatic Papers, 1940*, p. 250.

resignations of Secretary of War Woodring and Navy Secretary Charles Edison,¹¹ who had opposed FDR's proposal to transfer to England some army planes and 50 destroyers¹² and offered their posts to two Republicans—Alfred M. Landon and Frank Knox, the 1936 Republican candidates for president and vice president. Landon turned down the offer, but Mr. Knox accepted, agreeing to serve as secretary of the Navy.

Roosevelt then looked for another prominent Republican who shared his views on foreign policy. He turned to Henry L. Stimson. As Hoover's Secretary of State in the 1920s, Stimson had long wanted the United States to take a firm stand against Japan's operations on the Asian mainland. His position, recently set forth in a talk to some of his fellow alumni at the Yale University commencement, was that the United States should reject so-called "neutrality" and take a stronger stand against Japan and Germany. The next day, June 18, he expressed similar ideas in a radio talk and his remarks were reported the following morning on page one of *The New York Times*. FDR phoned him that very day offering him the post of secretary of war.¹³ When Stimson asked if the president had seen the story in the *Times*, FDR said he had and, according to Stimson's diary, he agreed with it. Thus reassured, Stimson accepted the position. He was sworn in as Secretary of War on July 10, 1940.

These two new cabinet officers soon began to influence U.S. foreign policy; some Navy officials even dated our commitment to war from about July 1, 1940, when Roosevelt dropped Edison

¹¹Prior to the post-World War II reorganization of the government, when the military forces were combined under a single Department of Defense, War and Navy were separate departments, each with full cabinet ranking.

¹²James Farley, *Jim Farley's Story* (Irvine Calif.: Reprint Services Corp., 1948), pp. 241–43.

¹³Henry L. Stimson and McGeorge Bundy, *On Active Service in Peace and War* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1947/8), p. 324.

and Woodring and replaced them with two men more willing to follow Roosevelt's lead.

Stimson, the new secretary of war, began almost immediately to push for compulsory military training. His efforts were soon crowned with success. The Selective Service Act of 1940 was passed, and the president signed it into law on September 16.¹⁴

BRITISH SECRET AGENT IN THE U.S.

By the summer of 1940 England's plight was desperate. Germany controlled most of Europe; her planes were being readied for nightly bombings of Britain's cities; her U-boats were preparing to attack British shipping in the Atlantic on a massive scale.

In June the British sent to New York Sir William Stephenson who opened offices in New York in Radio City. Ostensibly a public-relations man, Stephenson was actually a British agent known as "Intrepid," a secret envoy of Churchill's and chief of British Security Coordination. Intrepid's express purpose was to get the United States into the war. FDR reportedly told Stephenson on one occasion, apparently he wasn't kidding, "I'm your biggest undercover agent."¹⁵

Stephenson met with Roosevelt in Washington. Secret arrangements were made for U.S.-British cooperation and for sharing of confidential information with the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). In retrospect, the foreign-policy decisions made in Washington from that time on seem to have been aimed relentlessly at taking the United States down the road to war on the side of England and against Germany and Japan.

¹⁴Ibid., pp. 345-48.

¹⁵William Stevenson, *A Man Called Intrepid: The Secret War* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1976), p. 127.

U.S. ENCOURAGES BRITISH MILITARY PURCHASES

Britain's and France's "cash and carry" purchases permitted under the 1939 Neutrality Act were a stimulus to U.S. producers of arms and other military supplies. Those huge sales had relieved much of the mass unemployment that had plagued this country since the Depression and that FDR's New Deal had failed to solve. But with the fall of France, only the British were still in a position to buy, and they were fast running out of cash. Roosevelt feared that if their purchases came to an end, mass unemployment would return. He was looking for ways to keep workers employed when the British could no longer pay cash.

On July 3 Lord Lothian, British ambassador to the United States, presented to the State Department a formal statement on the status of his country's finances. Britain was overcommitted. The United Kingdom would pay as long as she could, but

in all frankness . . . it will be utterly impossible for them [His Majesty's Government] to continue to do this for any indefinite period. . . . This was not a request for credit. The United States Ambassador in London had warned that such a request would be unwise.

Rather, it reflected British concern with their need to enter into long-term contracts so as to feel confident of their sources of supply. The British were reassured by Washington officials. "Lord Lothian was told informally ten days later 'not to worry too much' on the score of dollars."¹⁶

According to U.S. Treasury Secretary Morgenthau, the president personally charged him "with the responsibility of seeing that everything be done for them [the British] so that they could

¹⁶H. Duncan Hall, *North American Supply* (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office; Longmans, Green, 1955), p. 243.

not quit” fighting.¹⁷ Morgenthau asked the British for a detailed explanation of their finances. In mid-July a representative of the British treasury, Sir Frederick Phillips, was sent to Washington to report. The British were then placing orders for aircraft, and Morgenthau thought “[t]he scope of British purchasing plans . . . would probably leave England short of gold within six months.”¹⁸

On July 24, Morgenthau gave Arthur Purvis, head of the Anglo-French Purchasing Mission, bold advice.

You’ve talked about how the British would like 3,000 planes a month; say to [William S.] Knudsen [chairman of the Council of National Defense], you’re ready to order them. . . . Don’t worry about the authorization. . . . [Y]ou’ll get it all right. . . . You’ve got to bluff; stick to the 3,000 planes and put it up to Knudsen as though it were an offer you had been thinking about for weeks. . . . Tell Knudsen you want 3,000 planes and I’ll back you up.

As he recalled later, “The tactic worked.”¹⁹

On July 25, when reporters asked Morgenthau whether the British were able to pay for the planes they were ordering, he replied he was not worried about a lack of funds: “they have plenty of money—plenty.” To the British embassy this implied

ultimate financial assistance by the United States; no promise of any kind, however, had been given. . . . The [British] war chest was emptying faster than the Treasury had expected. . . . It was clear that only the United States Government was left; without its aid purchasing from the United States must cease.²⁰

¹⁷John Morton Blum, *From the Morgenthau Diaries: Years of Urgency, 1938–1941* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1965), pp. 171.

¹⁸*Ibid.*, p.170.

¹⁹*Ibid.*, p.175.

²⁰Hall, *North American Supply*, pp. 251–52.

Yet according to Morgenthau, the “present temper of the country [was] absolutely opposed” to making loans, or anything like that, to the British.

Phillips, the British Treasury officer sent to Washington to discuss the liquidation of England’s dollar assets, told Morgenthau the British planned to sell gold and securities to meet their deficit. That “would have two healthy effects,” Morgenthau said. “It would help to finance the purchase of necessary war materials, and it would demonstrate to the American public that England was doing everything possible in her own behalf.” And the demonstration, that Britain was doing everything she could, “might in time bring American opinion to support a loan or gift.”²¹

1940 was an election year in the United States. The British realized that “no aid could be given before the November presidential election.”²² Moreover, the British recognized that any commitments made should not become public knowledge. Nevertheless, the financial talks with Phillips in July were not too discouraging. They ended with an invitation for him “to come again in the autumn—after the election.”²³

Because the British were running out of dollars so fast, and because exposure of London’s plight might threaten negotiations with the United States, British treasury officials tried their best to follow U.S. advice. If the British were to expect financial assistance from the United States and if the critical U.S. legislation was to go through as speedily as possible after the election, the American people had to be persuaded that the British were doing their best to help themselves, that they were in fact liquidating all their assets and gold. “Throughout the summer [1940] the American Administration had been by no means backward in telling the British how they could get by until massive aid was

²¹Blum, *From the Morgenthau Diaries*, pp. 170–71.

²²Hall, *North American Supply*, p. 252.

²³*Ibid.*, p.250.

forthcoming.”²⁴ Spokesmen for the United States offered many creative and ingenious suggestions as to how the British might economize, scrape together as much gold as possible, liquidate assets in the United States, and even how they might borrow by offering the British-owned railroads in Argentina as collateral.

SECRET U.S.-BRITISH STAFF CONVERSATIONS

At the suggestion of the British ambassador, Lord Lothian, on August 6 FDR sent to London for staff conversations three U.S. military officers, representatives of the Navy, Army, and Air Force—Assistant Chief of Naval Operations, Rear Admiral Robert L. Ghormley; Chief of the Army’s War Plans Division, Major General George V. Strong; and Commanding General of the GHQ Air Force, Major General Delos C. Emmons. They sailed on what was supposed to have been a secret mission. But the news leaked out.

One outcome of their conference was an agreement in principle on “methods by which the sources of information at the disposal of the United States might be placed at the disposal of the British Government.”²⁵ By agreeing to share our information with the British, we were taking one more step away from neutrality. The British were anxious that such an “exchange of information should be placed upon a regular basis.” Lord Lothian later “revived the proposal.”²⁶

²⁴R.S. Sayers, *Financial Policy, 1939–1945* (London: Her Majesty’s Stationery Office, 1956), p. 369.

²⁵Mark Skinner Watson, *The War Department: Chief of Staff: Prewar Plans and Preparations* (Washington, D.C.: Department of the Army, Historical Division, 1950), p. 115.

²⁶*Ibid.*, p. 118.

TRADE TREATY WITH JAPAN ENDED

As the United States's commercial treaty with Japan had expired on January 26, 1940, Roosevelt was able, on July 5, 1941, to prohibit the export, without a license, of aircraft engines and strategic materials to Japan. Then on July 31, he embargoed aviation gas. From that time on, U.S.-Japanese relations deteriorated, as artful diplomacy alternated with concerted acts of harassment.

The international situation, both in Europe and in the Far East, was becoming increasingly ominous during the summer of 1940. Our ambassador to Japan, Joseph C. Grew, warned FDR that an oil embargo might cause Japan to institute sanctions against the United States, and that sanctions could lead to war. In spite of his warning, however, we banned the export of aviation gasoline to Japan. Japan resented this move. To compensate for the loss, she began to build planes that could operate on ordinary gasoline.

JAPANESE DIPLOMATIC CODE BROKEN

In August the U.S. Army and Navy communications experts succeeded in breaking the top Japanese diplomatic code. Japanese messages at that time were encoded on an extremely intricate kind of typewriter, actually two typewriters connected by wires, with complex coding wheels and switches. When a message was typed on one machine, the words were printed out mechanically on the other in code. Every few days the arrangement of coding wheels and switches was altered so as to change the cipher. To break this code it was necessary to build a machine that could do what the Japanese machine could do and that would give the same results as the Japanese machine would give whenever it was adjusted. And this task had to be accomplished without having any clues as to the nature of the encoding typewriter or of when and how the switches and coding wheels were altered to change

the cipher. It was thanks to a suggestion by Navy communications expert Captain L.F. Safford that one of his subordinates in the Army Signal Corps, who had been struggling with the problem for some time, was finally able to solve the puzzle.²⁷

After the Japanese diplomatic code was deciphered, the U.S. government was able to read all of Japan's diplomatic messages to and from Tokyo and her representatives in all the capitals of the world. We referred to Japan's diplomatic code as "Purple" and to the information derived from reading it as "MAGIC."

DESTROYERS-FOR-BASES DEAL

The first of Churchill's several requests in his May 15, 1940, letter was for "the loan of forty or fifty of your older destroyers."

²⁷Captain Safford spent many hours with this author, sharing insights gained from his pre-Pearl Harbor work in communications and security, and talking about his experiences and his knowledge of the Japanese intercepts. He played an important role, not only in deciphering "Purple" in 1940, but also, as we shall see, in the post-Pearl Harbor investigations.

According to David Kahn (*The Codebreakers: The Story of Secret Writing*, London: Weidenfield & Nicolson, 1967, pp. 10, 388, 503-04):

Commander Laurence F. Safford . . . founded the Navy's communication-intelligence organization. . . . One of his principal accomplishments before the outbreak of war was the establishment of the Mid-Pacific Strategic Direction-finder Net and of a similar net for the Atlantic, where it was to play a role of immense importance in the Battle of the Atlantic against the U-boats. . . . He [Safford] built up the communications intelligence organization into what later became OP-20-G and, by adding improvements of his own to Edward Hebern's rotor mechanisms, gradually developed cipher machines suitable for the Navy's requirements of speed, reliability, and security. . . . [H]e is the father of the Navy's present cryptologic organization. . . . Thanks to Commander Laurance F. Safford head of OP-20-G and father of the Navy's communications-intelligence organization, the United States had, upon its entrance into the war, an Atlantic arc of high-frequency direction-finders to exploit the U-boat garrulity.

FDR had replied that he was “not certain that it would be wise for that suggestion to be made to the Congress at this moment.” However, he talked with Chief of Naval Operations Stark about the possibility of making such a transfer.

Stark was a serious, well-rounded naval officer. His manner was genial and courteous, not at all gruff or rough. He had graduated from Annapolis in 1903 and had risen up through the ranks. He and Roosevelt had known each other since 1913, when FDR was assistant secretary of the Navy under President Woodrow Wilson. Stark had then been in command of a destroyer on which FDR used to travel in Maine waters when visiting his family’s summer home on Campobello, a small Canadian island just across the border from Maine. The two men had become good friends.

Roosevelt liked Stark personally and trusted him as a loyal aide. In 1939, FDR appointed him Chief of Naval Operations. FDR wrote Stark at that time that it would be

grand to have you here as C.N.O. . . . [Y]ou and I talk the same language. My only objection is that if we get into a war you will be a desk Admiral—but I cannot have you in two places at once!²⁸

Stark took over as CNO on August 1, 1939.²⁹

When the question of releasing U.S. destroyers to the British came up, Stark was opposed. A law prohibited the Navy from disposing of anything that the Chief of Naval Operations could not declare “unnecessary” for the defense of the country and Stark believed those destroyers were necessary; they were then

²⁸Franklin Delano Roosevelt, *F.D.R.: His Personal Letters, 1928–1945* (New York: Duell, Sloan and Pearce, 1950), vol. 2, p. 864.

²⁹Julius A. Furer, *Administration of the Navy Department in World War II* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1949), p. 46n.

being used by the Atlantic Patrol.³⁰ In spite of his geniality, Stark was no doormat that FDR could walk over at will. At times he spoke up frankly, and he must have on this occasion. FDR was apparently reluctant also but nevertheless he decided to acquiesce to Churchill's request and let Britain have the destroyers. He told Stark to make the arrangements.

Stark was depressed by FDR's orders. That evening, as Admiral Ben Moreell, chief of the Bureau of Yards and Docks, was leaving his office for home, he just happened to stick his head in Stark's office to say good night. He noticed that Stark appeared downcast and went in to cheer him up. Stark unburdened himself to Moreell. The president had just asked him to give some of the United States's over-age destroyers to England. Stark felt that, in ordering him to arrange the transfer, FDR was asking him to do something illegal, thus placing him in a hopeless position.³¹

The final deal agreed upon exchanged 50 U.S. destroyers for 99-year leases on bases on the Grand Banks (Newfoundland), Bermuda, the Bahamas, in the Caribbean (Jamaica, St. Lucia, Trinidad, and Antigua), and in British Guiana.³² Stark reasoned and then "certified that the exchange . . . would strengthen the total defense of the United States, and that by this standard

³⁰Patrick Abbazia, *Mr. Roosevelt's Navy: The Private War of the Atlantic Fleet, 1939-1942* (Annapolis, Md.: Naval Institute Press, 1975), pp. 92-95.

³¹This high-handed disregard for legal procedure on the part of FDR was not an isolated incident. Stark mentioned a similar incident respecting a dry dock at Pearl Harbor (interview with author, December 10, 1962). This was long before December 1941. Moreell, whose Bureau of Yards and Docks would be constructing the dry dock, asked for written authorization. When the president refused to authorize the transaction in writing, Stark went out on a limb and provided it himself. Moreell completed the dock ten months ahead of schedule, some ten days before the Japanese attack. According to Furer (*Administration of the Navy Department in World War II*, p. 426) this battleship dry dock proved "invaluable in repairing damaged ships after the attack."

³²Walter Karig, *Battle Report: The Atlantic War* (New York: Farrar & Rinehart, 1943), p. 25.

these destroyers were not essential to our defense. We needed the destroyers; we needed the bases more.”³³

The “destroyers for bases” executive agreement was announced on September 3 by Roosevelt. This deal, he said, had been worked out

in view of the friendly and sympathetic interest of His Majesty’s Government in the United Kingdom in the national security of the United States and their desire to strengthen the ability of the United States to cooperate effectively with the other nations of the Americas in defence of the Western Hemisphere . . . in view of the desire of the United States to acquire additional air and naval bases in the Caribbean and in British Guiana.³⁴

The first contingent of eight U.S. destroyers, renovated and outfitted, was turned over to the British in Halifax on September 9. Little or no publicity accompanied the exchange. The men who took these ships to Nova Scotia were told that “under no circumstances were the American destroyermen to permit themselves to be photographed in the company of British personnel.” The destroyers were soon plying the North Atlantic as escorts to British convoys. The last installment of ten destroyers was handed over on November 26.³⁵

³³Ibid., p. 15.

³⁴54 Stat Pt. 2, 2405, quoted in U.S. House Committee on Foreign Affairs, *Events Leading up to World War II: Chronological History of Certain Major International Events Leading up to and During World War II with the Ostensible Reasons Advanced for their Occurrence, 1931–1944*, 78th Cong., 2nd sess., 1944, p. 255; U.S. Department of Navy, Naval History Division, Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, *United States Naval Chronology, World War II* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1955), p. 5. See also Department of State, *Peace and War: United States Foreign Policy, 1931–1941* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1943), pp. 564–65.

³⁵Abbazia, *Mr. Roosevelt’s Navy*, pp. 98–102.

On November 1 the Atlantic Squadron of the “unneutral” U.S. Neutrality Patrol became known as the “Patrol Force” of the newly reorganized Atlantic Fleet.

RETAINING THE FLEET AT PEARL HARBOR

The U.S. Fleet, which had left the west coast on April 2, 1940, for maneuvers, had been ordered in May to stay in Hawaii. The commander-in-chief, Admiral Richardson, had objected strenuously, but to no avail. The fleet remained in Hawaii. In July Richardson went to Washington to present to his superiors in person the reasons why he believed the Fleet should not be retained at Pearl Harbor. He also sought answers to several questions—why the fleet was being retained there, how long it was expected to stay there, and what efforts were being made to adequately man the fleet.

Richardson explained the lack of security at Pearl Harbor. He described the congestion and the difficulty of operating ships in and out of its narrow entrance. He cited the inadequate facilities for fleet services, training, recreation, and housing. He pointed out also that the prolonged and indefinite stay away from the mainland during peacetime was bad for the morale of the men. But perhaps even more important than all these reasons was the fact that the fleet at Pearl Harbor was not in a state of preparedness. If we went to war, it would have to return to the west coast to be outfitted, and that could involve a net loss of time.³⁶

Richardson met and talked with the president, secretaries of state (Hull) and Navy (Knox), Chief of Naval Operations (Stark), Chief of the Bureau of Navigation (Chester W. Nimitz), the Army Chief of Staff (George C. Marshall), state department officials, and several members of Congress. His arguments as to why the fleet should not be kept in Hawaii seemed to fall on deaf ears;

³⁶Richardson, *On the Treadmill*, pp. 307–18, 383–95.

he didn't receive what he considered satisfactory answers to his questions. He testified later that one of Stimson's anti-Japanese appointees in the State Department, Stanley Hornbeck, appeared to be "exercising a greater influence over the disposition of the Fleet than I was."³⁷

Richardson was called back to Washington a second time in October, at the request of the new Secretary of the Navy, Knox. When they met, the talk turned to the possibility of war in the Pacific. The British were planning to reopen the Burma Road shortly so as to be able to supply the Chinese forces from the south. Roosevelt was concerned about Japan's possible reaction. "In the event the Japanese took drastic action, he, the president, was considering shutting off all trade between Japan and the Americas, and to this end was considering establishing a patrol of light ships in two lines" west of Hawaii across the Pacific. Richardson asked Knox "whether the president was considering a declaration of war. The Secretary stated that the president hadn't said, and that all he, Knox, knew was what he was told." Richardson was "amazed" at this proposal; he said "the fleet was not prepared to put such a plan into effect, nor for the war which would certainly result from such a course of action."³⁸

Richardson also visited the president. With FDR he went over the personnel situation, pointing out the need for more enlisted men. Roosevelt believed that "men in mechanical trades in civil life could be quickly inducted and made adequate sailor men, if their services were suddenly required." Richardson explained to FDR that "a seasick garage mechanic would be of little use at sea, and that it took time for most young men to get their sea legs."³⁹

³⁷79th Cong., 1st sess. Joint (Congressional) Committee on the Investigation of the Pearl Harbor Attack. *Pearl Harbor Attack*, 39 vols. (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1946), part 1, p. 297.

³⁸Richardson, *On the Treadmill*, pp. 399–400.

³⁹*Ibid.*, p. 434.

Richardson then took up the question of returning the Fleet, except for a Hawaiian detachment, to the Pacific coast for training and outfitting. "The president stated that the fleet was retained in the Hawaiian area in order to exercise a restraining influence on the actions of Japan." Admiral Richardson doubted it would have that effect, for the Japanese military government knew full well that the U.S. Fleet in Hawaii was undermanned and unprepared for war. However, the president insisted: "Despite what you believe, I know that the presence of the fleet in the Hawaiian area, has had and is now having, a restraining influence on the actions of Japan."⁴⁰

Richardson

asked the president if we were going to enter the war. He replied that if the Japanese attacked Thailand, or the Kra Peninsula [the southeast Asian peninsula at the southern tip of which Singapore is located], or the Dutch East Indies we would not enter the war, that if they even attacked the Philippines he doubted whether we would enter the war, but that they could not always avoid making mistakes and that as the war continued and the area of operations expanded sooner or later they would make a mistake and we would enter the war.⁴¹

"The discussion [with the president] waxed hot and heavy." In Richardson's words,

[I] could not help but detect that re-election political considerations, rather than long-range military considerations, were the controlling factor in the president's thinking. It was less than a month before the 1940 Presidential Election, and the president was reluctant to make any commitment to increase the number of men in the Navy, which, due to the location of naval ships

⁴⁰Ibid., pp. 425, 427.

⁴¹Ibid., p. 427; Richardson's testimony before the Joint Congressional Committee in 1945, as related in his book.

in foreign waters, would seem to run counter to his third-term campaign statements. . . .

Finally, when it became fully apparent that he had no intention of accepting my recommendations [to permit the Fleet to return to the west coast], I [Richardson] said to him very deliberately: "Mr. President, I feel that I must tell you that the senior officers in the Navy do not have the trust and confidence in the civilian leadership of this country that is essential for the successful prosecution of a war in the Pacific."

The president, with a look of pained surprise on his face, said: "Joe, you just don't understand that this is an election year and there are certain things that can't be done, no matter what, until the election is over and won."⁴²

FINANCING OF BRITISH ARMS PURCHASES ASSURED

The president was also seriously concerned at this time with how the British were to finance their arms purchases. The British treasury was fast being depleted. There was a "growing sense of urgency in London."⁴³ It was difficult for them to know how to proceed. "Earlier in the year the president had shown an interest in regard to British assets in Latin America, including the Argentine Railways. . . . He came back to it again in mid-October in a talk with the British Ambassador. He thought that by this means the financial crisis might be postponed for a month or two."⁴⁴

On October 14 Lord Lothian, the British ambassador, asked Roosevelt and Morgenthau when British treasury representative Phillips might return to continue discussions about Britain's

⁴²Ibid., pp. 434–35.

⁴³Hall, *North American Supply*, p. 253.

⁴⁴Ibid., p. 249.

financial resources. Lothian was told it would have to wait until after the election.⁴⁵ Shortly thereafter he returned to England for a visit.

The impasse [with respect to Britain's financial crisis] was disguised by the desires and explorations, of both sides, to find some way out of the maze. The Ambassador on his return from London nine weeks later, reported that the [U.S.] Administration was "still discussing ingenious ways of giving us assistance."⁴⁶

The British encountered continued vacillation in their dealings with the United States.

Time after time the British side was told to go ahead with orders, only to find the way blocked by insuperable difficulties. On 20th October Purvis [Britain's purchasing agent in Washington] reported that in week-end talks with Secretary Morgenthau at the latter's home he had received "a complete green light" for the immediate ordering of 9,000 aircraft. . . . In the next few days Purvis and [Sir Walter] Layton were told to go ahead with their orders on the assumption that the Reconstruction Finance Corporation would pay for the capital cost. An agreement to this effect was worked out with the War Department. The admonitions to go ahead continued at intervals through December.⁴⁷

FDR WINDS UP HIS ELECTION CAMPAIGN

As the election campaign continued, Roosevelt spoke to the people more than once about his determination to keep the United States out of the war. For example, in Chicago on September 11:

⁴⁵Ibid., p. 250.

⁴⁶Ibid., p. 253.

⁴⁷Ibid., p. 254.

I hate war, now more than ever. I have one supreme determination—to do all that I can to keep war away from these shores for all time. I stand, with my party, and outside of my party as president of all the people, on the [Democratic Party] platform, the wording that was adopted in Chicago less than two months ago. It said:

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.⁴⁸

While Roosevelt and his administration were reassuring the British off and on of U.S. assistance in their war against Germany, he was reassuring the American voters of our continued neutrality. On October 23, he spoke in Philadelphia:⁴⁹

To Republicans and Democrats, to every man, woman and child in the nation I say this: Your president and your Secretary of State are following the road to peace.

We are arming ourselves not for any foreign war.

We are arming ourselves not for any purpose of conquest or intervention in foreign disputes. I repeat again that I stand on the Platform of our Party. . . .

It is for peace that I have labored: and it is for peace that I shall labor all the days of my life.

⁴⁸Franklin Delano Roosevelt, *The Public Papers and Addresses of Franklin Delano Roosevelt*, vol. 1: *The Genesis of the New Deal, 1928–1932* (New York: Random House, 1940), p. 313; Charles A. Beard, *American Foreign Policy in the Making: 1932–1940* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1946), pp. 313–14.

⁴⁹Roosevelt, *Public Papers*, 1940, pp. 488ff. Partial quote in Franklin Delano Roosevelt, *Quotations from Franklin Delano Roosevelt, July 1940–August 1, 1944*, Republican National Committee, September 1944, p. 50. See also Beard, *American Foreign Policy in the Making*, pp. 314–15.

Then on October 30, FDR made a similar pledge to the voters in Boston:⁵⁰

And while I am talking to you mothers and fathers, I give you one more assurance.

I have said this before, but I shall say it again and again and again:

Your boys are not going to be sent into any foreign wars.

They are going into training to form a force so strong that, by its very existence, it will keep the threat of war from our shores.

The purpose of our defense is defense.

Roosevelt wound up his campaign with talks on Saturday evening, November 2, in Buffalo, New York, and on Sunday, November 3, in Cleveland, Ohio. In Buffalo, he pledged, "Your president says this country is not going to war."⁵¹ And in his final address of the campaign, on November 3, in Cleveland, he said:⁵²

The first purpose of our foreign policy is to keep our country out of war. . . . And through it all [my past record] there have been two thoughts uppermost in my mind—to preserve peace in our land; and to make the forces of democracy work for the benefit of the common people of America.

⁵⁰Roosevelt, *Public Papers, 1928–1932*, p. 517; Beard, *American Foreign Policy in the Making*, p. 316.

⁵¹Roosevelt, *Public Papers, 1928–1932*, pp. 543ff.; Beard, *American Foreign Policy in the Making*, p. 317.

⁵²Roosevelt, *Public Papers, 1928–1932*, pp. 546ff.; Beard, *American Foreign Policy in the Making*, p. 318.

Taking the side of one of two combatants in a conflict always incurs risk. For months, FDR and his close associates had been secretly encouraging the British to expect continued and increased U.S. support in their struggle against Germany. At the same time, they had been reassuring the American people they were doing everything that could be done to keep the United States neutral and at peace.

These contradictory pronouncements were certainly intentional. Some time later Ambassador Bullitt, a long-time intimate and adviser of Roosevelt's, as much as admitted that this equivocation had been deliberate. Roosevelt's "White House advisers," Bullitt wrote "persuaded him that if he told the truth he would lose the 1940 election. The president knew that war was coming to the American people. . . . This was a low-water mark in presidential morality," Bullitt said, "but the president won the election."⁵³

⁵³William C. Bullitt, "How We Won the War and Lost the Peace," 2 parts. *Life* (August 30, 1948), pp. 83–97; (September 6, 1948), pp. 86–103.

3.

U.S. Ties to Britain Strengthened

FDR'S RE-ELECTION A VICTORY FOR BRITAIN

On November 5, 1940, President Roosevelt won an unprecedented third term, defeating Republican Wendell Willkie. However, he did not win by as large a margin as in 1936 over Republican Alfred Landon. With the election over and won, FDR no longer needed to exercise the same caution with respect to his dealings with England. Just two days after his re-election he met with British Purchasing Agent Purvis to discuss more military supplies for England. Roosevelt proposed allocating military supplies to Britain and Canada on a “fifty-fifty basis.” When the subject of ships came up, FDR mentioned “leasing supplies to the Allies; and he said nothing about payment.”¹

¹H. Duncan Hall, *North American Supply* (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office; Longmans, Green, 1955), pp. 256–57.

On November 8 the SS *City of Rayville* became the first U.S. merchant vessel to be sunk in World War II.² It hit a mine laid by a German raider south of Australia in the Bass Strait. FDR did nothing about it.

Meanwhile, the U.S. military was continuing to plan for war. On November 4 Chief of Naval Operations Stark drafted a new estimate of the world situation for presentation to the secretary of the Navy. In this draft, presented as a formal memorandum on November 12, Stark considered four possible plans for action:

- (A) limiting American activity to [western] hemisphere defense;
- (B) directing primary attention to Japan, and secondary attention to the Atlantic;
- (C) directing equivalent pressure in both theaters;
- (D) conducting a strong offensive in the Atlantic, and a defensive [one] in the Pacific.

Stark then argued for his fourth plan, Plan D or “Plan Dog” as it was known in service lingo.³

U.S. AID TO THE BRITISH

[As] a preliminary to possible entry of the United States into the conflict he [Stark] recommended that “the United States Army and Navy at once undertake secret staff talks on technical matters” with the British in London, the Canadians in Washington . . . and the British and Dutch in Singapore and Batavia, “to reach agreement and lay down plans for promoting unity of allied effort should the United States find it necessary to enter the war.”⁴

²U.S. Department of Navy, Naval History Division, Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, *United States Naval Chronology, World War II* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1955), p. 6.

³Mark Skinner Watson, *The War Department: Chief of Staff: Prewar Plans and Preparations* (Washington, D.C.: Department of the Army, Historical Division, 1950), p. 119.

⁴Ibid.

British Ambassador Lord Lothian had been advised in October that his discussions with the United States about further supplies for England would have to wait until after the election. On returning to Washington on November 23, he spoke with newsmen. "Well, boys," he remarked, "Britain's broke; it's your money we want."⁵ FDR, Morgenthau, and Churchill all chided him for this "calculated indiscretion."⁶ In his defense, Lord Lothian reported to London that

American public opinion . . . was still "saturated with illusions . . . that we have vast resources available that we have not yet disclosed . . . and that we ought to empty this vast hypothetical barrel before we ask for assistance." It was this fact, he explained, which had induced him to make his statement. It is clear that the exhaustion of funds could hardly have been concealed much longer.⁷

A week after that, Sir Walter Layton, director-general of programs in the British ministry of supply, submitted to Treasury Secretary Morgenthau a paper headed "Initial Orders to be placed for Output." The British document cited a figure of \$2,062 million plus \$699 million for "Capital Investment necessary for creating New Productive Capacity."⁸ Morgenthau immediately took this document to FDR and asked for instructions. Thus, Roosevelt was finally forced to face up to the question, which he had successfully avoided until then, of financing Britain's urgent purchases.

⁵Francis L. Loewenheim, Harold D. Langley, and Manfred Jonas, eds. *Roosevelt and Churchill: Their Secret Wartime Correspondence* (New York: E.P. Dutton, 1975), p. 125n.

⁶Joseph P. Lash, *Roosevelt and Churchill, 1939–1941: The Partnership That Saved the West* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1976), p. 261.

⁷Hall, *North American Supply*, p. 258.

⁸*Ibid.*, p. 259.

Roosevelt sailed aboard the *Tuscaloosa* on a post-election cruise for rest and reflection.⁹ While at sea, he received a 4,000-word plea from Churchill for American naval escorts in the Atlantic, 2,000 aircraft per month, and much, much more. Churchill stated further that “orders already placed or under negotiation . . . many times exceed the total exchange resources remaining at the disposal of Great Britain. The moment approaches when we shall no longer be able to pay cash.”¹⁰ The ball was clearly in FDR’s court.

Stephenson, the British agent “Intrepid,” described the U.S.-British relationship at the end of 1940 as “a common-law alliance.”¹¹ In other words, the United States and Britain were “bound” in a relationship that did not enjoy the blessing or sanction of law, a relationship that existed in spite of the officially enacted U.S. Neutrality Act and in spite of Roosevelt’s pledges to the people of the United States that he would not permit the nation to become involved in “entangling foreign alliances” or “intervention in foreign disputes.”

LEND-LEASE FOR PEACE

It was apparent that the British could no longer operate on a cash-and-carry basis. FDR had been trying for some time to devise a new arrangement to help England. Finally, he hit on what became known as “lend-lease.” On returning from his cruise, he announced at a press conference a new aid-to-Britain program. In his folksy manner, he explained:

⁹Lash, *Roosevelt and Churchill, 1939–1941*, pp. 261–62.

¹⁰Loewenheim, et al., *Roosevelt and Churchill: Their Secret Wartime Correspondence*, p. 125.

¹¹William Stevenson, *A Man Called Intrepid: The Secret War* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1976), p. 155.

[I]f my neighbor's house catches fire . . . and I am watering the grass in my backyard, and I don't pass my garden hose over the fence to my neighbor, I am a fool. How do you think the country and the Congress would react if I should put aid to the British in the form of lending them my garden hose?¹²

This new lend-lease program was intended to help Britain by tapping the wealth of U.S. taxpayers.

A few days after FDR proposed his scheme, the German government charged that U.S. aid to the United Kingdom was "moral aggression."¹³

During his December 29 "fireside chat" on the radio, Roosevelt answered Hitler's charge:

The Nazi masters of Germany have made it clear that they intend not only to dominate all life and thought in their own country but also to enslave the whole of Europe, and then to use the resources of Europe to dominate the rest of the world.

The intentions of the United States were completely honorable and peaceful, he said:

There is no demand for sending an American Expeditionary Force outside our own borders. There is no intention by any member of your Government to send such a force. You can, therefore, nail any talk about sending armies to Europe as deliberate untruth. Our national policy is not directed toward war. Its sole purpose is to keep war away from our country and our people. . . . We must be the great arsenal of democracy. For

¹²William C. Bullitt, "How We Won the War and Lost the Peace." 2 parts. *Life* (August 30, 1948), pp. 83–97; (September 6, 1948), pp. 86–103. See also Lash, *Roosevelt and Churchill, 1939–1941*, p. 263.

¹³U.S. House Committee on Foreign Affairs. *Events Leading up to World War II: Chronological History of Certain Major International Events Leading up to and During World War II with the Ostensible Reasons Advanced for their Occurrence, 1931–1944*, 78th Cong., 2nd sess., 1944, pp. 1, 5.

us this is an emergency as serious as war itself. We must apply ourselves to our task with the same resolution, the same sense of urgency, the same spirit of patriotism and sacrifice, as we would show were we at war.¹⁴

FDR sent his proposal for lend-lease to Congress early in 1941. As noted *New York Times* correspondent Arthur Krock recalled,

Congress and the public were assured, on the highest Executive word, that the measure was a means to keep the United States from becoming involved abroad, on land, sea and in the air, in World War II.

For Krock, this constituted “gross deception.”

[I]t was obvious—and so pointed out repeatedly at the time that militant reaction by the Central Powers and Japan was a certainty; hence the Lend-Lease Act would inevitably change the position of the United States from a disguised cobelligerent—a status previously reached by presidential “Executive Orders”—to an active one.¹⁵

Morgenthau testified for lend-lease, saying that its purpose was to save the British fleet as a bulwark in the Atlantic.¹⁶ The House passed the bill on February 8, the Senate on March 8, and the president signed it into law on March 11, 1941.

¹⁴Department of State, *Peace and War: United States Foreign Policy, 1931–1941* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1943), pp. 599–607.

¹⁵Arthur Krock, *The Consent of the Governed, and Other Deceits* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1971), p. 40.

¹⁶John Morton Blum, *From the Morgenthau Diaries: Years of Urgency, 1938–1941* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1965), pp. 221ff.

MEANWHILE IN THE FAR EAST

The United States put \$100 million at the disposal of Chiang and promised him a supply of up-to-date fighter aircraft.¹⁷ Then, in January 1941, Britain decided to enter into closer relations with Chiang so that, if war came, Chiang would be willing and able to help Britain in Burma and Hong Kong.¹⁸ Moreover, former U.S. Army Air Corps Colonel Claire Chennault was openly training his Flying Tigers in Burma for air battle with the Japanese. And behind the scenes, FDR was supportive. On April 15, 1941, he signed an

unpublicized executive order authorizing Reserve officers and enlisted men to resign from the Army Air Corps, the Naval and Marine Air services so they could join Chennault's American Volunteer Group. Since the U.S. was not at war with Japan and could not deal openly with China, all arrangements had to be made with an unofficial agency to ensure secrecy. The Central Aircraft Manufacturing Company of China was set up and authorized to hire a hundred American pilots and several hundred ground crewmen to operate, service and manufacture aircraft in China.¹⁹

As the British and Dutch were building up their defenses in the Far East, the Japanese were pursuing their own program. They were concerned not only with the advance of their forces southward, obtaining supplies of oil, but also with preventing the

¹⁷S. Woodburn Kirby, *The War Against Japan*, vol. 1: *The Loss of Singapore* (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1957), p. 38.

¹⁸*Ibid.*, pp. 53–54.

¹⁹John Toland, *Infamy: Pearl Harbor and Its Aftermath* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1982). (1983 paperback published by Berkley Publishing, New York, includes "Postscript" dated August 21, 1982, p. 127n.)

Communists from harassing their northern border.²⁰ On April 13, 1941, Japan signed a “neutrality pact” with Russia to safeguard her position in the north and to make it possible for her to pursue her plans southward.²¹

U.S. WAR PLANNING WITH BRITAIN

Secret U.S.-British staff conversations, held in Washington from January 29 to March 27, 1941, led to an agreement on joint strategy. (American officials had already met with British counterparts in London in January 1938, before the war in Europe began, and again in August 1940, after England was at war with Germany.) The British sent naval and military officers as envoys, attired in civilian dress to conceal the true nature of their mission. The stated purpose of these secret ABC meetings (American-British-Conversations) was “To coordinate, on broad lines, plans for the employment of the forces of the Associated Powers” and “To reach agreements concerning the methods and nature of Military Cooperation between the two nations.” The agreements were to cover the “principal areas of responsibility,” and “the major lines of Military strategy to be pursued by both nations.”²²

²⁰The Japanese

“had four ends in view: to secure their Manchurian frontier with the Soviet Union, thus enabling them to move southwards without having to look over their shoulders; to obtain oil supplies and concessions from the Netherlands East Indies by means other than the use of force, thus making themselves less dependent on the United States; to obtain complete control of Indo-China, so as to be able to occupy, at an appropriate moment, Siamese territory as a base from which to mount an attack on Malaya, and to prevent the United States either from entering the war on the side of Britain or interfering with their own plans for their southward advance.” (Kirby, *The War Against Japan*, p. 59)

²¹Ibid., p. 61.

²²79th Cong., 1st sess. Joint (Congressional) Committee on the Investigation of the Pearl Harbor Attack. *Pearl Harbor Attack*, 39 vols. (Washington, D.C.:

The agreement arrived at in Washington, known as ABC-1, supplanted the one developed in London three years earlier (January 1938) and outlined procedures to be followed if and when the United States entered the war. It provided that "If Japan does enter the war, the Military strategy in the Far East will be defensive." The United States was not to increase her present military strength in the Far East, although she would "employ the United States Pacific Fleet offensively in the manner best calculated to weaken Japanese economic power, and to support the defense of the Malay barrier²³ by diverting Japanese strength away from Malaysia." Also according to the agreement, the United States would so "augment its forces in the Atlantic and Mediterranean areas that the British Commonwealth will be in a position to release the necessary forces for the Far East."²⁴

Admiral Richmond Kelly Turner, chief of the Navy's war plans division, participated in these secret conversations. According to him, the ensuing understanding was

U.S. Government Printing Office, 1946), part 15, p. 1488. See also part 15, pp. 1491-92:

It was agreed at these meetings that: "If Japan does enter the war, the Military strategy in the Far East will be defensive. The United States does not intend to add to its present Military strength in the Far East but will employ the United States Pacific Fleet offensively in the manner best calculated to weaken Japanese economic power, and to support the defense of the Malay barrier by diverting Japanese strength away from Malaysia. The United States intends so to augment its forces in the Atlantic and Mediterranean areas that the British Commonwealth will be in a position to release the necessary forces for the Far East.

²³The Malay barrier was the string of islands, stretching west from Bathurst Island, just off the northern coast of central Australia, through New Guinea, Borneo, Java, and Sumatra, to Singapore on the Malay Peninsula. See Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 6, p. 2864.

²⁴Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 15, pp. 1485-550.

a world-wide agreement, covering all areas, land, sea, and air, of the entire world in which it was conceived that the British Commonwealth and the United States might be jointly engaged in action against any enemy. On the conclusion of that agreement with the British, the WPL-46 [U.S. Navy war plan] was prepared after a great many talks with the Army and was approved by the Joint Board, the Secretaries of War and Navy, and by the President. The Navy issued their form of that war plan in May of 1941, and it is my recollection the Army form of it was issued about August.²⁵

Turner wrote further,

The plan contemplated a major effort on the part of both the principal associated Powers against Germany, initially. It was felt in the Navy Department, that there might be a possibility of war with Japan without the involvement of Germany, but at some length and over a considerable period, this matter was discussed and it was determined that in such a case the United States would, if possible, initiate efforts to bring Germany into the war against us in order that we would be enabled to give strong support to the United Kingdom in Europe.²⁶

Thus Turner reaffirmed that the primary goal of the U.S.-British agreement was to help England and to target Germany.

In complete disregard of the Neutrality Act officially in force, these conversations put the United States definitely in Britain's camp in her war against Germany.

²⁵Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 26, p. 264; Turner testimony at Hart Inquiry; part 15, p. 1485. Pencilled notation on United States-British Staff Conversations Report cover page: Secretary of the Navy Knox on May 28, 1941, and Secretary of War Stimson on June 2, 1941.

²⁶Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 26, pp. 264–65; Turner testimony before Hart Inquiry.

THE UNDECLARED BATTLE OF THE ATLANTIC

The Germans had invaded and occupied Denmark on April 9, 1940. Exactly one year later the United States assumed responsibility for the defense of Greenland, then Danish territory. According to the April 9, 1941 agreement between the United States and Denmark, the defense of Greenland “against attack by a non-American power is essential to the preservation of the peace and security of the American Continent.”²⁷

FDR wrote Churchill on April 11 that he intended to have the United States lend still more active support to the hard-pressed British in the Atlantic. To do this,

We will want in great secrecy notification of movements of convoys so our patrol units can seek out any ships or planes of aggressor nations. . . . We will immediately make public to you position [of] aggressor ships or planes when located in our patrol area.²⁸

That same day, the first U.S. shot was fired against a German target in World War II, although apparently without hitting its mark. The U.S. destroyer *Niblack* had been en route from Halifax to Iceland, where she was to explore the convoying of ships to Iceland, which lay within the German submarine war zone. She responded to an SOS call from a Dutch freighter that was sinking after having been torpedoed by a German sub. *Niblack* picked up survivors. When soundings indicated a submarine in the area, *Niblack* dropped three depth charges, but no wreckage was seen.²⁹ The president was reportedly furious when an account of this incident appeared in the press.

²⁷Department of State, *Peace and War*, p. 642; U.S. Congress, *Events*, p. 277.

²⁸Loewenheim, et al., *Roosevelt and Churchill: Their Secret Wartime Correspondence*, p. 137.

²⁹Patrick Abbazia, *Mr. Roosevelt's Navy: The Private War of the Atlantic Fleet, 1939–1942* (Annapolis, Md.: Naval Institute Press, 1975), pp. 191–96.

On the other side of the Atlantic, Adolf Hitler was taking great pains to avoid a clash with the United States. On April 25 he cautioned his naval forces that “all incidents with American ships be avoided.” The commander-in-chief of his navy, Admiral Erich Raeder, was pushing for aggressive action against the United States. Hitler answered Raeder at a conference on May 22, ordering that “Weapons are not to be used. Even if American vessels conduct themselves in a definitely unneutral manner. . . . Weapons are to be used *only if US ships fire the first shot.*”³⁰

In late April, Roosevelt extended the Atlantic patrol’s area of surveillance from 200 to 300 miles east of our shores, to the western border of the German submarine war zone or 26 degrees west longitude, whichever was farther west,³¹ and south to 20 degrees south latitude.³² This encompassed the vast expanse of the Atlantic between Bermuda and the Azores. Arrangements were also set in motion to strengthen the Atlantic Fleet at the expense of the Pacific Fleet, by transferring a carrier and five destroyers from Pearl Harbor to the Atlantic.

By May, U.S. Navy personnel were flying regularly as pilot “advisers” aboard some of the planes the British had received through lend-lease. On May 26 one of these “advisers,” ensign Leonard B. Smith, aboard a U.S.-manufactured PBY (Catalina Patrol Bomber) over the Atlantic, about 690 miles west of Brest (France), spotted the *Bismarck*, a huge German battleship. Although only fairly recently commissioned, the *Bismarck* was menacing British shipping and had already sunk the illustrious British battle cruiser *Hood*. When the sighting was broadcast, other American PBYs with U.S. personnel aboard, as well as some ten or twelve British warships, joined the chase. The *Bismarck* tried desperately to make port, but failed. She was finally sunk

³⁰Ibid., pp. 164, 176.

³¹Ibid., p. 154.

³²Department of Navy, *United States Naval Chronology, World War II*, p. 26.

on May 27, after enduring a horrendous bombing; over 2,000 officers and crew went down with the ship.³³

The first U.S. ship to be torpedoed by a German submarine was a freighter, the *Robin Moor*, sunk in the South Atlantic on May 21. News of the event reached the world only when survivors finally landed in Brazil on June 11. Roosevelt was outraged. But, although some British officials in Washington, as well as the President's close friend and adviser, Harry Hopkins, wished for decisive U.S. retaliation, FDR did no more than remonstrate.³⁴

On June 6 Roosevelt authorized the seizure of all idle foreign merchant ships in our ports "for urgent needs of commerce and national defense."³⁵ German, Italian, and Danish ships had already been taken into "protective custody" on March 30 for the duration of the emergency.

Then on June 14 Roosevelt "ordered Axis funds in the United States frozen." Two days later the United States "requested withdrawal of German and Italian consular staffs by July 10," charging them with having "engaged in activities wholly outside the scope of their legitimate duties."³⁶

FDR had long since given up all pretense of applying the Neutrality Act equally to all belligerents. In his view, Britain had enjoyed special status from the very beginning of the war. Then after Germany attacked Russia on June 21, 1941, FDR refrained as well from applying the neutrality law to the Soviet Union. He released Russian credits and promised Stalin lend-lease aid. By these actions, Roosevelt was further committing this country to the British cause and against Germany. At the same time that he

³³Abbazia, *Mr. Roosevelt's Navy*, pp. 184–89.

³⁴L. Langer and S. Everett Gleason, *The Undeclared War* (London: Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1953), pp. 519–20.

³⁵Department of Navy, *United States Naval Chronology, World War II*, p. 9. See also U.S. Congress, *Events*, p. 283.

³⁶*Ibid.* p. 284.

was allying the United States with the communist Soviet Union, he was also lending support to the communists on the opposite side of the world—in China. By cooling down the conversations the U.S. government had been holding with capitalistically oriented Japan, long engaged in a struggle against the Soviet Union in Asia, Roosevelt was taking the side of the communists and thus placing the United States directly in opposition to Japan.

On July 1 the Roosevelt administration exchanged letters with Iceland, pointing out that it was

imperative that the integrity and independence of Iceland should be preserved because of the fact that any occupation of Iceland by a power whose only too clearly apparent plans for world conquest included the domination of the peoples of the New World would at once directly menace the security of the entire Western Hemisphere.

On July 7, the United States occupied Iceland.³⁷ “The Icelanders accepted the occupation fatalistically as a ‘necessary evil’.”³⁸

THE U.S. BEGINS ESCORTING BRITISH SHIPS

The desirability of instigating escort operations to help safeguard U.S. and British ships plying the Atlantic was seriously discussed during the early months of 1941. Stark had pressed for escorts in June, so as “not to let England fall.” He proposed at one time to coordinate the departure of U.S. ships and British convoys from the vicinity of Halifax. Then on July 2 the president approved the Atlantic Fleet’s plan for escort operations. The occupation of Iceland and the need to assure the arrival there of supplies and provisions provided the immediate excuse. By late

³⁷Ibid., p. 288; Department of State, *Peace and War*, pp. 686–87.

³⁸Abbazia, *Mr. Roosevelt’s Navy*, p. 201.

July the decision had been made to escort,³⁹ and on August 20, U.S. ships actually began escorting American and British merchant ships in the North Atlantic to and from Iceland.⁴⁰

The decision to escort was a policy decision, in line with that of continuing to support Britain and to oppose Germany. Historian Patrick Abbazia described it as

the logical conclusion of . . . the President's previous policy, his determination to prevent the Germans from winning the Battle of the Atlantic. It had little to do, as is sometimes said, with the need to safeguard precious Lend-Lease cargoes as such.⁴¹

ROOSEVELT MEETS CHURCHILL; THEY DISCUSS JAPAN'S THREATENING ENCROACHMENT ON BRITISH IN FAR EAST

In August 1941 it was announced that FDR was leaving Washington on an extended fishing expedition. He left aboard the Coast Guard cutter *Calypso* and fished off the coast of Massachusetts for a couple of days. Then he quietly transferred to the American cruiser *Augusta*, which sped north to Newfoundland. Churchill, traveling from England aboard the British battleship the *Prince of Wales*, also headed for Newfoundland. The two ships rendezvoused in Placentia Bay, just off Argentia, Newfoundland. There, from August 9 to 12, the two heads of state met, talked, and entertained one another in turn, each on his respective ship.

On August 11 Churchill wired London from Argentia an account of his conversations with FDR. He reported to his secretary of state

³⁹Ibid., pp. 213–16.

⁴⁰Langer and Gleason, *The Undeclared War*, p. 665.

⁴¹Abbazia, *Mr. Roosevelt's Navy*, p. 216.

for foreign affairs, Anthony Eden, that Roosevelt had agreed to negotiate

a moratorium [with Japan] of, say, thirty days, in which we may improve our position in Singapore area and the Japanese will have to stand still. But he will make it a condition that the Japanese meanwhile encroach no farther, and do not use Indo-China as a base for attack on China. He will also maintain in full force the economic measures directed against Japan. These negotiations show little chance of succeeding, but President considers that a month gained will be valuable.

Churchill's report to Eden continued:

At the end of the Note which the President will hand to the Japanese Ambassador when he returns from his cruise in about a week's time he will add the following passage which is taken from my draft: "Any further encroachment by Japan in the Southwest Pacific would produce a situation in which the United States Government would be compelled to take counter-measures, even though these might lead to war between the United States and Japan".⁴²

During their private conference, FDR indicated to Churchill that because he was uncertain that he could carry Congress with him in a declaration of war, and because more time was needed to strengthen America's forces, he must seek to delay a break with Japan. Churchill had hoped at this meeting to persuade Roosevelt to have the United States declare war on the German-Italian Axis. Churchill told him that he "would rather have an American declaration of war now and no supplies for six months than double the supplies and no declaration." However, Churchill recognized the president's constitutional difficulties: "He may take action as Chief Executive, but only Congress can declare war." According

⁴²Winston Churchill, *The Grand Alliance* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1950), pp. 439–41.

to Churchill, "He went so far as to say to me, 'I may never declare war: I may make war. If I were to ask Congress to declare war, they might argue about it for three months'."⁴³

Although Churchill hoped for a U.S. declaration of war, he was generally pleased at the outcome of the Argentinia meeting. FDR had in effect agreed to issue an ultimatum to Japan along the lines of Churchill's suggestion. No further encroachment in the southwest Pacific would be tolerated, or else "various steps would have to be taken by the United States notwithstanding the president's realization that the taking of such measures might result in war between the United States and Japan."⁴⁴

The newspapers and newsreels of the day announced the meeting at Argentinia and showed the two men sitting at their ease on the deck of the *Augusta*, or attending Sunday church service on the *Prince of Wales*. When FDR returned to Washington, he let it be understood that the only outcome of the meeting had been the "Atlantic Charter,"⁴⁵ a plan for postwar world peace and prosperity. The Charter, signed by both Roosevelt and Churchill, set forth certain idealistic common principles. Force was to be abandoned, peaceful trade and economic collaboration among all nations was to be assured and it was hoped that "after the final destruction of the Nazi tyranny" all men in all nations would be able to "traverse the high seas and oceans without hindrance" and to "live out their lives in freedom from fear and want."

⁴³Ibid., p. 593, Churchill reporting by letter (November 9, 1941) to General Jan Christian Smuts, prime minister of the Union of South Africa, on the meeting at Argentinia.

⁴⁴Department of State "Memorandum of Conversation" (signed by Sumner Welles, undersecretary of state) between the president and Winston Churchill at sea, August 11, 1941.

⁴⁵U.S. Congress, *Events*, p. 293; Department of State, *Peace and War*, pp. 718–19.

THE UNDECLARED BATTLE OF THE ATLANTIC CONTINUES

The U.S. Patrol Force had seen little activity since late 1940, when some of its destroyers had trailed several German ships from Mexican ports until they were intercepted by British or Dutch ships and then scuttled by their crews.⁴⁶ Then in March 1941, all Axis ships remaining in U.S. ports had been seized. So when the decision to escort was made, the Patrol Force was simply diverted from routine patrolling. After August, when convoys of British and U.S. merchant ships crossed the Atlantic to maintain a lifeline of supplies and equipment to England, they were usually accompanied by U.S. destroyers.

On September 4, the destroyer *Greer* was on her way to Iceland with mail and miscellaneous freight when a British bomber overhead signaled that it had sighted a German submarine in the area. The submarine released a torpedo. The *Greer* responded with a depth charge. The submarine released a second torpedo. Neither sub nor the *Greer* hit its target.⁴⁷

German submarines had also torpedoed and sunk several other ships operated by “non-belligerents”—on August 17, the SS *Sessa* of Panamanian registry, on its way to Iceland; also on August 17, the SS *Panaman*; and on September 6 in the Gulf of Suez, the SS *Steel Seafarer*.⁴⁸

FDR, stirred to action by the attack on the *Greer*, issued to the U.S. Navy serving in America’s expanded defense waters a “shoot-on-sight order.” He sounded angry when he spoke to the nation by radio on September 11:⁴⁹

⁴⁶Abbazia, *Mr. Roosevelt’s Navy*, pp. 126–29.

⁴⁷Ibid., pp. 223–29. See also Department of Navy, *United States Naval Chronology, World War II*, p. 11.

⁴⁸U.S. Congress, *Events*, p. 297.

⁴⁹Department of State, *Peace and War*, pp. 737–43.

It is the Nazi design to abolish the freedom of the seas and to acquire absolute control and domination of the seas for themselves. . . .

We have sought no shooting war with Hitler. We do not seek it now. . . .

But when you see a rattlesnake poised to strike, you do not wait until he has struck before you crush him.

These Nazi submarines and raiders are the rattlesnakes of the Atlantic. They are a menace to the free pathways of the high seas. . . . The time for active defense is now. . . .

Upon our naval and air patrol—now operating in large number over a vast expanse of the Atlantic Ocean—falls the duty of maintaining the American policy of freedom of the seas—now. That means, very simply and clearly, that our patrolling vessels and planes will protect all merchant ships—not only American ships but ships of any flag—engaged in commerce in our defensive waters. They will protect them from submarines; they will protect them from surface raiders. . . .

It is no act of war on our part when we decide to protect the seas which are vital to American defense. The aggression is not ours. Ours is solely defense.

But let this warning be clear. From now on, if German or Italian vessels of war enter the waters the protection of which is necessary for American defense they do so at their own peril.

The orders which I have given as Commander-in-Chief to the United States Army and Navy are to carry out that policy—at once.

As a result of the president's order, our destroyers escorting convoys in the North Atlantic began to engage in "active defense." They searched, took sonar readings, frequently made contact

with German submarines, and released depth charges. German submarines truly learned that they ventured into the vicinity of British convoys being escorted by U.S. destroyers only “at their own peril.”

On September 16, the destroyer USS *Kearny*, heading from Argentia to Iceland with a convoy, was trying to corral late arrivals and stragglers. To discourage a trailing submarine, the *Kearny* dropped a depth charge. The sub launched several torpedoes. A number of ships in the convoy were torpedoed, set ablaze, and sunk. The *Kearny*, silhouetted against the burning ships, became an easy target. The German U-boat fired three torpedoes, hitting her almost amidships and causing an explosion. Eleven men were killed and 22 were wounded in the attack. Yet the surviving crew members, by prodigious effort, saved the ship. She limped into Reykjavik Harbor two days later.⁵⁰

On September 22 Stark, in Washington, reported to his Asiatic Fleet Commander, Admiral Hart, on the situation:

So far as the Atlantic is concerned, we are all but, if not actually, in it [the war]. . . . If Britain is to continue, she has to have assistance. She will now get it openly. . . . In a nutshell, we are now escorting convoys regularly from the United States to points in the Iceland area. . . . [C]ontacts are almost certain to occur. The rest requires little imagination.⁵¹

Stark’s expectations were soon borne out. “Active defense” in the Atlantic meant that U.S. ships searched for submarines and dropped depth charges. Unsurprisingly, a U.S. ship was soon torpedoed and sunk. In October the destroyer *Reuben James* was accompanying a convoy in the North Atlantic. Several submarines were harassing the convoy. On October 31 a German torpedo

⁵⁰Abbazia, *Mr. Roosevelt’s Navy*, pp. 265–80.

⁵¹Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 16, pp. 2209–11.

hit the *Reuben James* on her side; an explosion burst her in two. Forty-five men were saved; a hundred died.⁵²

The United States was still officially neutral. Yet it had seized Axis ships in its harbors and frozen Axis funds. It was supplying England and her allies with weapons and supplies. Its ships were escorting British convoys in waters infested with German submarines, dropping depth charges on them. Its ships had trailed Axis ships, notified the British of their whereabouts, and stood by while the Axis ships were sunk. Its ships were being sunk, and its sailors were being killed. The president of the United States, commander-in-chief of the Army and Navy under the U.S. Constitution, was doing precisely what he had told Churchill he might do: he was beginning to “make war,” without “declaring war.”

⁵²Abbazia, *Mr. Roosevelt's Navy*, pp. 297–308. See also Department of Navy, *United States Naval Chronology, World War II*, p. 11, and Samuel Eliot Morison, *The Two-Ocean War: A Short History of the United States Navy in the Second World War* (Boston: Little Brown, 1963), p. 37.

4.

U.S. Military Plans and Preparations

U.S. RELATIONS WITH JAPAN

Relations with Japan had been strained for some time. The Roosevelt administration was fully aware of Japan's dependence on imports. Yet, as we have seen, it had terminated America's long-standing commercial treaty with her. After January 1940 Japan had to ask permission on a case by case basis whenever she wanted to import from the United States. In July 1940 the administration had further prohibited exports to Japan by requiring her to get a license to purchase aircraft engines and strategic materials. (When sale of aviation gas, defined by the U.S. as 86 octane or higher, was embargoed on July 1, 1940, she had contrived a way to use 76 octane in her planes.¹) The administration was tightening an economic noose around Japan's neck bit by

¹Interview by author of Captain Albert E. Hindmarsh, January 9, 1964 (typescript in author's files). According to Hindmarsh, Japanese language expert with the Office of Naval Intelligence before the attack, the July 1941 embargo of gasoline below 86 octane really hurt Japan.

bit, forcing her to look elsewhere for the supplies and materials she had been accustomed to buying from the United States.

The Japanese had considerable commercial interests in south-east Asia, especially in French Indochina (now comprising the states of Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia). After France fell in June 1940, Japan had negotiated with the Vichy government of unoccupied France for permission to occupy French Indochina, to take over bases there, and to maintain order. The rather helpless Vichy government had agreed. As trade with the United States became more difficult, Japan's interests in Indochina gained in importance and she turned more and more in that direction for the foods and raw materials she needed. Trade pacts concluded later with Indochina assured Japan of uninterrupted supplies of rice, rubber, and other needed raw materials.

U.S. Ambassador Grew in Japan kept Roosevelt fully advised of her precarious economic situation and urgent need for imports. Chief of Naval Operations (NCO) Stark had warned the president of the danger of imposing an oil embargo on Japan. Stark had "made it known to the State Department in no uncertain terms that in my opinion if Japan's oil were shut off, she would go to war." He did not mean "necessarily with us, but . . . if her economic life had been choked and throttled by inability to get oil, she would go somewhere and take it . . . and if I were a Jap, I would" do the same.²

Many people, including Eleanor Roosevelt, the president's wife, were concerned about what Japan might be planning. In the fall of 1940, she had asked her husband about our continuing shipment of oil to Japan. FDR answered Eleanor on November 13, 1940:

²79th Cong., 1st sess. Joint (Congressional) Committee on the Investigation of the Pearl Harbor Attack. *Pearl Harbor Attack*, 39 vols. (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1946), part 32, p. 43. Testimony before the Naval Court of Inquiry.

The real answer which you cannot use is that if we forbid oil shipments to Japan, Japan will increase her purchases of Mexican oil and furthermore, may be driven by actual necessity to a descent on the Dutch East Indies. At this writing, we all regard such action on our part as an encouragement to the spread of war in the Far East. [Signed] F.D.R.³

Thus Roosevelt had been well aware for some time that stopping the export of oil to Japan was fraught with danger. Japan feared also that her assets in the United States might be frozen, making her economic situation still more perilous.

In February 1941 Sir Robert Craigie, the British ambassador in Tokyo, cabled his Foreign Office in London that Japan would soon move against British-held Singapore, then a vital commercial and communications link between Britain and her overseas dominions and colonies. Anthony Eden, British secretary of state for foreign affairs, called Mamoru Shigemitsu, the Japanese ambassador in London, into his office, and gave him “a thorough hauling over the coals” concerning the “extravagant and sensational telegrams” emanating from the British embassy in Tokyo.⁴ When Eugene H. Dooman, counselor at the U.S. embassy in Tokyo, called on Japan’s vice minister for foreign affairs, Chiuchi Ohashi, Ohashi told him that “there was no truth whatever in Sir Robert’s prediction.” Ohashi said he had “repeatedly told Sir Robert that Japan would not move in Singapore or the Dutch East Indies, ‘unless we (the Japanese) are pressed’ (by the imposition of American embargoes).” However, Ohashi went on to say that “if disorders beyond the power of the French to control were to arise in Indochina . . . we would be obliged to step in to suppress

³Franklin Delano Roosevelt, *F.D.R.: His Personal Letters: 1928–1945* (New York: Duell, Sloan and Pearce, 1950), vol. 2, p. 1077.

⁴Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States: Diplomatic Papers, 1941*. vol. 2: *The Far East* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1956), pp. 37–39; Grew memorandum of February 14, 1941.

the disorders.”⁵ Ohashi’s assertion was one more reminder of the danger inherent in imposing embargoes on Japan.

ARMY CHIEF OF STAFF
GENERAL GEORGE C. MARSHALL

Chief of staff of the Army at this time was General George C. Marshall. Marshall had graduated from Virginia Military Institute in 1901 and began his military career as a second lieutenant in 1902. The Spanish-American War had just ended and he was assigned the task of accompanying infantry troops to the Philippines. He entered World War I as a captain and before it ended was promoted to temporary colonel. In May of the following year, he became aide-de-camp to the World War I hero General John J. Pershing, but was returned to his permanent rank of captain shortly thereafter. After the war he had to begin again to work his way up to colonel, a slow process in peacetime.⁶

General Douglas MacArthur, a contemporary of Marshall’s but a graduate of West Point (1903), became chief of staff in 1930 and served in that capacity until 1935. At that time, Pershing suggested to MacArthur that he promote Marshall, his former aide, to brigadier general. Marshall had spent most of his career up to that time in service schools and staff positions and had only just attained the rank of full colonel. To round out his experience, so as to become qualified for a generalship, he was given a command assignment with a top regiment. This was during the early years of FDR’s New Deal, when the Army had been asked to help establish the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC). Marshall devoted so much of his energies to the CCC that his regiment’s training program was found to have suffered seriously. Thus Marshall

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 39.

⁶ Katherine Tupper Marshall, *Together: Annals of an Army Wife* (New York/Atlanta: Tupper & Love, 1946), Appendix 1, pp. 283–90.

missed this opportunity to become a general. Pershing continued to press Marshall's case, but to no avail. Marshall was relegated to the position of senior instructor for the Illinois National Guard (1933–1938).⁷

Through Marshall's diligence in working with the CCC, he made a number of friends in the Roosevelt administration. He came to know several persons of influence, notably Judge Advocate Scott Lucas, later a U.S. senator who was to serve on the 1945–1946 Joint Congressional Committee to Investigate the Pearl Harbor Attack; Major General Frank McCoy, Stimson's long-time aide; and Harry Hopkins, FDR's close adviser. Pershing also continued to support Marshall. Such friends stood him in good stead as the years went by.

In July 1938 Marshall was brought to Washington as director of war plans. From then on, with the help of Hopkins and others, Marshall advanced rapidly. He was promoted to brigadier general, effective October 1, 1938. On October 15, after only three months in war plans, he was appointed deputy chief of staff. On April 27, 1939, it was announced that Marshall would be advanced over many officers with more seniority to become the Army's new chief of staff. He took over officially on September 1, 1939, the very day Hitler's forces marched into Poland, becoming in the process a temporary four-star general—from one to four stars in less than a year!

As chief of staff, Marshall was “the immediate advisor of the Secretary of War on all matters relating to the Military Establishment.” He was also “charged by the Secretary of War with the planning, development and execution of the military program.”⁸ The chief of staff's obligation was to report directly to

⁷Forrest C. Pogue, *George C. Marshall: Education of a General: 1830–1939*, (New York: Viking Adult, 1963), pp. 290–99.

⁸Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 3, p. 1050. Quoted from Army regulations.

the president. During the years he served in the post, Marshall proved himself to be a loyal and devoted deputy to his superior, Franklin D. Roosevelt.

The chief of staff's responsibility in peacetime—and the United States was still at peace when Marshall took over—was to serve “by direction of the president,” as “Commanding General of the Field Forces.” In that capacity he was to direct “field operations and the general training of the several Armies, of the oversea forces, and of the GHQ units.” If war were to break out, he was to continue exercising command of the field forces “until such time as the President shall have specifically designated a Commanding General thereof.”⁹

Marshall also had certain responsibilities with respect to the Navy when the fleet was in port. More about that later.

The chief of staff and the president were the only ones with legal authority to issue command orders to the army commanders in the field. The secretary of war, a civilian, was outside this line of command.

ADMIRAL RICHARDSON, COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF U.S. FLEET, RELIEVED OF COMMAND

In January 1941 Richardson, commander-in-chief of the U.S. Fleet (CINCUS), was notified that he was being relieved of his command in about three weeks. Admiral Husband E. Kimmel was named to replace him, effective February 1.

Richardson was “deeply disappointed in my detachment, yet,” as he wrote later, “there was some feeling of prospective relief, for I had never liked to work with people whom I did not trust, and I did not trust Franklin D. Roosevelt.”¹⁰

⁹Ibid.

¹⁰James O. Richardson, *On the Treadmill to Pearl Harbor* (Washington, D.C.: Naval History Division, Department of the Navy, 1973), p. 420.

On his return to Washington, Richardson was directed to report to Secretary of the Navy Knox. When he called on Knox on March 24, he asked why he had been removed as CINCUS so peremptorily, after having served only 13 months of the usual 24-month tour of duty. "Why, Richardson," Knox responded, "when you were here in Washington last October, you hurt the President's feelings by what you said to him. You should realize that."¹¹

Richardson's relief put on notice all top-ranked officers, including his replacement, that Roosevelt would brook no opposition to his plans. It was a warning to all military officers that criticism of FDR, their commander-in-chief under the Constitution, was not tolerated.

GENERAL MARSHALL'S RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE FLEET

Marshall appointed Lieutenant General Walter C. Short to be commanding general of the Hawaiian department, effective February 7, 1941. That same day, Marshall wrote Short that Kimmel, who had taken over command of the fleet in Pearl Harbor the week before, had written his superior, CNO Stark, about the serious shortages of army materiel needed for the protection of Pearl Harbor. Kimmel had "referred specifically to planes and anti-aircraft guns." Marshall wrote Short that Kimmel didn't realize that the army was "tragically lacking in this materiel . . . and that Hawaii is on a far better basis than any other command in the Army."

Marshall's letter revealed concern for more than just the Hawaiian situation. Nevertheless, Marshall advised Short that the protection of the fleet was the Army's major responsibility. "The fullest protection for the Fleet is *the* rather than *a* major

¹¹Ibid., p. 424.

consideration for us. [Italics in original]. . . [O]ur first concern is to protect the Fleet.” Marshall told Short of “the pressures on the Department [from other sources] for the limited materiel we have.” However, he believed the existing defenses in Hawaii would discourage an enemy’s attack “if no serious harm is done us during the first six hours of known hostilities.”

Marshall speculated on the most likely threat to Hawaii:

The risk of sabotage and the risk involved in a surprise raid by Air and by submarine, constitute the real perils of the situation. Frankly, I do not see any landing threat in the Hawaiian Islands so long as we have air superiority.

However, Marshall reminded Short:

Please keep clearly in mind in all your negotiations that our mission is to protect the base and the Naval concentration, and that purpose should be clearly apparent to Admiral Kimmel.¹²

Marshall wrote Short again on March 5, requesting an “early review of the situation in the Hawaiian Department with regard to defense from air attack.” And he added, “The establishment of a satisfactory system of coordinating all means available to this end is a matter of first priority.”¹³ Marshall recognized that, as chief of staff, he was responsible for protecting Hawaii, and he was again calling the attention of his Hawaiian commander to that responsibility.

¹²Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 32, pp. 565–66. Marshall’s February 7, 1941, letter to Short.

¹³*Ibid.*, part 15, p. 1605.

ADMIRAL KIMMEL, NEW COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF, U.S. FLEET, STRIVES TO BUILD UP FLEET'S STRENGTH IN PEARL HARBOR

Kimmel realized that, for strategic reasons, the Fleet did not belong at Pearl Harbor. He considered Richardson's arguments against holding the fleet there valid. Yet Kimmel realized he could not oppose the president on this issue and expect to retain his command. The best he could do was to try to get the materiel needed to defend the fleet. Over the next year, in letter after letter to CNO Stark, he asked for personnel, weapons, radar, destroyers, cruisers, planes, ammunition.¹⁴

CNO Admiral Stark gained a reputation for persistence as he continued to appeal to Roosevelt for men and materiel. He once asked FDR for 300,000 men for the Navy. There were a lot of people in the room at the time. FDR, always jovial when he had an audience, simply "threw back his head and laughed." He then turned to the others in the room and said, "Betty," referring to Stark by his nickname, "usually begins working early; he starts in working a year ahead of time and he follows it up."¹⁵

To strengthen its defenses, the Navy recommended construction of a battleship and cruiser dry dock at Pearl Harbor.¹⁶ However, all the funds then available for construction had been allocated. Admiral Ben Moreell, chief of the Navy's bureau of yards and docks, which would be building the dry dock, felt he should not go ahead without written authorization. He suggested that Stark ask FDR, in light of the "limited National emergency" then in effect, to authorize the funds in writing. Without being specific as to who had made the request, Stark approached FDR. When he reported back to Moreell, Stark said he had "never seen

¹⁴Ibid., part 16, pp. 2225–57.

¹⁵Ibid., part 5, p 2273. Stark testimony.

¹⁶Julius Augustus Furer, *Administration of the Navy Department in World War II* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1959), p. 404.

the president so angry. He pounded the table and asked ‘Who wants something on a piece of paper?’” Tell that bureau chief that he would “give him something on a piece of paper, but it will not be what he expects.”¹⁷ So Stark, as acting secretary of the navy—the secretary and assistant secretary were away at the time—took on himself the responsibility of authorizing the construction. The dry dock, completed just ten days before the attack, was put to immediate use.

Stark wrote Kimmel of the problems he encountered in obtaining authorization to build up the Navy.

I am struggling, and I use the word advisedly, every time I get in the White House, which is rather frequent, for additional men. . . . The President just has his own ideas about men. I usually finally get my way but the cost of effort is very great and of course worth it. I feel that I could go on the Hill this minute and get all the men I want if I could just get the green light from the White House.¹⁸

In answer to Kimmel’s requests for ships and supplies to bolster the Pacific Fleet, Stark often mentioned the dire straits of the British, whose economic lifeline was being threatened by German submarines. He also cited the demands for supplies being made under the lend-lease program.

Soon to be superimposed on our Navy ordnance problems through the administration of the Lend-Lease Bill is the task of procurement, inspection and delivery of enormous—almost astronomical—quantities of ordnance supplies for the British Navy and any allies which may survive to fight the Dictators.¹⁹

¹⁷Robert Greenhalgh Albion and Robert Howe Connery, *Forrestal and the Navy* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1962), pp. 87–88.

¹⁸Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 16, p. 2148, Stark to Kimmel, February 10, 1941.

¹⁹*Ibid.*, part 16, p. 2153. Stark to Kimmel, March 3, 1941.

ADMIRAL STARK OPPOSES ANTAGONIZING JAPAN

Roosevelt had been doing his best for months to give the British aid and comfort, although he had been restrained, primarily by public opinion, from openly involving the United States in the war against Germany. Stark shared the president's desire to enter that war, but he did not always go along with Roosevelt's risky moves in the Pacific.

Stark's friendship with FDR was such that he could express himself candidly—and he often did. On February 11, 1941, Stark wrote FDR a long memorandum, cautioning against the tactics he was adopting in the Pacific.²⁰ The question of sending a detachment of cruisers on a tour of the Philippines had been discussed at a meeting of top administration officials. FDR had questioned the desirability of such a maneuver, called it a “bluff,” and said he “did not want to take a chance on losing 5 or 6 [cruisers] . . . in the Philippines in case of sudden attack.” Stark had then “breathed a great sigh of relief and thought the issue pretty definitely closed.”²¹

Stark opposed such a move and he explained his reasons:²² “Sending a small force [of ships to Manila] would probably be no deterrent to Japan,” Stark wrote, and it would not hinder Japan's southward advance. Further moves against Japan could “precipitate hostilities rather than prevent them. We want to give Japan no excuse for coming in, in case we are forced into hostilities with Germany whom we all consider our major problem.”

Although the Pacific Fleet was “weaker in total tonnage and aircraft than the Japanese Navy,” he considered it “a very strong force and as long as it is in its present position it remains a constant serious and real threat to Japan's flank.” It would be “a grave

²⁰*Ibid.*, part 16, pp. 2150–51; part 33, pp. 1203–04.

²¹*Ibid.*, part 16, p. 2150; part 33, p. 1203.

²²*Ibid.*, part 16, pp. 2150–51; part 33, pp. 1203–04.

strategic error at this time to divide our Pacific Fleet . . . in three parts, Atlantic, Mid-Pacific, and Western Pacific.”

“If we are forced into the war,” Stark continued, “our main effort as approved to date will be directed in the Atlantic against Germany. We should, if possible, not be drawn into a major war in the Far East.” The Pacific Fleet should remain strong until we see what Japan is going to do. Then, if she moved toward Malaysia in southeast Asia, we would be in a position to

vigorously attack the Mandates [an archipelago of south Pacific islands mandated after World War I to Japan to administer] and Japanese communications in order to weaken Japan’s attack on the British and Dutch.

At the same time, we could continue to lend support to the battle in the Atlantic.

Stark recommended against doing anything in the Far East which would reveal our intentions. We should not send “any considerable division . . . to Manila [as that] might prove an invitation to Japan to attack us.” We “should not indicate the slightest interest in the Gilbert or Solomon or Fiji Islands [lest the Japanese] smell a rat and our future use of them, at least so far as surprise is concerned, might be compromised.” The Japanese are trained for amphibious operations—we are not—and they would then be able to occupy some of those British-held islands before we could.

To reinforce this position against doing anything that might appear to threaten Japan unless we were ready to fight, Stark quoted from a telegram just received from the U.S. embassy in Tokyo:

Risk of war would be certain to follow increased concentration of American vessels in the Far East. As it is not possible to evaluate with certainty the imponderable factor which such

risks constitute[,] the risk should not be taken unless our country is ready to force hostilities.

In spite of his reservations, however, Stark told FDR he was “notifying Kimmel to be prepared to send a force such as we talked about yesterday to the Philippines, in case your final decision should be to send them.”

Although he disagreed with the president, he was ready to obey orders. He continued his memorandum to FDR:

I just wanted to get this off my chest to you as I always do my thoughts and then will defer to your better judgment with a cheerful Aye, Aye, Sir, and go the limit as will all of us in what you decide.

Stark was above all a good soldier, loyal to his commander-in-chief.

On February 25 Stark sent Kimmel a copy of his memorandum. He and Kimmel were good friends and had been for many years, so Stark was straightforward in his analysis of the situation. Stark wrote Kimmel, as he had told FDR he would, that he should make plans for “offensive raids.”²³ He should

study very carefully the matter of making aircraft raids on the inflammable Japanese cities (ostensibly on military objectives), and the effect such raids might have on Japanese morale and on the diversion of their forces away from the Malay Barrier.

“Such adventures,” Stark wrote, might appear “unjustified from a profit and loss viewpoint . . . [or] they might prove very profitable.” But, he implied, this was immaterial. “In either case (and this is strictly SECRET) you and I may be ordered to make them.” Therefore, Kimmel realized he would be well advised to consider plans for launching such air raids.

²³Ibid., part 16, pp. 2149–50. Stark letter (February 25, 1941) to Kimmel.

The question of sending a detachment of the fleet to the Far East had been brought up several times. Stark and Kimmel both considered it “unwise.” However, Stark wrote,

even since my last letter to you, the subject has twice come up in the White House. Each of the many times it has arisen, my view has prevailed, but the time might come when it will not.

The attitude of the people in the country with respect to the war was confused, Stark wrote. “I simply can not predict the outcome.” His memo to FDR represented, he said, his “best estimate of the Far Eastern present situation.”

ADMIRAL KIMMEL IN PEARL HARBOR REQUESTS “INTELLIGENCE”

In addition to equipment and supplies, a commander in the field also needs intelligence; that is, information, particularly information relevant for military planning and preparations. The Navy Department in Washington inevitably receives such secret or confidential information, which the commanders in the field are entitled to have, and should have, if they are to carry out their duties. After Kimmel took over command of the fleet at Pearl Harbor, he requested not only ships, men, equipment, supplies, and munitions, but also intelligence; he asked Stark to furnish him with whatever “information of a secret nature” was available.²⁴

Stark replied that this was the responsibility of the Office of Naval Intelligence (ONI). “ONI is fully aware of its responsibility in keeping you adequately informed.”²⁵

In 1941, information concerning the location of Japanese merchant vessels was forwarded weekly from Washington by air-mail to Pearl Harbor. Thus Kimmel was receiving material on a

²⁴Ibid., part 16, p. 2229. Kimmel to Stark (February 18, 1941).

²⁵Ibid., part 17, p. 2160. Stark to Kimmel (March 22, 1941).

regular basis. Given that fact, plus Stark's reassurance that ONI would keep him informed, Kimmel assumed he was being sent, and would be sent, all the information of value that Washington could supply.

SECURITY LEAK IN WASHINGTON

Since August 1940 we had been intercepting and decoding messages sent in the Japanese diplomatic cipher, designated "Purple." This enabled us to read messages to and from Japan's embassies all around the world. These secret intercepts came to be called MAGIC and were surrounded by strict security. Except for the cryptographers and translators, they were seen by only a handful of top people in the administration and the services. Then in the spring of 1941 it was discovered that one copy of a decoded Japanese intercept was missing from the files. A "magic translation . . . was lost in the State Department. The Army had sent it to them and it never came back."²⁶ In the words of Commander L.F. Safford, then in charge of communications security, "all hell broke loose." A missing message was a serious matter. If the Japanese learned we could read messages sent in their complex diplomatic code, which we had deciphered at a cost of much time and effort, they would probably change it. We would then be deprived of an extremely valuable source of intelligence.

Safford and the others concerned with security could not imagine where this missing message had gone. However, in April and May we intercepted several "Purple" messages between Berlin and Tokyo indicating that German intelligence sources, probably in the United States, believed that the U.S. government had deciphered some Japanese codes. Tokyo cabled Berlin on April 16, "We suspect that the several codes I^b, 80^c and OITE^d are being

²⁶*Ibid.*, part 8, p. 3735.

cryptanalyzed by foreign powers.” And from Berlin to Tokyo on May 3:

STAHMER called on me this day (evening?) and . . . said that Germany maintains a fairly reliable intelligence organization abroad (or—“in the U.S.”?), and according to information obtained from the above mentioned organization it is quite (or—“fairly”?) reliably established that the U.S. government is reading Ambassador Nomura’s code messages.²⁷

As a result, the Japanese warned their embassies to exercise extreme caution to protect the security of their messages. But, fortunately for the United States, Japan did not heed, or did not realize the full import of, the warnings sent her embassy in Berlin. In any event, her diplomats continued to use their “Purple” diplomatic code.

THE AMERICAN-DUTCH-BRITISH (ADB) CONVERSATIONS, SINGAPORE, APRIL 1941

Toward the end of April the scene shifted to Singapore, where a conference of American, Dutch, and British military and naval officers, the so-called ADB Conversations, was held in utmost secrecy. The principals dressed in mufti (civilian attire) to conceal the nature of their visit. The agreement reached on April 27 was subsequently signed by officials of the Associated Powers—the United States, United Kingdom, Netherlands East Indies, Australia, New Zealand, and India.²⁸ The United States was the only signatory not then in the war.

²⁷Ibid., part 4, pp. 1860–61. Tokyo/Berlin cables; part 4, p. 1815, June 23, 1941 Tokyo to Mexico message cautioning vigilance: “There are suspicions that they [the Americans] read some of our [Japan’s] codes.”

²⁸Ibid., part 15, pp. 1551–84 (Exhibit No. 50). American-Dutch-British Conversations, Singapore, April, 1941 (Short Title, “A.D.B.”), Report.

The 33-page ADB report that issued from this Singapore conference was classified MOST SECRET. It described specific moves on the part of Japan that would force the signers of the agreement to recommend that their governments take military action against Japan.

It is agreed that any of the following actions by Japan would create a position in which our failure to take active military counter-action would place us at such military disadvantage, should Japan subsequently attack, that we should then advise our respective Governments to authorise such action:

(a) A direct act of war by Japanese armed forces against the Territory or Mandated Territory of any of the Associated Powers. . . .

(b) The movement of the Japanese forces into any part of Thailand to the West of 100° East or to the South of 10° North.

(c) The movement of a large number of Japanese warships, or of a convoy of merchant ships escorted by Japanese warships, which from its position and course was clearly directed upon the Philippine Islands, the East coast of the Isthmus of Kra [the narrow strip of land connecting Singapore's peninsula with the Asian mainland] or the East coast of Malaya, or had crossed the parallel of 6° North between Malaya and the Philippines, a line from the Gulf of Davao [on the southeastern-most tip of the Philippines] to Waigeo Island [the northwestern-most island of New Guinea], or the Equator East of Waigeo.

(d) The movement of Japanese forces into Portuguese Timor.

(e) The movement of Japanese forces into New Caledonia or the Loyalty Islands [northeast of New Caledonia].²⁹

²⁹Ibid., p. 1564.

The ADB report also outlined cooperative procedures to be followed by the land, sea, and air forces of the several parties in the event of hostilities. The United States turned down a British request at the meeting that it send the Pacific Fleet to Singapore.

Roosevelt knew these agreements were not constitutional. Yet he sanctioned and continued pressing secretly for still closer ties with Britain and her allies. According to Robert Sherwood, one of FDR's speechwriters and close advisers, "Roosevelt never overlooked the fact that his actions might lead to his immediate or eventual impeachment."³⁰ From the administration's point of view, therefore, it was imperative that "the very existence of any American-British joint plans, however tentative, had to be kept utterly secret." Sherwood called it "ironic" that

in all probability, no great damage would have been done had the details of these plans fallen into the hands of the Germans and the Japanese; whereas, had they fallen into the hands of the Congress and the press, American preparation for war might have been well nigh wrecked and ruined.³¹

U.S. SHIPS TRANSFERRED FROM PACIFIC TO ATLANTIC FLEET

In April 1941 Kimmel learned not only that he would not be receiving the ships he had requested to strengthen his fleet,

³⁰Robert E. Sherwood, *Roosevelt and Hopkins: An Intimate History* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1948), p. 274.

³¹*Ibid.*, pp. 273–74. Here Sherwood quotes noted historian, Charles A. Beard:

If these precedents are to stand unimpeached and to provide sanctions for the continued conduct of American foreign affairs, the Constitution may be nullified by the President, officials, and officers who have taken the oath, and are under moral obligation to uphold it.

but that he would be forced to relinquish several destroyers and cruisers to reinforce the Atlantic Fleet. This was in accord with the U.S.-British ABC-1 agreement.

“The entire world set-up was gone into very carefully,” Stark wrote Kimmel on April 19. A detachment of ships—three battleships, one aircraft carrier, four cruisers and two squadrons of destroyers—was to be transferred from the Pacific to the Atlantic. But then the president canceled the authorization for the move and gave specific directions to bring only the one CV (aircraft carrier) and one division of destroyers. The president “did not want, at this particular moment, to give any signs of seriously weakening the forces in the Pacific.”³²

However, a week later, after a long conference at the White House on April 25, it was decided that the most urgent matter was to go “all out in the Atlantic.” Stark wrote Kimmel the following day that he should get “mentally prepared” because “a considerable detachment from your fleet will be brought to the Atlantic.” Stark anticipated “the reinforcing of the Atlantic by the 3 BBs [battleships], 1 CV [aircraft carrier], 4 CLs [cruisers] and 2 squadrons of destroyers.” And still further detachments from the Pacific Fleet might be expected. Action on the transfer may come “at any time.”³³

In May 1941 “a force consisting of three battleships, an aircraft carrier and appropriate supporting vessels . . . about a quarter of the strength of the Pacific Fleet,” was shifted to the Atlantic from Kimmel’s command in the Pacific. These ships then joined “in the ever-extending activities of the Atlantic patrol,” which was lending support to Britain.³⁴

³²Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 16, p. 2164. Stark to Kimmel, April 19, 1941.

³³*Ibid.*, part 16, p. 2165. Stark to Kimmel, April 26, 1941.

³⁴William L. Langer and S. Everett Gleason, *The Undeclared War, 1940–1941* (New York: Harper & Bros., 1953), p. 451.

COORDINATION OF U.S. WAR PLANS AND PRODUCTION

By this time, demands for war materiel were being submitted to the United States from all over the world. Requests for supplies and equipment were coming in from the British, beleaguered in the Atlantic and in Singapore; from the Chinese under pressure by the Japanese; and from our own forces in the field. Effective coordination was needed. On May 21, Marshall, under pressure from the War Department, the Office of Production Management, and especially the White House, sought a “complete statement of Army needs—not for 1941 and 1942 but for the actual winning of a war not yet declared.” He asked the various divisions of the War Department general staff to make strategic estimates of our ground, air, and naval situations, and to list items of equipment needed “as an aid to industry in its planning.” The War Plans Division assigned Major (later Lt. Gen.) A.C. Wedemeyer the immense task of researching and assembling from widely scattered sources the necessary data on military requirements, supplies, reserves, and production.³⁵

UNITED STATES–JAPAN DIPLOMATIC CONVERSATIONS: IN WASHINGTON

Japan’s Ambassador to the United States, Admiral Kichisaburo Nomura, had begun negotiations with the United States. Japan was willing to make quite a few concessions from her point of view, and for a while in June 1941, it looked as though an amicable conclusion might be reached. The major bone of contention was the presence of Japanese troops in China. In the course of the discussions, Japan agreed to withdraw most of her troops from

³⁵Mark Skinner Watson, *The War Department: Chief of Staff: Prewar Plans and Preparations* (Washington, D.C.: Department of the Army, Historical Division, 1950), pp. 336–37.

China. Subject to further discussion, she would station a few on the northern border

for protection against the entry of communistic elements from Outer Mongolia. . . . The troops which would be maintained for resistance against communistic activities would not under any circumstances interfere in Chinese internal affairs.

Japan then presented a draft proposal suggesting that Roosevelt ask China to negotiate a peace treaty with Japan based on the principles of:³⁶ (1) Neighborly friendship; (2) Joint defense against communism; and (3) Economic cooperation.

As befitting an agreement between two sovereign nations, Japan further asserted that these principles implied: (1) Mutual respect of sovereignty and territories; (2) Mutual respect for the inherent characteristics of each nation cooperating as good neighbors and forming a Far Eastern nucleus contributing to world peace; (3) Withdrawal of Japanese troops from Chinese territory in accordance with an agreement to be concluded between Japan and China; (4) No annexation, no indemnities; and (5) Independence of Manchoukuo.³⁷

Prompted by her desire for reliable sources of raw materials and given the uncertainty created by the termination of her commercial treaty with the United States, Japan's draft proposal stated further that if the United States and Japan reached agreement on the basis of these principles, then they would cooperate in providing each other with access to "supplies of natural resources (such as oil, rubber, tin, nickel) which each country needs."³⁸

³⁶Department of State, *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States: Japan, 1931-1941* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1943), vol. 2, pp. 444-45, 448-49.

³⁷*Ibid.*, p. 423.

³⁸*Ibid.*, p. 462.

Roosevelt and Secretary of State Hull were lukewarm, if not cool, to these proposals. They balked at the Japanese plan for “Cooperative defense against injurious communistic activities.”³⁹ On June 21, Hull, “handed the Japanese Ambassador a complete rewrite of the draft proposal.”⁴⁰ The talks with the Japanese were stalled.

HITLER’S INVASION OF RUSSIA ALTERS SITUATION AND EXPANDS CALL FOR WORLDWIDE COORDINATION

During the night of June 21–22 Hitler attacked the U.S.S.R. The Soviets immediately became an enemy of Germany, and Britain immediately became an ally of the Soviets. Once we learned of Germany’s invasion of Russia and of Britain’s alliance with the Soviet Union against Germany, U.S. policy shifted. We released Russian credits, refused to apply the neutrality law to the Soviet Union, and promised American aid to Stalin’s regime.⁴¹

Roosevelt called for an additional effort to coordinate war planning and production. On July 9 he sent an urgent message to his secretaries of war and navy asking them to

join . . . in exploring at once the overall production requirements required to defeat our potential enemies . . . [and] the munitions and mechanical equipment of all types which in your opinion would be required to exceed by an appropriate amount that available to our potential enemies.⁴²

³⁹Ibid., pp. 444, 447.

⁴⁰Ibid., p. 483. See also Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 14, pp. 1400–01. (7/24/41, re sanctions on Japan).

⁴¹U.S. House Committee on Foreign Affairs. *Events Leading up to World War II: Chronological History of Certain Major International Events Leading up to and During World War II with the Ostensible Reasons Advanced for their Occurrence, 1931–1944*, 78th Cong., 2nd sess., 1944, pp. 286–87.

⁴²Watson, *The War Department*, pp. 338–39.

The assignment Marshall had given Wedemeyer in May, to determine the needs of the Army, was to be expanded to include the Navy and Air Corps also. From this “a real Victory Program” was to be developed encompassing, by presidential directive (August 30, 1941), the distribution of munitions as well, not only to U.S. forces, but also to those of Great Britain, Russia, and other countries needing our help.⁴³ The War Plans Division’s draft, which Wedemeyer had completed by July 1, became the basis of the more extensive project, and Wedemeyer was assigned “the major responsibility for the new and larger task.”⁴⁴

In view of the fact that the United States was still officially neutral, security concerning this ultra-secret Victory Program “for the winning of a war not yet declared” was extremely tight. Only five copies were prepared, each numbered and registered. Wedemeyer kept his working copy; he gave one to Stimson for presentation to FDR, and three to his superiors. It was thought that this very limited distribution would prevent any leak.

U.S.-JAPAN RELATIONS “TREADING THE EVIL ROAD”

As we have seen, the Japanese had received the permission of the Vichy government of unoccupied France to land troops in French Indochina and to acquire there the rice and other raw materials she desperately needed.⁴⁵ Both the United States and Britain objected to these arrangements. On July 23, Undersecretary of State Sumner Welles broke off the talks then going on with the Japanese Ambassador in Washington. The next day the United States denounced Japan’s actions in French Indochina. Then on July 25, in retaliation for Japan’s Indochina moves and against the advice of Ambassador Grew in Japan and

⁴³Ibid., pp. 347–49.

⁴⁴Ibid., p. 342.

⁴⁵U.S. Congress, *Events*, p. 289.

Chief of Naval Operations Stark, FDR by executive order froze all Japanese assets in this country. England followed suit the following day.⁴⁶

This brought all trade between the United States and Japan to an end. Japan had warned that this drastic measure would leave her in desperate straits. It hurt especially because it deprived her of regular gasoline from which she had been able to produce higher grade aviation gas.⁴⁷ Back in November 1940 Roosevelt had been well aware of the crisis that would arise if Japan were deprived of oil.

Ambassador Grew and Stark understood Japan's economic plight and realized she might go to war if her oil were shut off. Stark had argued that "unless we were prepared for war—I do not mean prepared in the sense of complete readiness for war, but unless we were ready to accept a war risk, we should not take measures which would cut oil down to the Japanese below that needed for what might be called their normal peace time needs for their industry and their ships." He said he "never waived [sic] one inch on that stand."⁴⁸ Nevertheless, the United States went ahead and imposed sanctions. The die was cast.

Stark cabled his three fleet commanders on July 25 about the economic sanctions. It was expected that these sanctions would include all trade except for a few items for which export licenses would be issued. He advised the commanders to "take appropriate precautionary measures against possible eventualities."⁴⁹

All this time, we were still intercepting, decoding, and reading Japanese messages sent in the diplomatic code, "Purple." Among

⁴⁶Ibid., p. 290.

⁴⁷Interview (January 9, 1964) of Japanese expert, Captain Albert E. Hindmarsh (typescript in author's files).

⁴⁸Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 32, p. 43. Stark testimony before the Navy Court of Inquiry.

⁴⁹Ibid., part 24, p.1355. Stark testimony before the Roberts Commission, Exhibit 13.

them was a message dated July 31 from the Japanese foreign minister in Tokyo to Japan's ambassador in Berlin concerning their desperate economic situation.⁵⁰ A copy was sent to Nomura, the Japanese ambassador in Washington. It read in part:

Commercial and economic relations between Japan and third countries, led by England and the United States, are gradually becoming so horribly strained that we cannot endure it much longer. Consequently, our Empire, to save its very life, must take measures to secure the raw materials of the South Seas. Our Empire must immediately take steps to break asunder this ever-strengthening chain of encirclement which is being woven under the guidance and with the participation of England and the United States, acting like a cunning dragon seemingly asleep. That is why we decided to obtain military bases in French Indo-China and to have our troops occupy that territory . . . and now Japanese-American relations are more rapidly than ever treading the evil road.⁵¹

After being decoded and translated, this message was distributed to Roosevelt and his advisers, the few top officials in Washington who were privy to MAGIC. This cable further confirmed Japan's economic plight and the impending crisis due to the U.S. sanctions.

On August 6 Japan again offered to negotiate.

Japanese Prime Minister Fuminaro Konoye, who represented Japan's "Peace Party," suggested a personal meeting with Roosevelt, "with a view to discussing means whereby an adjustment [in U.S.-Japan relations] could be brought about." On August 8 Nomura asked Hull "whether it might not be possible for the responsible

⁵⁰Ibid., part 12, p. 8.

⁵¹Ibid., p. 9.

heads of the two Governments to meet, say in Honolulu.”⁵² On August 17, the United States rejected this proposal. Hull

made it clear that he did not see how conversations between the two Governments could usefully be pursued or proposals be discussed while Japanese official spokesmen and the Japanese press contended that the United States was endeavoring to encircle Japan and carried on a campaign against the United States.⁵³

THE FIRST U. S. “ULTIMATUM” TO JAPAN

The public announcement of the Argentinia meeting of Roosevelt and Churchill announced the Atlantic Charter, but said nothing about the tough words FDR had agreed to address to Japan as a result of his conversations with Churchill. It had been “mutually understood” by the men “that the Governments of both the United States and Great Britain needed more time to prepare for resistance against possible Japanese attack in the Far East.” Therefore, it had been agreed that Roosevelt should make clear to Japan in no uncertain terms that further aggression against her neighboring countries would not be tolerated, that such aggression would force those countries to take measures to safeguard their rights. Accordingly, once FDR was back in Washington, he informed the Japanese ambassador (August 17) that

if the Japanese Government takes any further steps in pursuance of a policy or program of military domination by force or threat of force of neighboring countries, the Government of the United States will be compelled to take immediately any

⁵²Department of State, *Peace and War: United States Foreign Policy, 1931–1941* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1943), p. 708.

⁵³*Ibid.*, p. 715.

and all steps which it may deem necessary toward safeguarding the legitimate rights and interests of the United States and American nationals and toward insuring the safety and security of the United States.⁵⁴

The next day in a wire signed by Roosevelt, transmitted by the State Department to the U.S. embassy in London, it was reported that FDR and Hull had received the Japanese ambassador and had

made to him a statement covering the position of this Government with respect to the taking by Japan of further steps in the direction of military domination by force along the lines of the proposed statement such as you [Churchill] and I [FDR] had discussed. The statement I made to him was no less vigorous than and was substantially similar to the statement we had discussed.⁵⁵

This statement was later referred to by Stimson and others as the “first ultimatum” to Japan.

KIMMEL CONTINUES TO REQUEST MEN AND EQUIPMENT FOR THE U.S. FLEET IN HAWAII

Before Kimmel took over as commander-in-chief of the Pacific Fleet at Pearl Harbor on February 1, 1941, he had had an opportunity “to survey the situation” briefly. He had written Stark on January 27 that he was

particularly impressed with the lack of Army equipment, for the task of defending this base. . . . I think the supply of an

⁵⁴Ibid., p. 714. FDR's oral statement to Nomura, August 17, 1941.

⁵⁵Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States: Diplomatic Papers, 1941*. vol. 4: *The Far East* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1956), p. 380.

adequate number of Army planes and guns for the defense of Pearl Harbor should be given the highest priority.

Kimmel was also concerned with the personnel shortage and wrote that he would

probably be required to make recommendations on this subject shortly after I take over. It appears wise to now fill all ships with personnel to capacity, both on account of the needed increase in complement to man the ships, and to train men for new construction.⁵⁶

These same complaints had been made before by Kimmel's predecessor, Richardson, just then being relieved of his command.

Once in command, Kimmel continued to bombard Washington with requests for men and materiel to strengthen the fleet. Yet rather than being strengthened, the fleet was weakened by the transfer in May to the Atlantic of almost a fourth of the Pacific Fleet. Kimmel felt he knew very little of what was going on in Washington, and he persisted in asking for information and supplies.

After Germany attacked Russia, Kimmel wanted to know how this would affect policy.⁵⁷ "Whether or not planes are to be supplied to the Russians may be outside my province," Kimmel wrote on July 30,

but I do remain keenly aware of our own deficiencies in aircraft. It is quite an undertaking for the United States to supply planes to any quarter of the globe in which fighting against Axis Powers may occur.⁵⁸

⁵⁶Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 16. pp. 2225–27. Kimmel to Stark, January 27, 1941.

⁵⁷*Ibid.*, part 16, p. 2242.

⁵⁸*Ibid.*

Again, on August 12, Kimmel reminded Stark of the fleet's needs. Kimmel believed the radar equipment was

far behind what it should be. . . . We need more ships of all types for a successful Pacific campaign but I believe we need submarines, destroyers, carriers and cruisers even more than we need battleships. This is a vast ocean.⁵⁹

Stark sympathized with Kimmel's supply problem but was unable to help. He responded on August 22 to several of Kimmel's more recent requests for men and materiel: "I know you want results, not excuses. So do I. I am doing everything from pleading to cussing with all the in-between variations and hope the picture presented is not too unsatisfactory."⁶⁰ Although Kimmel got some results over the months he was in command, he generally got more excuses than results.

THE VICTORY PROGRAM COMPLETED

In estimating the military and production requirements of the nation, Wedemeyer had to seek data from many sources. He looked into the status of the shipping, munitions requirements, and munitions production of U.S. troop bases. He explored the situation and capabilities of each of the major combatant nations, the capabilities and probable lines of action of both friendly and Axis powers. It was assumed that "the earliest date when U.S. armed forces could be mobilized, trained, and equipped for extensive operations" would be July 1, 1943.⁶¹

The president's July 9 request had enlarged the scope of Wedemeyer's survey. A couple of months later, Roosevelt expanded the task still further. In a memorandum to the War Department

⁵⁹Ibid., part 16, pp. 2243-45.

⁶⁰Ibid., p. 2181. Stark to Kimmel, August 22, 1941.

⁶¹Watson, *The War Department*, pp. 348-55.

on August 30, he wrote that he wanted the department, working in cooperation with the Navy Department, to submit to him by September 10, 1941, their

recommendation of distribution of expected United States production of munitions of war as between the United States, Great Britain, Russia and the other countries to be aided—by important items, quantity, time schedules, and approximate values for the period from the present time until June 30 [1942].

FDR also wanted to receive their

general conclusions as to the over-all production effort of important items needed for victory on the general assumption that the reservoir of munitions power available to the United States and her friends is sufficiently superior to that available to the Axis Powers to insure defeat of the latter.⁶²

Wedemeyer completed his exhaustive study by FDR's deadline.⁶³

JAPAN'S PEACE PARTY FALLS; HER WAR PARTY TAKES OVER

With our embargo in full effect, Japan's economic plight was fast deteriorating. In a desperate effort to save his government, Prime Minister Konoye on August 28 renewed his plea for a personal meeting with Roosevelt in Hawaii. The administration did not reply immediately.

By September 23 the conversations with the Japanese ambassador in Washington had "practically reached an impasse." Stark had a confidential talk with Hull about the situation and then reported to Kimmel: "Conversations without results cannot last

⁶²Ibid., p. 348.

⁶³Ibid., p. 351.

forever. If they fall through, and it looks like they might the situation could only grow more tense.” Stark wrote that Hull kept him pretty well informed and added in a P.S. dated September 29, “if there is anything of moment I will, of course, hasten to let you know.”⁶⁴ Once more Kimmel felt reassured that he would be sent any information pertinent to Pearl Harbor.

On October 2, Roosevelt and Hull, after several exchanges of notes, again turned down Konoye’s proposal for a Hawaii meeting.

Two weeks later, on October 6, Konoye, who had been doing his best to maintain peaceful relations between his country and the United States, was forced to resign. Konoye’s successor was an army general, Hideki Tojo. With a government composed primarily of military men, Japan’s “War Party” was in control. The chances of solving Japan’s economic needs by peaceful means faded.

Stark analyzed the Japanese power shift in a cable to his three fleet commanders.

The resignation of the Japanese cabinet has created a grave situation X. . . . Since the U.S. and Britain are held responsible by Japan for her present desperate situation there is also a possibility that Japan may attack these two powers X In view of these possibilities you will take due precautions including such preparatory deployments as will not disclose strategic intention nor constitute provocative actions against Japan X⁶⁵

In a covering letter to Kimmel, Stark wrote:

Personally I do not believe the Japs are going to sail into us and the message I sent you merely stated the “possibility”; in fact I tempered the message handed to me considerably. Perhaps

⁶⁴Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 16, pp. 2212–14. Stark letter to Kimmel, September 23, 1941; postscript dated September 29.

⁶⁵*Ibid.*, part 14, p. 1327.

I am wrong, but I hope not. In any case after long pow-wows in the White House it was felt we should be on guard, at least until something indicates the trend.⁶⁶

JAPANESE STOCKS OF STRATEGIC MATERIALS DANGEROUSLY LOW

Estimates of Japan's stocks of strategic materials furnished clues to the Japanese situation. Lieutenant Albert E. Hindmarsh, an economic analyst in the far eastern section of Naval Intelligence, had access to all available intelligence, including MAGIC. Hindmarsh was also regularly reading the minutes of the Japanese parliament. By following its debates, he could determine how much the Japanese government was paying per unit for storage of some 23 strategic materials. He then divided these figures into the total amounts shown in the Japanese budget for this purpose. In that way, he was able to calculate the stocks of Japan's strategic materials still on hand.

At regular intervals Hindmarsh personally took to Roosevelt his estimates of the stocks of these various materials. Japan's severest shortage was of oil. Our oil embargo, especially the embargo on aviation gasoline, was putting Japan in a desperate plight. Hindmarsh calculated in mid-summer 1941, that she had on hand about 75 million barrels. In a war Hindmarsh figured she would need 52 million barrels per year. She had enough mica, which came from India, for four years. And her stocks of hemp and sisal were sufficient, so she could safely bypass the Philippines. Hindmarsh was able to explain to FDR that, in view of Japan's economic priorities, she would have to aim first at replenishing her oil stocks; he expected her primary objective would be the

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, part 16, pp. 2214–15 (Stark to Kimmel, October 17, 1941).

Dutch East Indies, where she might expect to get oil production going in some six months or so.⁶⁷

THE OCTOBER REVOLUTION IN ONI

Throughout 1941, a struggle was going on within the Navy Department as to whose responsibility it was to evaluate secret military intelligence and pass it along to the commanders in the field. Both the chief of War Plans, Rear Admiral Richmond K. Turner, and the chief of Office of Naval Intelligence, Captain Alan G. Kirk, claimed this responsibility. The table of organization at the time seemed to place the responsibility with ONI. And Stark's March 22 letter to Kimmel supported that position.⁶⁸ However, Turner was aggressive and persistent. He finally persuaded Stark to reduce ONI to a fact-gathering agency, and War Plans assumed the responsibility for evaluating available intelligence and for determining what should be sent to the field commanders. This October 1941 power struggle between ONI and War Plans confused the lines of communication and created doubt as to just where the responsibility actually lay.

Then also in October, Kirk and his top assistant were removed from duty. According to communications-security chief Safford, this was the first time in Navy Department history that both chief and assistant chief of a bureau had been removed from office simultaneously. The previous practice had been to remove only one of the two top men at a time, so as to assure continuity. The third man in charge, then in London, was not involved.

⁶⁷ Author's notes of Albert E. Hindmarsh interview, January 9, 1954.

⁶⁸ Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 16, pp. 2159–60. Stark to Kimmel, March 22, 1941.

“BERTHING PLAN” OR HARBOR BOMB PLOT MESSAGES

The shift in ONI leadership took place on October 10, the day after the “berthing plan” message—asking the Japanese consul in Hawaii to report the movements of U.S. naval ships in and out of Pearl Harbor—became available in Washington. Rear Admiral Theodore S. Wilkinson, who had been serving as commanding officer aboard the battleship USS *Mississippi* took over as chief of ONI on October 15. Prior to joining the ONI, he had had no experience with naval intelligence “other than attendance at two international conferences for limitation of armaments in 1933 and 1934.”⁶⁹

The Pearl Harbor commanders were never advised of the “berthing plan” message. The failure to notify them of its existence and of the other “ships-in-harbor” messages decoded later in Washington, could have been due to failure on the part of those evaluating intelligence to recognize the importance of these messages. It could have been due to disarray accompanying the turnover in ONI personnel. It could have been due to mere negligence. But whatever the reason, the fact remains that neither War Plans nor ONI notified the Pearl Harbor commanders of those critical messages.

The U.S. Navy’s communications personnel in Hawaii were under instructions to try to solve the Japanese navy code (JN-25). They were not to spend time trying to decipher Japanese intercepts in the Japanese consular code (J-19) or any other code; these were to be mailed to Washington for decoding and translating. Therefore, our people in Hawaii made no attempt to decode and translate these intercepts, but simply forwarded them, as instructed, to Washington. Airmail from Hawaii to Washington then was not nonstop. It was by short hops and only

⁶⁹Ibid., part 4, p. 1724.

twice a week, so it took several days for an airmailed intercept to reach Washington.

One J-19 message, sent from Tokyo on September 24 to Honolulu, was picked up in Hawaii and mailed, undecoded to Washington, where it was decoded, translated, and made available to the top military personnel in Washington on October 9, 1941.⁷⁰ In that message, the foreign minister in Tokyo asked the Japanese consul in Hawaii to set up a system for making regular reports on the movements of U.S. ships in and out of Pearl Harbor. This ships-in-harbor message became known as the “berthing plan,” or as the first of the “bomb plot messages.” Pearl Harbor was not notified.

On November 15 Tokyo sent a cable to Honolulu, translated in Washington on December 3, which read, “As relations between Japan and the United States are most critical, make your ‘ships in harbor report’ irregular, but at a rate of twice a week.”⁷¹ Pearl Harbor was not advised.

On November 29 Tokyo cabled the consul in Honolulu: “We have been receiving reports from you on ship movements, but in future will you also report even when there are no movements.”⁷² Washington decoded and translated this message on December 5. Pearl Harbor was not notified.

Many other ships-in-harbor messages referring to Pearl Harbor, some 39 in all, were transmitted back and forth between Tokyo and Honolulu during the two months prior to the Japanese attack. Due to the pressure of other demands on the decoders in Washington, however, only 25 of these crucial intercepts were deciphered, translated, and read before the attack.⁷³ Yet not a single one of those 25 deciphered and translated messages was sent

⁷⁰Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 12, p. 261.

⁷¹*Ibid.*, part 12, p. 262.

⁷²*Ibid.*, part 12, p. 263. J-19, #122. (Tokyo to Honolulu, November 29, 1941)

⁷³*Ibid.*, part 12, p. 254–70.

to the Army and Navy commanders in Hawaii—they were not even informed of their existence.

To complete the record, it might be pointed out that intercepted Japanese cables revealed to our authorities in Washington that the Japanese were also watching ship movements in Manila. Some 59 messages were exchanged between Tokyo and the Philippines; all but two were deciphered and translated before December 7. Twenty-seven cables reporting on ship movements in and out of the Panama Canal were intercepted to and from Tokyo, 21 of which were deciphered and read before the attack on Pearl Harbor. We also intercepted eight Japanese cables between Tokyo and the west coast (San Francisco and Seattle), another eight that referred to southeast Asia and the Dutch East Indies, and a couple each concerning Vancouver (Canada) and Vladivostok (Russia).⁷⁴

The record shows that the ships in Pearl Harbor were those most closely under surveillance. Yet no hint was ever given Kimmel or Short that the Japanese, from September 24 on, were plotting regularly on grid charts the locations and movements of ships in Pearl Harbor, and forwarding this information to Tokyo. Nor was any hint ever given Kimmel or Short that as of mid-November, the Japanese consul had been asked to make these reports more frequently, “at a rate of twice a week,” or that he had been asked on November 29 to report “even when there are no ship movements.” In spite of Kimmel’s several requests for intelligence and in spite of the repeated reassurances that he would be kept informed, none of these vital intercepts was forwarded to the Pearl Harbor commanders before the attack.

⁷⁴*Ibid.*, part 12, pp. 254, 270–316.

5.

Talk of Ultimatums and Deadlines

JAPAN AND PUBLIC OPINION

Japan's trade situation continued to deteriorate. Her situation was desperate. On November 3, Ambassador Grew in Tokyo cabled Secretary of State Hull that "the greater part of Japan's commerce has been lost. Japanese industrial production has been dramatically curtailed, and Japan's national resources have been depleted." Grew believed that the United States would not be able to avert war in the Far East by continuing to embargo trade with Japan.

He saw world political events crowding in upon Japan, forcing her to take some drastic actions. He cautioned that if diplomacy failed, if Japan did not succeed in her attempts at reconciliation with the United States, he fully expected she would make "an all-out, do-or-die attempt, actually risking national hara-kiri, to make [her] impervious to economic embargoes." The United States should be ready to decide "whether war with Japan is justified by American national objectives, policies, and needs." Grew left no room for illusions. He warned in his cable that the United

States should not be deceived into thinking that Japan might not

rush headlong into a suicidal struggle with the United States. . . . It would be short-sighted for American policy to be based upon the belief that Japanese preparations are no more than saber rattling. . . . Japan may resort with dangerous and dramatic suddenness to measures which might make inevitable war with the United States.¹

There were factions in both Japan and the United States that wanted to maintain peace. Japanese Prime Minister Konoye had sought some agreement with the United States and had even offered to meet with Roosevelt to try to reconcile their differences. He had been rebuffed. As a result, he had been forced to resign. In October a more militant faction had taken over the government of Japan.

In this country the sentiment against our going to war was still widespread. Public opinion polls in the spring of 1941 reported more than 80 percent of the people were against becoming involved.² The America First Committee, established on September 4, 1940, was the most prominent organization that opposed U.S. involvement in the war. Its national chairman was General Robert E. Wood, board chairman of Sears Roebuck and Co. Among its more celebrated members were journalist John T. Flynn; Alice Roosevelt Longworth, daughter of former President

¹Department of State, *Peace and War: United States Foreign Policy, 1931–1941* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1943). Ambassador Grew's November 3, 1941 cable to State Department, Washington.

²A poll conducted by public opinion statistician George Gallup "indicated that 83% of the people in the United States would vote against a declaration of war if given the opportunity," although they "were still convinced that the American public would take the risk of war 'to help England win.'" James J. Martin, *American Liberalism and World Politics* (New York: Devin-Adair, 1964), vol. 2, p. 1275.

Theodore Roosevelt; World War I aviator Edward Rickenbacker; Lillian Gish, star of the early films; Socialist Norman Thomas; and aviator Colonel Charles A. Lindbergh.³ Lindbergh, a national hero ever since his dramatic solo flight across the Atlantic in 1927, became America First's most popular spokesman. When he spoke at New York's Manhattan Center on April 23, 1941, the hall was jammed with 5,500 people. In subsequent appearances—New York, Minneapolis, St. Louis, Philadelphia, Hollywood, Cleveland, Des Moines, Fort Wayne—he attracted even larger enthusiastic crowds, up to 22,000.⁴

Others were also working to maintain peace with Japan. Among them were religious groups, the Friends, or Quakers, and the followers of the Reverend E. Stanley Jones, a well-known Methodist missionary. Reverend Jones believed the Japanese were tired of fighting in China and were ready to make peace. He hoped to act as a “catalyst,” to help the various parties reconcile their differences, and had approached high Japanese and Chinese officials informally to learn their reaction to his suggestions. He had talked with officials in the U.S. State Department, and his suggestions had been transmitted by memoranda to the president. He wanted FDR to send a personal cable to the Emperor. Jones had also spoken to groups of ministers, usually finding them receptive to his ideas. By November 1941, Jones seemed to be making some progress with his suggestions.

The pro-peace noninterventionists, however, were gradually being overwhelmed by the pro-British propaganda emanating from the administration and the mass communications media—radio, movies, newsreels, and major newspapers and magazines. Although the majority of the people in the United States still did

³For an account of the America First Committee, see Wayne S. Cole, *America First: The Battle Against Intervention, 1940–1941* (New York: Octagon Books, 1971).

⁴E. Eastman Irving, ed., *The World Almanac* (New York: New York World-Telegram, 1942), pp. 62, 75, 78.

not want this country to become involved in the war, the climate of opinion was gradually shifting. Antiwar sentiment was beginning to decline.

WASHINGTON'S FAR EASTERN POLICY
—WARN JAPAN, DELAY OPERATIONS TO
ALLOW U.S. BUILD-UP IN PACIFIC

Rather than wanting to conciliate Japan, Secretary of State Hull was in favor of issuing an additional warning. Before doing so, however, he sought to determine the Army's and Navy's state of readiness. Would the military authorities be ready to support further State Department warnings?

On November 1 the State Department held a meeting on the far eastern situation. Messages from Generalissimo Chiang Kai-Shek, China's head of government at Chungking, and General John Magruder, chief of the American military mission to Chungking, were discussed. Chiang was urging that the United States warn Japan against attacking China through Yunnan, a province in southern China. To present the Navy viewpoint, Chief of Naval Operations Stark and Captain Schuirmann, the Navy liaison with the State Department, were present. They pointed out that Japan had already been warned. The president had told Japan on August 17, when he returned from meeting Churchill at Argentia, that if she continued military aggression against her "neighboring countries," the United States would be "compelled" to take action.⁵ According to Schuirmann, Hull "desired to know if the military authorities would be prepared to support further warnings by the State Department."⁶

⁵Department of State, *Peace and War*, pp. 713–14. FDR's oral statement to the Japanese ambassador, August 17, 1941.

⁶79th Cong., 1st sess. Joint (Congressional) Committee on the Investigation of the Pearl Harbor Attack. *Pearl Harbor Attack*, 39 vols. (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1946), part 14, p. 1063.

Another meeting was held at the State Department the following day. At that time it was proposed that the British send some planes to Thailand and that Japan be warned against moving into Siberia.⁷ On November 3 the Joint Board of the Army and Navy met. Fifteen top Army and Navy officers were present. The deliberations were strictly confidential; no hint of them was made public. Assistant Chief of Naval Operations, Admiral Royal E. Ingersoll, reviewed the far eastern situation. He said that a decision had been made several months before “to make the major effort in the Atlantic, and if forced to fight in the Pacific, to engage in a limited offensive effort.” This was consistent with the U.S.-British Staff Conversations Report (ABC-1) of March 27, 1941. A major war effort in the Pacific, Ingersoll pointed out, “would require an enormous amount of shipping, which would have to come from the Atlantic and other essential areas,” and this “would materially affect United States aid to England.” Even if the fleet could be moved to the Far East, he continued, there were no repair facilities at Manila or Singapore.⁸

Ingersoll then assessed the possibility of a Japanese attack. “Japan is capable of launching an attack in five directions; viz., against Russia, the Philippines, into Yunnan, Thailand and against Malaya.” He gave his recommendations as to what the United States should do in each of these five eventualities. “In case of Japanese attack against either the Philippines or British and Dutch positions, the United States should resist the attack. In case of Japanese attack against Siberia, Thailand or China through Yunnan, the United States should not declare war.”⁹

Ingersoll felt “the State Department was under the impression that Japan could be defeated in military action in a few weeks.” However, he pointed out, our fleet was “seriously handicapped”

⁷Ibid.

⁸Ibid., part 14, pp. 1063–64.

⁹Ibid., part 14, p. 1064.

at the time for lack of certain major naval units then in the repair yards. He recommended that offensive action in the Far East be deferred until U.S. military strength was built up in the Philippines. From what he said, it was obvious that the U.S. military was not eager to provoke a confrontation with Japan. “[T]he present moment was not the opportune time to get brash.”¹⁰

ARMY AND NAVY OPPOSE ULTIMATUM TO JAPAN UNTIL PHILIPPINE STRENGTH IS DEVELOPED

Army Chief of Staff Marshall was also at this November 3 meeting. He said he had received information to the effect that the Japanese expected to decide in a couple of days—that would be by November 5—what action they would take. He “emphasized” that it would be dangerous to move the “augmented Army Air Force” away from its present station in the Philippines for he believed that as long as it was there the Japanese would find action against the Philippines or towards the south to be “a very hazardous operation.” Moreover, he expected the Army forces in the Philippines would be of “impressive strength” by mid-December and “this in itself would have a deterrent effect on Japanese operations.”¹¹

It was Marshall’s position that, until U.S. power was sufficiently developed in the Philippines so we would “have something to back up our statements,” the Japanese should not be antagonized unnecessarily. The United States should “make certain minor concessions which the Japanese could use in saving face,” such as “a relaxation on oil restrictions or on similar trade restrictions.”¹² However, he realized that until U.S. forces were built up in the Far East, the situation was delicate.

¹⁰Ibid., Ingersoll remark at Joint Army-Navy Board November 3 meeting.

¹¹Ibid.

¹²Ibid., part 14, p. 1064.

At the conclusion of these discussions the Joint Board adopted Ingersoll's proposal, with amendments suggested by Stark and Marshall. A memorandum was to be prepared for the president opposing (1) the issuance of an ultimatum to Japan, (2) military action against Japan if she moved into Yunnan, and (3) support of Chiang Kai-Shek with U.S. military forces. The memorandum was to recommend that the State Department postpone hostilities with Japan as long as possible, and that some agreements be made with Japan "to tide the situation over for the next several months."

In addition to these recommendations, the memorandum was to (1) point out how a U.S.-Japanese war in the Far East would impair the help the United States was giving Great Britain and the other nations fighting Germany, and (2) emphasize that the United States was not in a position to engage in an offensive operation in the Far East without transferring to the Pacific most of the ships now in the Atlantic.¹³

JAPANESE-U.S. RELATIONS "ON THE BRINK OF CHAOS"

Our facility in decoding and translating intercepted messages sent in the Japanese diplomatic code, "Purple," had improved dramatically. On November 4, we intercepted, decoded, and translated a message sent from Tokyo earlier that day:

Well, relations between Japan and the United States have reached the edge, and our people are losing confidence in the possibility of ever adjusting them. . . . Conditions . . . are so tense that no longer is procrastination possible, yet in any sincerity to maintain pacific relationships between the Empire of Japan and the United States of America, we have decided . . . to gamble once more on the continuance of the parleys, but this is our last effort. . . . If through it we do not reach a quick

¹³Ibid., pp. 1064-65.

accord, I am sorry to say the talks will certainly be ruptured. Then, indeed, will relations between our two nations be on the brink of chaos. I mean that the success or failure of the pending discussions will have an immense effect on the destiny of the Empire of Japan. In fact, we gambled the fate of our land on the throw of this die.¹⁴

Japan was announcing that a break in the relations with the United States was imminent. And the top U.S. political and military officials who were cleared to read the secret intelligence known as MAGIC knew it.

STARK AND MARSHALL MEMORANDUM TO FDR:
AVOID WAR WITH JAPAN;
ISSUE NO ULTIMATUM TO JAPAN

As agreed at the November 3 meeting of the Joint Board, Marshall and Stark prepared a memorandum for the president, briefing him in some detail with respect to the Far East situation. One by one they pointed out the various reasons why the United States should *not* issue an ultimatum to Japan that might force her to take drastic action involving the United States in a Pacific war:

1. The U.S. fleet in the Pacific was inferior to the Japanese fleet and was not in a position to undertake an unlimited strategic offensive in the western Pacific.
2. U.S. military forces in the Philippines were not yet strong enough. They were being reinforced, however, and it was expected that air and submarine strength would be built up by mid-December and that the air forces would reach their projected strength by February or March 1942.

¹⁴Ibid., part 12, pp. 92–93. November 4, 1941 cable #725 from Tokyo to Washington. Translated November 4, 1941.

3. British naval and air reinforcements were expected to reach Singapore by February or March.

Marshall and Stark reconfirmed the policies and strategies agreed to in the U.S.-British staff conversations. “War between the United States and Japan should be avoided,” they wrote,

while building up defensive forces in the Far East, until such time as Japan attacks or directly threatens territories whose security to the United States is of very great importance.:

1. Territory or mandated territories of the United States, the British Commonwealth or the Netherlands East Indies;
2. Certain parts of Thailand in southeast Asia;
3. Portuguese Timor, New Caledonia, and the Loyalty Islands, all in the southwest Pacific.

The memorandum also stated that:

We should not intervene against Japan if she should attack Russia.

We should attempt to weaken Japan economically.

We should not send troops to China, but we should give “[a]ll possible aid short of actual war . . . to the Chinese Central Government.”

U. S. plans should be fully coordinated with the British and the Dutch.

It closed with a strong recommendation: “That no ultimatum be delivered to Japan.”¹⁵

Note that the territories Marshall and Stark named with whose defenses we were concerned and “whose security to the

¹⁵*Ibid.*, part 14, pp. 1061–62.

United States is of very great importance” were all thousands of miles from our shores.

JAPAN SETS A DEADLINE FOR SIGNING AGREEMENT
—TO SAVE U.S. RELATIONS FROM FALLING INTO
“CHAOTIC CONDITION”

Marshall had told the Joint Board on November 3 that he had information to the effect that on November 5 the Japanese would decide their course of action. And sure enough! On November 5, we intercepted and read the following November 5 Japanese message to the Washington embassy:

Because of various circumstances, it is absolutely necessary that all arrangements for the signing of this agreement be completed by the 25th of this month. I realize that this is a difficult order, but under the circumstances it is an unavoidable one. Please understand this thoroughly and tackle the problem of saving the Japanese-U.S. relations from falling into a chaotic condition. Do so with great determination and with unstinted effort, I beg of you.

This information is to be kept strictly to yourself only.¹⁶

U.S. CABINET WOULD SUPPORT A STRIKE
AGAINST JAPAN IF SHE ATTACKED THE
BRITISH OR DUTCH IN SOUTHEAST ASIA?

It was customary for the president to hold meetings of his cabinet on Friday mornings, and he held one as usual on Friday, November 7. Secretary of War Stimson had kept a rather complete diary for many years, and he continued the practice throughout his tenure, dictating rather copious notes each morning before going to his office in the War Department. Following the

¹⁶*Ibid.*, part 12, p. 100, #736, Tokyo to Washington.

November 7 meeting, Stimson wrote, "The Far Eastern situation was uppermost in many of our minds." Hull reported that U.S. relations with Japan had become "extremely critical and that we should be on the outlook for an attack by Japan at any time." But, as Marshall and Stark had stated in no uncertain terms in their memorandum to FDR just two days before, the military were anxious to avoid becoming involved in any action with Japan at that time. Nevertheless, according to Stimson's diary, "our military advisors . . . had urged military action if Japan attacked . . . American, British or Dutch territory." In anticipation that we might be called on to take some such action under the Singapore agreement with the British and Dutch, the military had been flying heavy B-17 bombers out to the Philippines for some time, whenever they could be spared from other duties. None of the cabinet members except Hull and Stimson knew of this ongoing buildup.

Roosevelt took "an informal vote" of the cabinet members on how the American people might react "if it became necessary to strike at Japan, in case she should attack England in Malaya or the Dutch in the East Indies." According to Stimson's diary, "The Cabinet was unanimous in the feeling that the country would support such a move," that is, a strike against Japan if she were to attack the British or Dutch in southeast Asia.¹⁷

NEWS OF "VICTORY PROGRAM" LEAKS; MARSHALL DENIES ITS EXISTENCE

The all-encompassing "Victory Program," prepared at the Roosevelt's request had been completed by September 10. It contained estimates of the military needs of the United States and her potential allies, and of the military stocks available worldwide to win a war in which this country was not as yet officially involved. The details and the very existence of the "Victory Program" was

¹⁷Ibid., part 11, p. 5420.

a carefully guarded secret. The small number of copies made had been distributed only to a select few military and administration officials. However, if it was to be intelligently implemented, the officers who would be involved had to know about it. Therefore, War Plans Division (WPD) prepared a strategic estimate of the situation, which it circulated in mid-November among War Department officials.¹⁸

In spite of the careful security surrounding WPD's estimate, news of the "Victory Program" leaked out. A rumor circulated in November that an American expeditionary force (AEF) was being planned. If true, this was contrary to Marshall's testimony before Congress in July when testifying on the extension of Selective Service. At that time, he had discounted any threat of militarism and assured Congress that he was not considering an AEF, but merely "task forces" of 5,000, 15,000, or 30,000 men. Marshall issued a categorical denial to scotch the rumor about an AEF: "There is no foundation whatsoever for the allegation or rumor that we are preparing troops for a possible expedition to Africa or other critical areas outside this hemisphere."¹⁹

THE JAPANESE PUSH FOR AGREEMENT

The seriousness of the Japanese deadline became increasingly apparent to anyone reading the secret "Purple" dispatches during this period. Japan was sending Nomura repeated reminders of the need for urgency. She realized she had to reach some agreement with the United States. And with this in mind, Ambassador Nomura and representatives of the U.S. State Department continued their discussions.

¹⁸Mark Skinner Watson, *The War Department: Chief of Staff: Prewar Plans and Preparations* (Washington, D.C.: Department of the Army, Historical Division, 1950), pp. 220–31, 358.

¹⁹*Ibid.*, p. 359.

In a further attempt to bring about an amicable settlement, Japan sent to Washington a second ambassador, Admiral Saburu Kurusu, to assist Nomura. Kurusu, with an American wife, was pro-American. Kurusu's association with the U.S. dated back to World War I when the two countries were allies. The U.S. government facilitated priority passage for him and for the Japanese Foreign Office secretary who accompanied him to the United States via a Pan American plane.²⁰ Kurusu arrived in Washington on November 15. His instructions were to

cooperate with [Nomura] in an unsparing effort to guide the negotiations to any early settlement. That is my fervent prayer which I hope may be granted. . . . [T]he crisis is fast approaching. . . . [D]o everything in your power to make the United States come to the realization that it is indeed a critical situation. I beg of you to make every effort to have them cooperate with us in assuring peace on the Pacific.²¹

On November 15 our Navy decoders deciphered and translated a Japanese "Purple" intercept reminding the Japanese ambassador in Washington "that the date [November 25] set forth in my message #736 is an absolutely immovable one. Please, therefore, make the United States see the light, so as to make possible the signing of the agreement by that date."²²

Nomura immediately cabled Tokyo. He was concerned about what would happen to the Japanese nationals residing in the United States:

²⁰Department of State, *Peace and War*, p. 137. See also Department of State, *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States: Japan, 1931-1941* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1943), vol. 2, p. 362.

²¹Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 12, pp. 130-31. Tokyo to Washington, #781, November 15, 1941.

²²*Ibid.*, p. 130. Tokyo to Washington, #775.

Let us suppose that the Japanese-U.S. negotiations for the adjustment of relations between the two countries which are being conducted at present, unfortunately break down. . . . It is most probable that diplomatic relations between the two countries would be broken off immediately. . . . I presume that the government has given careful consideration as to the disposition of the various offices and our nationals residing here. I would appreciate being advised in confidence of your decision in these matters.²³

Tokyo answered the following day:

...[Y]ou may be sure that you have all my gratitude for the efforts you have put forth, but the fate of our Empire hangs by the slender thread of a few days, so please fight harder than you ever did before. . . . I set the deadline for the solution of these negotiations in my #736, and there will be no change. Please try to understand that. You see how short the time is; therefore, do not allow the United States to sidetrack us and delay the negotiations any further. Press them for a solution on the basis of our proposals, and do your best to bring about an immediate solution.²⁴

We decoded, translated, and read both messages on November 17.

Nomura presented Japan's newly arrived second ambassador, Kurusu, to Secretary of State Hull on November 17. The three men then proceeded to the White House so that Kurusu might be received formally by the president. After the courtesies were over, Roosevelt brought up the serious misunderstandings between the two countries and expressed his desire to avoid war. The ambassadors said they equally wished for a peaceful settlement in the Pacific. In Kurusu's words, "[A]ll the way across the Pacific it was

²³Ibid., p. 133. Washington to Tokyo, #1098.

²⁴Ibid., pp. 137–38. Tokyo to Washington, unnumbered dispatch.

like a powder keg." He repeated that some way must be found to avoid war and assured the president that Prime Minister Tojo was also "very desirous of bringing about a peaceful adjustment notwithstanding he is an Army man."²⁵

Meanwhile, that very afternoon Hull received a cable from Ambassador Grew in Japan. Grew warned that there was "need to guard against sudden Japanese naval or military actions" outside the area of the Chinese theater of operations. It was likely, he said, that the Japanese might take "every possible tactical advantage, such as surprise and initiative." Japan maintained "extremely effective control over both primary and secondary military information," so the embassy's field of observation was "restricted almost literally to what could be seen with the naked eye, and this is negligible." This meant that the U.S. embassy's naval and military attaches could not be relied on to send "substantial warning." The Japanese, therefore, were "assured of the ability to send without foreign observation their troop transports in various directions."²⁶

THE JAPANESE AMBASSADORS CONTINUE TRYING FOR AGREEMENT

The two Japanese ambassadors were back at the State Department the following day. Their deadline (November 25) was approaching, and their immediate concern was the difficult position of the Japanese under the U.S.-imposed trade restrictions and asset-freeze. They pointed out that Japan was much more dependent on foreign trade than the United States; she was "hard-pressed," and thus "desirous" of reaching some agreement.

²⁵Department of State, *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States: Japan, 1931-1941*, vol. 2, pp. 740-43.

²⁶*Ibid.*, pp. 743-44.

Hull responded by raising the China question, which had long been a sticking point between the two countries. Would the Japanese be willing to forgo annexation and indemnities, and to respect China's sovereignty and territorial integrity, as well as the principle of equality? Nomura replied that they would be. Hull then asked how many soldiers the Japanese would be willing to withdraw from China. "Possibly 90 per cent," the ambassador replied. And how long did the Japanese intend to keep that remaining 10 percent in China? The ambassador did not reply directly but "invited attention to the fact that under the existing Boxer Protocol, Japan was permitted to retain troops in the Peiping and Tientsin area."

The next topic was Indochina. When Japan moved troops into that country in July, U.S.-Japanese conversations were interrupted and shipments of petroleum products were discontinued. Kurusu said Japan intended to withdraw her troops from Indochina "as soon as a just Pacific settlement should be reached." He asked about the possibility of the United States's ending the sanctions in the meantime. Hull said he would consult the British and the Dutch on this suggestion.²⁷

The Japanese were tired of fighting China, Kurusu added, and she would go as far as she could in taking the first step toward peace. Nevertheless, the U.S. government refused to make any concessions about aid to China. The situation was complicated by Japan's military alliance with Germany. Both England and Russia wanted Japan thoroughly occupied with her war in China so that she could not become an active ally of Germany, which would put at risk Britain's possessions in Asia and Russia's far eastern territory. Thus U.S. aid to China was, in effect, aid to England and Russia.

²⁷*Ibid.*, pp. 744–50. Memorandum of Hull's November 18, 1941 conversation with Japanese ambassadors.

Judging from the cable traffic we were reading, it was becoming apparent that Japan was preparing for a definite break in relations with the United States within a very short time. As we have seen, the Japanese embassy in Washington had cabled Tokyo on November 15 to ask advice “as to the disposition of the various offices and our nationals residing here” in the event of such a break. Then on November 17 Tokyo responded in a cable that we read on the 19th, asking the Japanese ambassador to advise the several consuls in the United States secretly “to help our citizens who remain behind to work for the common good” and also “to destroy immediately . . . secret documents.” Tokyo would soon wire “a plan for reducing the members of staffs.”²⁸

A break in relations was close!

²⁸Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 12, pp. 153–54.

6.

Modus Vivendi—Yes? No!

INTELLIGENCE

Information about an enemy is “intelligence.” Intelligence is one of the most valuable weapons in the arsenal of a belligerent. Most intelligence comes in bits and pieces—one fact here, another there, often seemingly unrelated. In the hands of an intelligent and capable agent, these bits and pieces may often be linked and made intelligible, yielding valuable information, “intelligence.” Thus coordination, analysis, and interpretation are extremely important. The more intelligence a nation can gain about its enemies—their forces, weapons, and plans—the more prepared it can be to forestall or oppose an attack. And the greater advantage it will have in any encounter.

To gain information about their enemies, to observe and to eavesdrop, warring powers employ every available technique—spies, telescopes, balloons, radio intercepts, electronic devices, satellite photography, cryptography, and so on. They seek to intercept secret communications. They work to expose invisible inks, and to decipher codes and ciphers, often extremely intricate and complex ones that frequently are revised and altered. Espionage and counterespionage are important to both sides in any conflict.

As we have seen, the United States had an advantage over the Japanese during the 1921–1922 Washington Naval Conference on disarmament because it was reading the Japanese government's secret instructions to its representative. But the U.S. government closed down its cryptographic agency in 1929, although the Navy continued to maintain an intelligence office, OP-20-G, which operated after 1916 under Commander Laurence F. Safford. And in 1930 the Army established its Signal Intelligence Service (SIS), headed by William Friedman. By 1940, these two agencies were deeply involved once more in analyzing and deciphering Japanese codes.

At that time, the Japanese had many codes of varying complexities. Each was intended for a different purpose. The most intricate were their diplomatic, consular, and naval codes. When the Japanese were especially anxious to assure the security of a message, they usually transmitted it in one of these codes. They considered their diplomatic code to be their most complex and most indecipherable; they thought it was absolutely secure and used it for their very most secret messages.

JAPAN'S DIPLOMATIC CODE

The intelligence experts in the Army's SIS and the Navy's Op-20-G cooperated in the attempt to break the various Japanese codes. Although the Japanese navy code long defied U.S. cryptographers, they made considerable headway in breaking several others, including the consular code. Their most spectacular success, however, was with Japan's diplomatic cipher.

After some 18 or 20 months of painstaking effort, the Army and Navy experts finally succeeded in breaking this code. They even constructed a machine that could duplicate the operations of the Japanese machine, including replicating the daily shuffling and transpositional changes by which the Japanese hoped

to thwart would-be code-breakers. In time, six of these machines were constructed.

For some time, the U.S. code name for Japan had been “Orange.” The machine used for decoding a previous Japanese cipher had been known as the “Red” machine. So in the tradition of color code names, this new machine was called “Purple.”

The first “Purple” machine was retained in Washington. When additional machines became available, they were distributed to stations where they were expected to be most valuable. The Navy retained one, the Army two. The others were sent to commanders in the field where conflict with Japan seemed possible. Two machines were sent to England, one of which was later forwarded to Singapore. Another machine went to Corregidor in the Philippines. Because personnel was limited there and because atmospheric conditions prevented picking up more than about 10 percent of the Tokyo-Washington messages, the Philippines handled primarily local traffic.¹ No “Purple” machine was ever sent to Hawaii. The Pearl Harbor commanders had to rely for intelligence about the Japanese on radio directional findings they could pick up and on reports relayed to them from Washington.

Intercepting and decoding a Japanese message was only the first step on the road to turning it into useful intelligence. Once deciphered, an intercept had to be translated into English. But this translation was not “intelligence”; it was only raw material. To become useful “intelligence,” it had to be properly analyzed and interpreted. Then it had to reach those who could use it to advantage. And all this had to be accomplished without the enemy’s knowledge.

¹Percy L. Greaves, Jr., “The Pearl Harbor Investigations,” in Harry Elmer Barnes, ed., *Perpetual War for Perpetual Peace* (Caldwell, Idaho: Caxton Printers, 1953), p. 410; David Kahn, *The Codebreakers: The Story of Secret Writing* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 1967), p. 23. See also Laurence F. Safford, two-hour tape, notes in author’s possession.

Developing the “Purple” machine seemed almost miraculous, so the information derived from it was code-named “MAGIC.” Since this information was extremely valuable, the U.S. government was anxious not to jeopardize its source. Should the Japanese discover their code had been broken, they would undoubtedly stop using it, revise it and/or adopt a different code. The laborious task of breaking a new code would then have to begin all over again. So knowledge of “Purple” was confined to a very few officials and only about a dozen copies of each translated MAGIC intercept were made.² Distribution of the MAGIC intercepts was by a high-ranking special courier who usually waited to answer questions while the intercepts were being read. To maintain security, the intercepts were then retrieved and returned to a secure file. Only four copies of each decoded/translated intercept were kept; all others were destroyed.³

Once the Japanese diplomatic code was broken, the Army and Navy intercept stations rarely missed a message. With experience, the Army and Navy specialists in Washington became quite skillful at deciphering Japanese messages coded on the “Purple” machine. As time went by, specialists were often able to decode and translate messages so quickly that they were in the hands of Secretary of State Hull before his meetings with the Japanese ambassadors. “Of the 227 messages pertaining to Japanese-American negotiations sent between Tokyo and Washington from March to December 1941, all but four were picked up.”⁴ And the messages we intercepted dealt not only with the U.S.-Japanese negotiations, but also with many other matters.⁵

²79th Cong., 1st sess. Joint (Congressional) Committee on the Investigation of the Pearl Harbor Attack. *Pearl Harbor Attack*, 39 vols. (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1946), part 36, p. 23. McCollum testimony at Hewitt Inquiry.

³Safford interview, April 5, 1966, notes in author’s possession.

⁴Kahn, *The Codebreakers*, p. 13.

⁵Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 33, p. 915.

So throughout the months preceding the Japanese attack, U.S. officials in Washington received a continual flow of precise and accurate information directly from the innermost chambers of the Japanese government.

However, the Japanese officials did not communicate everything to their representatives abroad, not even to their Washington ambassadors. So there was still much we did not know about Japan's plans and intentions and there was ample room for conjecture, speculation and interpretation.

JAPAN PROPOSES A *MODUS VIVENDI*

On November 19, Japanese ambassadors Nomura and Kurusu renewed their conversations with Hull at his apartment. The ambassadors told Hull that Japan was being squeezed economically by the U.S. embargo and by "our freezing measures"; she wanted a "quick settlement." They told Hull they "were momentarily expecting instructions" from their government. Hull suggested that "if the Japanese Government could prevail over the views of the Japanese war party," it might be possible to "work out something with us."⁶

By the following day, the ambassadors had received their instructions and visited Hull again. Nomura said "the Japanese Government was clearly desirous of peace and that it was trying to show this peaceful purpose by relieving the pressure on Thailand." It was anxious to resume trade, and to accomplish this, it was offering to restrict military operations. Nomura and Kurusu proposed a *modus vivendi*. *Modus vivendi* is Latin meaning a "living or viable method or measure." In other words, the ambassadors

⁶Department of State, *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States: Japan, 1931-1941* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1943), vol. 2, pp. 751-52.

were proposing a temporary working arrangement until the disputes could be settled.⁷

The Japanese *modus vivendi* contained five points: (1) The governments of Japan and of the United States should agree “not to make any armed advancement” in southeastern Asia or the south Pacific, except in French Indochina, where the Japanese troops were already stationed; (2) the Japanese government would agree to withdraw its troops from French Indochina once peace was established in the Pacific, and in the meantime, it would shift them from southern to northern French Indochina; (3) the two governments would “cooperate with a view to securing” in the Netherlands East Indies the various goods and commodities they might need; (4) the governments would undertake to restore pre-embargo commercial relations, and the United States shall supply Japan “a required quantity of oil”; and (5) the U.S. government, in turn, should refrain from actions “prejudicial” to the restoration of general peace between Japan and China.⁸

UNITED STATES MAKES A 6-MONTH *MODUS VIVENDI* COUNTER-PROPOSAL

President Roosevelt expressed his view on the Japanese *modus vivendi* in a handwritten note to Hull:

6 months

1. U.S. to resume economic relations—some oil and rice now—more later.
2. Japan to send no more troops to Indochina or Manchurian border or any place South (Dutch, Brit. or Siam).
3. Japan to agree not to invoke tripartite pact even if U.S. gets into European war.

⁷Ibid., p. 753.

⁸Ibid., pp. 755–56.

4. U.S. to introduce Japs to Chinese to talk things over but U.S. to take no part in their conversations.

Later on Pacific agreements.⁹

Apparently FDR was then willing to enter into an agreement with Japan to help relieve the economic pressures on her for six months. He would permit Japan to obtain some oil and rice. He would not insist that Japan pull out of Indochina completely. He was concerned about the Japanese-German pact. However, in item 4 FDR ignored Japan's request that the United States "refrain from such measures and actions as will be prejudicial to . . . the restoration of general peace" in China. In other words, he did not acknowledge Japan's request that the United States discontinue helping Chiang's forces. To FDR, aid to China was important; by helping China we were hurting Japan, preventing her from attacking the Russian Communists in the far east, and that helped our allies, England and Russia, in their struggle against Germany in Europe.

Before responding to the Japanese proposal, Hull met on November 22 with the British and Australian ambassadors and the Dutch minister to determine the reactions of their respective governments. The Chinese ambassador, also invited, was late in arriving. Hull suggested, and the others seemed to agree, that it would be better to submit a substitute proposal than to make "a specific reply to the Japanese proposal, section for section." He outlined his alternative *modus vivendi*, the major purposes of which were to contain Japan and to protect China. The ambassadors all "seemed to be well pleased . . . except the Chinese Ambassador, who was somewhat disturbed." But then, in Hull's

⁹Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 14, pp. 1108–09, undated, probably shortly after November 20, 1941; Joseph P. Lash, *Roosevelt and Churchill, 1939–1941: The Partnership That Saved the West* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1976), p. 467.

words, he “always is when any question concerning China arises not entirely to his way of thinking.”¹⁰

JAPANESE DEADLINE EXTENDED TO
NOVEMBER 29, AFTER WHICH “THINGS ARE
AUTOMATICALLY GOING TO HAPPEN.”

The Japanese ambassadors had been told on November 5, that they must conclude their deliberations by November 25. Then on November 22, Tokyo cabled them, extending the deadline to November 29, but urged them to continue their efforts: “Stick to your fixed policy and do your very best. Spare no efforts and try to bring about the solution we desire.” It is “awfully hard for us to consider changing the date,” Tokyo told the two ambassadors.

There are reasons beyond your ability to guess why we wanted to settle the Japanese-American relations by the 25th, but if within the next three or four days you can finish your conversations with the Americans; if the signing can be completed by the 29th (let me write it out for you—twenty ninth); if the pertinent notes can be exchanged; if we can get an understanding with Great Britain and the Netherlands; and in short if everything can be finished, we have decided to wait until that date.

But, the Japanese government added, “This time we mean it, that the deadline absolutely cannot be changed. *After that things are automatically going to happen.*” (Italics added.)¹¹

The Japanese ambassadors were being giving a little more time. It was obvious that the failure of the negotiations would

¹⁰Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States: Diplomatic Papers, 1941*, vol. 4: *The Far East*, 7 vols. (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1956), p. 640, Hull memorandum of November 22, 1941.

¹¹Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 12, p. 165. Tokyo cable #812 to Japanese Ambassador in Washington.

have serious repercussions, but also that their government was not taking them into full confidence.

On November 22, Japan made another concession, offering to move her troops from the south of Indochina to the north. Kurusu told Hull it had taken

a great deal of persuasion to induce the army to abandon a position once taken, but that both he and the Ambassador had been pleasantly surprised when the Japanese army acceded to their suggestion in regard to offering to withdraw the Japanese troops from southern Indochina.

Kurusu considered this “an encouraging sign.”¹²

On November 24, two days after U.S. intelligence experts decoded Tokyo cable #812 extending the Japanese deadline to November 29, the two ambassadors received a follow-up cable from Tokyo: “The time limit set in my message #812 is in Tokyo time.”¹³ That was 14 hours earlier than Washington time. Thus we were alerted that the timing of the deadline was crucial. This cable was decoded by our cryptanalysts in Washington the same day it was sent.

MORE DISCUSSIONS AMONG FRIENDS OF THE U.S. ON U.S. RESPONSE TO JAPAN

Also on November 24, Hull met once more with the Australian, British, Chinese, and Dutch diplomats. The Dutch minister said his government “would support the [U.S.] *modus vivendi* proposal.” However, Chinese Ambassador Hu Shih objected to several of its provisions that affected China. For one

¹²Department of State, *Japan, 1931–1941*, p. 758. State Department memorandum of Hull’s November 22 conversation with the Japanese ambassadors.

¹³Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 12, p. 173. Tokyo message #823 to Washington.

thing, he believed that permitting the Japanese to retain soldiers in Indochina would pose a threat to China's supply line, the recently reopened Burma Road.

Hull realized the urgency of the situation. He pointed out to the four diplomats the importance of reaching a temporary agreement with the Japanese to assure a few more months of peace. He said he was

striving to reach this proposed temporary agreement primarily because the heads of our Army and Navy often emphasize to [him] that time is the all-important question for them, and that it is necessary to be more fully prepared to deal effectively with the situation in the Pacific area in case of an outbreak by Japan.

Hull also

emphasized the point that, even if we agree that the chances of such an outbreak are not great, it must be admitted that there are real possibilities that such an outbreak may soon occur—*any day after this week*—unless a temporary arrangement is effected. (italics added)¹⁴

Information then available in the Navy Department clearly indicated that the Japanese were planning some decisive action for the very near future. In the afternoon of November 24, Chief of Naval Operations Stark authorized a circular message to his fleet commanders on the rim of the Pacific—in the Philippines (Hart), at Pearl Harbor (Kimmel), and to the commandants of the several naval districts, Panama (15th), San Diego (11th), San Francisco (12th), and Seattle (13th)—with copies for information only to SPENAVO (Special Naval Observer/London) and the commander of the Atlantic Fleet (King). (All Navy messages

¹⁴Department of State, *The Far East*, pp. 646–47, Hull's memorandum of conversation.

were identified by a six-digit number indicating the time and date filed in Greenwich, England. This system eliminated confusion that might arise when sending and receiving messages to and from different time zones.)

In his cable Stark advised his field commanders:

Chances of favorable outcome of negotiations with Japan very doubtful. This situation coupled with statements of Japanese Government and movements their naval and military forces indicate in our opinion that a surprise aggressive movement in any direction including attack on Philippines or Guam is a possibility.... Guam will be informed separately.¹⁵

The commanders were asked “to inform senior Army officers their areas.”

Following instructions, Admiral Kimmel consulted with General Short in Hawaii. Kimmel and his advisers did not dispute Japan’s “capability” for delivering “a long-range surprise bombing attack” on Pearl Harbor. Nor did they rule out the possibility that Japan “might attack without a declaration of war.” The Philippines and Guam seemed the only U.S. possessions imminently threatened by Japan. The Philippines were on the flank of the most direct route from Japan to French Indochina, the Malay Peninsula, and the Dutch East Indies. And Guam, the site of a U.S. naval station, lay in the midst of the Japanese-mandated, formerly German-owned, islands—the Marianas, Carolines, and Marshalls. (After World War I, Japan, then an ally of Great Britain and the United States, had been given these islands to administer under a League of Nations mandate, and we had known for some time that Japan was constructing naval and air bases on them.) Thus, Kimmel and his advisers did not consider it likely that Hawaii would be the target of such “a surprise aggressive movement in any direction.” They

¹⁵Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 14, p. 1405.

reasoned that she [Japan] would not commit the strategic blunder of delivering a surprise attack on United States territory, the one course that irrevocably would unite the American people in war against Japan.¹⁶

So the effect of Stark's message was to turn the attention of Kimmel and his advisers toward the Far East.

OBJECTIONS RAISED TO U. S. PROPOSED *MODUS VIVENDI*

Another November 24 meeting concerning the U.S. proposed *modus vivendi* took place in the office of Treasury Secretary Morgenthau. Also present were Harry Dexter White, an assistant secretary, and Russian embassy counselor (later ambassador) Andrei Gromyko. White protested against "a Far Eastern Munich." He drafted a letter to Roosevelt for Morgenthau's signature stating that to sell China

to her enemies for thirty blood stained pieces of gold will not only weaken our national policy in Europe as well as in the Far East, but will dim the luster of American world leadership in the great democratic fight against fascism.¹⁷

Morgenthau didn't send that letter. He didn't have to; he realized "the president needed no prodding to stand for precisely the policy which the Secretary then and later considered essential. He had, in a sense, deemed it essential ever since the fall of 1938."¹⁸ It was in November 1938 that Japan had announced her intention

¹⁶Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 39 (Report), p. 314, analysis here as culled from testimony during the JCC hearings and presented in its final report.

¹⁷David Rees, *Harry Dexter White: A Study in Paradox* (New York: Coward, McCann & Geoghegan, 1973), p. 125.

¹⁸John Morton Blum, *From the Morgenthau Diaries: Years of Urgency, 1938–1941* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1965), p. 389.

of establishing an anticommunist “New Order” in Asia. Japan, Manchukuo, and China were to cooperate “to secure international justice, to perfect the joint defense against Communism, and to create a new culture and realize a close economic cohesion throughout east Asia.”¹⁹

In the evening of November 24 Chinese ambassador Hu Shih called on Stanley K. Hornbeck, State Department adviser on political relations, to register his objections to the *modus vivendi* the United States was considering. The ambassador said “he realized that it would be very helpful to keep the Japanese in suspense for another three months, but he doubted whether that could be achieved.” However, he assured Hornbeck “that he would try to cause his Government to see the problem in the light in which the American Government sees it.”²⁰

The Dutch minister had told Hull on November 22 that his government supported the U.S. proposal. However, the Dutch government had contacted him again to express reservations, as the Chinese ambassador had, to the number of Japanese troops that might be left in Indochina. The minister also called on Hornbeck that evening to relay to him his government’s second thoughts.²¹

¹⁹U.S. House Committee on Foreign Affairs. *Events Leading up to World War II: Chronological History of Certain Major International Events Leading up to and During World War II with the Ostensible Reasons Advanced for their Occurrence, 1931–1944*, 78th Cong., 2nd sess., 1944, p. 169. November 3, 1938 entry quotes from Prime Minister Prince Konoye’s November 3, 1938 radio speech announcing Japan’s intention of creating a “new order” in east Asia. For entire speech, see Department of State, *Japan: 1931–1941*, pp. 478–81.

²⁰Department of State, *The Far East*, p. 650–51, memorandum of conversations of State Department’s adviser on political relations, Stanley K. Hornbeck.

²¹*Ibid.*

THE U. S. PROPOSES 3-MONTH *MODUS VIVENDI*

The U.S. counterproposal to the Japanese *modus vivendi* went through several drafts. The one finally approved—by both the War and Navy departments and then later, at a White House meeting, by FDR’s so-called “War Cabinet”—provided for a three-month respite.

The United States was still, of course, officially neutral and nominally at peace. However, a War Cabinet had been set up as an informal body to coordinate the activities of the civil and military branches of the executive department. This War Cabinet consisted of the president; the secretaries of State (Hull), War (Stimson), and Navy (Knox); the Army chief of staff (Marshall), chief of naval operations (Stark), and occasionally the commanding general of the Air Force (Arnold).

It was a sort of clearing house for information, a gathering place for discussion of policies, so that each of the independent actors in the scene would know what was going on and would have information to guide him in making his own decisions that were more or less independent, but at the same time also somewhat dependent on the action of other members of the group.²²

The U.S. proposal called on Japan to withdraw her troops from French Indochina and to make no further advances in Asia or the Pacific. These provisions would accomplish the administration’s goals of restraining Japan and protecting China. In return

²²Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 39, p. 135. Quotation from Army Pearl Harbor Board Report. See also U.S. Congress, *Report of the Joint Committee on the Investigation of the Pearl Harbor Attack, Congress of the United States, Pursuant to S. Con. Res. 27, A Concurrent Resolution Authorizing an Investigation of the Attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, and Events and Circumstances Relating Thereto and Additional Views of Mr. Keefe Together with Minority Views of Mr. Ferguson and Mr. Brewster*, 79th Cong., 2nd sess. (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1946), p. 513.

for these concessions, the United States would agree to relax her trade restrictions for three months. The export of petroleum to Japan would be permitted “upon a monthly basis for civilian needs” only. The United States also would try to induce the Australian, British and Dutch governments to relax their trade restrictions.²³

In a November 24 telegram to Churchill, Roosevelt summarized this three-month *modus vivendi*:

This seems to me a fair proposition for the Japanese but its acceptance or rejection is really a matter of internal Japanese politics. I am not very hopeful and we must all be prepared for real trouble, possibly soon.²⁴

Stimson and Knox met in Hull’s office on November 25, where they discussed the proposal at some length. Stimson thought it “adequately safeguarded all our interests,” but he didn’t think the Japanese would accept it because it was “so drastic.”²⁵

British Ambassador Lord Halifax called on Hull later that same morning and relayed Britain’s approval of the U.S. decision to present the Japanese with a counterproposal. The British, he said, had “complete confidence in Mr. Hull’s handling of these negotiations.” They believed “the Japanese will try to force a hurried decision by magnifying the dangers of delay” and urged

that to prevent misrepresentation by Japan it will have to be made public that any interim agreement is purely provisional and is only concluded to facilitate negotiation of an ultimate

²³Department of State, *The Far East*, p. 644.

²⁴*Ibid.*, p. 649.

²⁵Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 11, p. 5433. Excerpt reprinted from Stimson’s November 25 diary.

agreement on more fundamental issues satisfactory to all parties concerned.²⁶

CHINA OBJECTS TO U.S. REVISED 3-MONTH *MODUS VIVENDI*

Word of the proposed U.S. *modus vivendi* soon reached Chiang Kai-shek. On November 25 “numerous hysterical cable messages to different Cabinet officers and high officials in the Government” began arriving from him and his associates.²⁷ They “bombed Washington with demands that no further concessions be made to Tokyo.”²⁸ Chiang cabled Knox, Stimson, and Morgenthau to say the same thing.²⁹ He also cabled Churchill in England.

Chiang appeared frantic. He asked his brother-in-law and personal emissary in Washington, Dr. T.V. Soong of China Defense Supplies, Inc., to contact Stimson and Knox.

If, therefore, there is any relaxation of the embargo or freezing regulations, or if a belief of that gains ground, then the Chinese people would consider that China has been completely sacrificed by the United States. The morale of the entire people will collapse and every Asiatic nation will lose faith, and indeed suffer such a shock in their faith in democracy that a most tragic epoch in the world will be opened. The Chinese army will collapse, and the Japanese will be enabled to carry through

²⁶Department of State, *The Far East*, pp. 655–56. British Embassy to Department of State.

²⁷*Ibid.*, pp. 685–87, Hull memorandum concerning November 29 conversation with the Japanese ambassadors.

²⁸Rees, *Harry Dexter White*, p. 124.

²⁹Blum, *From the Morgenthau Diaries*, p. 386.

their plans, so that even if in the future America would come to our rescue the situation would be already hopeless.³⁰

Another cable was sent that same day by one of Chiang's advisers, Owen Lattimore, to Lauchlin Currie, then an administrative assistant to President Roosevelt and a friend of Lattimore's. Currie had helped Lattimore obtain the appointment as Chiang's U.S. political adviser.³¹ Lattimore cabled that he had "never seen him [Chiang Kai-shek] really agitated before. Loosening of economic pressure or unfreezing would dangerously increase Japan's military advantage in China." According to Lattimore, Chiang believed that

A relaxation of American pressure while Japan has its forces in China would dismay the Chinese. Any *Modus Vivendi* now arrived at with China [sic; Japan?] would be disastrous to Chinese belief in America and analogous to the closing of the Burma Road, which permanently destroyed British prestige. . . . It is doubtful whether either past assistance or increasing aid could compensate for the feeling of being deserted at this hour. The Generalissimo [Chiang] has deep confidence in the President's fidelity to his consistent policy but I must warn you that even the Generalissimo questions his ability to hold the situation together if the Chinese national trust in America is undermined by reports of Japan's escaping military defeat by diplomatic victory.³²

³⁰Department of State, *The Far East*, pp. 660–61, telegram from Chiang Kai-shek to Dr. T.V. Soong, November 25, 1941.

³¹U.S. Congress. Senate. Committee on the Judiciary, Subcommittee to Investigate the Administration of the Internal Security Act and Other Internal Security Laws, *Institute of Pacific Relations*, 82nd Congress, 2nd session, part 9, pp. 3209–12.

³²Department of State, *The Far East*, p. 652; Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 14, p. 1160.

Still another cable arrived from China, this one from Foreign Minister Quo Tai-chi to Ambassador Hu Shih. “[T]he Generalissimo showed rather strong reaction” at the news he was receiving from Washington. Quo Tai-chi’s wire was somewhat calmer than Lattimore’s: Chiang “got the impression that the United States Government has put aside the Chinese question in its conversation with Japan.” Apparently, Chiang believed that the United States was “still inclined to appease Japan at the expense of China.” Quo Tai-chi had explained to Chiang that “the Secretary of State has always had the greatest respect for the fundamental principles, and that I believe he has made no concession to Japan.” But his main point came through loud and clear.

We are, however, firmly opposed to any measure which may have the effect of increasing China’s difficulty in her war of resistance, or of strengthening Japan’s power in her aggression against China. Please inform the Secretary of State.³³

When Hu Shih showed Hull this telegram, Hull again explained that the United States was just trying to give the U.S. military more time to build up its defenses. “[T]he official heads of our Army and Navy for some weeks,” Hull said, “have been most earnestly urging that we not get into war with Japan until they have had an opportunity to increase further their plans and methods and means of defense in the Pacific area.” Therefore, “at the request of the more peaceful elements in Japan . . . we have been carrying on conversations and [have been] making some progress thus far.”

Hull told Hu Shih that the Generalissimo and Madame Chiang Kai-shek had “very recently . . . flooded Washington with strong and lengthy cables telling us how extremely dangerous the

³³Department of State, *The Far East*, p. 654, November 24, 1941 telegram, Quo Tai-chi to Hu Shih.

Japanese threat is to attack the Burma Road through Indochina and appealing loudly for aid.” Hull pointed out that

practically the first thing this present proposal of mine and the president does is to require the Japanese troops to be taken out of Indochina and thereby to protect the Burma Road. . . . [O]ur proposal would relieve the menace of Japan in Indochina to the whole South Pacific area.

Hull continued,

Of course, we can cancel this proposal, but it must be with the understanding that we are not to be charged with failure to send our fleet into the area near Indochina and into Japanese waters, if by any chance Japan makes a military drive southward.³⁴

It would seem that either Hu Shih had completely misunderstood the provisions of the proposed *modus vivendi* or Chiang had. Perhaps these provisions had been misrepresented to China. As Hull explained to Hu Shih, the draft Hull had outlined previously would have required Japan to withdraw all military and police forces from China proper and from Indochina. Japan would also have had to agree to support no other government or regime in China except Chiang’s, then headquartered at Chungking. If Japan acceded to these provisions, it would constitute a great victory for Chiang’s government.

JAPANESE ATTACK APPEARS IMMINENT;
STIMSON: CAN THEY BE MANEUVERED
INTO “FIRING THE FIRST SHOT?”

On November 25, Navy intelligence deciphered and translated a Japanese J-19 circular message (#2330) sent ten days before from Tokyo to all Japan’s representatives abroad. It gave

³⁴Ibid., pp. 653–54.

them “detailed instructions for the destruction of code machines” to be carried out “in the event of an emergency.”³⁵ Here was clear evidence that Japan was contemplating more hostile action in the near future.

At noon on November 25, FDR’s War Cabinet met at the White House. “[I]nstead of bringing up the Victory Parade,” that is the plan “for the actual winning of a war not yet declared,” as Stimson had expected, Roosevelt raised another subject. He announced, Stimson recalled, “that we were likely to be attacked perhaps (as soon as) next Monday [December 1].” The Japanese were undoubtedly planning an “expedition to the South,” which would be likely to interfere with “our interests in the Philippines and cutting into our vital supplies of rubber from Malaysia.” Hull “laid out his general broad propositions on which the thing [our response to Japan’s proposed *modus vivendi*] should be rested—the freedom of the seas and the fact that Japan was in alliance with Hitler and was carrying out his policy of world aggression.”

FDR reminded the group that the Japanese were “notorious for making an attack without warning.” The question before the War Cabinet was “how we should maneuver them into the position of firing the first shot without allowing too much danger to ourselves.” Stimson confided to his diary that this was indeed “a difficult proposition.” The possibility of issuing Japan an ultimatum was also raised at this meeting. Stimson pointed out that the president

had already taken the first steps towards an ultimatum in notifying Japan way back last summer [August 17]³⁶ that if she crossed the border into Thailand, she was violating our safety. . . . [H]e had only to point out (to Japan) that to follow [sic; allow?] any such expedition was a violation of a warning we had already

³⁵Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 12, p. 137.

³⁶Department of State, *Japan: 1941*, p. 558.

given. So Hull was asked to prepare such a statement to be submitted to Japan.³⁷

When Stimson returned to his office from this meeting, he learned from Army Intelligence, G-2, that five Japanese divisions were headed southward from Shantung and Shansi to Shanghai. The ships had been sighted south of Formosa. He immediately phoned Hull and sent him a copy of the G-2 message. He also sent a copy to the president.³⁸

U.S. PROPOSED *MODUS VIVENDI* SCUTTLED

At 6:00 A.M. the next day, a Triple Priority cable, addressed to FDR from “the former Naval person,” Winston Churchill, was received in Washington. Churchill acknowledged receipt of the U.S. proposed *modus vivendi*. “Of course, it is for you to handle this business,” Churchill cabled, “and we certainly do not want an additional war. There is only one point that disquiets us. What about Chiang Kai Shek? Is he not having a very thin diet? . . . If they collapse, our joint dangers would enormously increase.”³⁹

Early that morning, T.V. Soong, Chiang’s brother-in-law and emissary in Washington, called on Harry Dexter White. Soong pleaded with White to use his influence with Morgenthau to try to have the proposed U.S. *modus vivendi* killed. White approached Morgenthau and persuaded him to call on the president. Morgenthau walked through the underground passageway linking the Treasury building to the White House to see Roosevelt. After Morgenthau described the Chinese ambassador’s and

³⁷Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 11, p. 5433, excerpt from Stimson’s diary, November 25, 1941.

³⁸Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 11, pp. 5433–34, from Stimson diary, as quoted in JCC hearings.

³⁹Department of State, *The Far East*, p. 665.

Soong's agitation, FDR agreed to see them. "I will quiet them down," he said.⁴⁰

White also

sent an "urgent telegram" to Edward C. Carter, the former secretary-general of the Institute of the Pacific Relations in New York . . . [asking] Carter to come to Washington to lobby against making any concessions to the Japanese.⁴¹

Stimson phoned FDR that same morning and told him about the Japanese expedition southward-bound from China. This was news to him, for he hadn't seen the G-2 message Stimson had sent him the evening before. According to Stimson, Roosevelt

blew up—jumped up into the air, so to speak, and said . . . that changed the whole situation because it was an evidence of bad faith on the part of the Japanese that while they were negotiating for an entire truce—an entire withdrawal (from China)—they should be sending this expedition down there to Indochina."⁴²

FDR met with the two Chinese and then called Hull to the White House. The proposed *modus vivendi* would be scuttled and a statement of "broad basic proposals" would be offered instead.⁴³ The Dutch government's shift from support to criticism of our *modus vivendi*, the reversal of the British government's position from "complete confidence" in Hull and "support" for a U.S. counterproposal to concern with Chiang's "very thin diet," buttressed

⁴⁰Blum, *From the Morgenthau Diaries*, p. 386.

⁴¹Rees, *Harry Dexter White*, p. 125. See also U.S. Congress, Senate, *Institute of Pacific Relations Hearings*, July 26, 1951, part 1, pp. 153–54.

⁴²Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 11, p. 5434, from Stimson's diary, November 26, 1941.

⁴³*Ibid.*, part 11, p. 5387, Hull reply to interrogatory submitted by the Joint Congressional Committee.

by Chiang's campaign of cables, had tipped the scales against Japan.

Without consulting his other advisers, Roosevelt authorized Hull to give the Japanese a ten-point note based on White's suggestions. Neither War nor Navy department was notified of this decision. Both Roosevelt and Hull realized their note would be unacceptable to the Japanese.

Chiang's anti-Japanese campaign, orchestrated largely by three communist sympathizers—White, Lattimore, and Currie, with Edward C. Carter standing in the wings ready to help if need be—had paid off.⁴⁴

U. S. NOTE DELIVERED TO JAPANESE AMBASSADORS

That afternoon, November 26, Hull summoned the two Japanese ambassadors to his office and handed them the statement FDR had approved. Section I set forth a number of diplomatic platitudes. The governments of the United States and Japan were

⁴⁴The Communist affiliations of these several advisers are on the record. The evidence offered by Whittaker Chambers and Elizabeth Bentley that White engaged in Soviet espionage was considered "conclusive" by Attorney General Brownell, "uncontradictable" by FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover, and "incontrovertible" by President Eisenhower (Rees, *Harry Dexter White*, p. 424). After Lattimore finished testifying during the investigation of the Institute for Pacific Relations conducted by the Senate Internal Security Subcommittee, the Subcommittee reported that Lattimore had been "from some time in the middle 1930s a conscious, articulate instrument of the Soviet conspiracy" (Francis X. Gannon, *Biographical Dictionary of the Left*, Belmont, Mass.: Western Islands, 1969, consolidated vol. 1., p. 416). On November 8, 1945, FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover informed President Truman that Currie was "one of many persons within the federal government who 'have been furnishing data and information to persons outside the Federal Government, who are in turn transmitting this information to agents of the Soviet Government'" (Ibid., p. 299). When testifying before the House Committee on Un-American Activities on July 1, 1948, former Soviet espionage agent Elizabeth Bentley accused Currie of having "furnished United States government secrets to a Soviet spy ring" (Ibid., p. 299).

both “solicitous for the peace of the Pacific.” Then several general principles were presented on which their mutual relations should be governed—principles of territorial integrity, sovereignty, non-interference in the internal affairs of other nations, equality of commercial opportunity, international cooperation, etc. Section II listed “Steps To Be Taken by the Government of the United States and by the Government of Japan.” Ten points followed.⁴⁵

⁴⁵Department of State, *Japan: 1931-1941*, pp. 768–70.

The Government of the United States and the Government of Japan propose to take steps as follows:

1. The Government of the United States and the Government of Japan will endeavor to conclude a multilateral non-aggression pact among the British Empire, China, Japan, the Netherlands, the Soviet Union, Thailand and the United States.
2. Both Governments will endeavor to conclude among the American, British, Chinese, Japanese, the Netherlands [sic] and Thai Governments an agreement whereunder each of the Governments would pledge itself to respect the territorial integrity of French Indochina and, in the event that there should develop a threat to the territorial integrity of Indochina, to enter into immediate consultation with a view to taking such measures as may be deemed necessary and advisable to meet the threat in question. Such agreement would provide also that each of the Governments party to the agreement would not seek or accept preferential treatment in its trade or economic relations with Indochina and would use its influence to obtain for each of the signatories equality of treatment in trade and commerce with French Indochina.
3. The Government of Japan will withdraw all military, naval, air and police forces from China and from Indochina.
4. The Government of the United States and the Government of Japan will not support—militarily, politically, economically—any government or regime in China other than the National Government of the Republic of China with capital temporarily at Chungking.
5. Both Governments will give up all extraterritorial rights in China, including rights and interests in and with regard to international settlements and concessions, and rights under the Boxer Protocol of

After reading the documents, Kurusu asked “whether this was our reply to their proposal for a *modus vivendi* . . . Mr. Kurusu offered various depreciatory comments in regard to the proposed agreement. He noted that in our statement of principles there was a reiteration of the Stimson doctrine.” He was referring to the Doctrine of Non-recognition advocated by Stimson when he was President Hoover’s secretary of state.⁴⁶ Kurusu

objected to the proposal for multilateral non-aggression pacts and referred to Japan’s bitter experience of international

1901. Both Governments will endeavor to obtain the agreement of the British and other governments to give up extraterritorial rights in China, including rights in international settlements and in concessions and under the Boxer Protocol of 1901.

6. The Government of the United States and the Government of Japan will enter into negotiations for the conclusion between the United States and Japan of a trade agreement, based upon reciprocal most-favored-nation treatment and reduction of trade barriers by both countries, including an undertaking by the United States to bind raw silk on the free list.
7. The Government of the United States and the Government of Japan will, respectively, remove the freezing restrictions on Japanese funds in the United States and on American funds in Japan.
8. Both Governments will agree upon a plan for the stabilization of the dollar-yen rate, with the allocation of funds adequate for this purpose, half to be supplied by Japan and half by the United States.
9. Both Governments will agree that no agreement which either has concluded with any third power or powers shall be interpreted by it in such a way as to conflict with the fundamental purpose of this agreement, the establishment and preservation of peace throughout the Pacific area.
10. Both Governments will use their influence to cause other governments to adhere to and to give practical application to the basic political and economic principles set forth in this agreement.

⁴⁶Ibid., p. 76. See also Henry L. Stimson and McGeorge Bundy, *On Active Service in Peace and War* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1947), pp. 257–58.

organization, citing the case of the award against Japan by the Hague tribunal in the Perpetual Leases matter.

Kurusu did not believe his government could agree to paragraph (3) calling on Japan to withdraw all military, naval, air, and police forces from both China and Indochina, or paragraph (4) asking her to refrain from supporting—militarily, politically, economically—any government or regime in China other than Chiang’s national government. Kurusu did not think the United States should expect Japan to “take off its hat to Chiang Kai-shek and propose to recognize him. . . . He said that if this was the idea of the American Government he did not see how any agreement was possible.”

Hull asked if this couldn’t be “worked out.” Kurusu responded “that when they [the Japanese ambassadors] reported our answer to their Government it would be likely to throw up its hands.” However, he said, “this was a tentative proposal without commitment.” Perhaps they should “not refer it to their Government before discussing its contents further informally here.” Hull said they might want to study the document carefully, but he explained that “our proposal was as far as we could go at this time.” With specific reference to the oil question, Hull said “public feeling [in the United States] was so acute . . . that he might almost be lynched if he permitted oil to go freely to Japan.”

Kurusu “felt that our response to their proposal could be interpreted as tantamount to meaning the end.” He wanted to know if we weren’t interested in a *modus vivendi*. “The Secretary replied that we had explored that. Mr. Kurusu asked whether it was because the other powers would not agree.” The Japanese must have been aware of the plans we had been making to cooperate with the British and Dutch in the southwest Pacific. The secretary [Hull] replied simply that “he had done his best in the

way of exploration.” With that the two Japanese ambassadors were dismissed.⁴⁷

BRITISH NOTIFIED OF *MODUS VIVENDI* REJECTION

Almost immediately after delivering to the Japanese ambassadors the U.S. note with its unacceptable ten points, Hull cabled Ambassador Grew in Japan and Ambassador C.E. Gauss in China.⁴⁸ That evening Hull telephoned British Ambassador Lord Halifax “to inform him of the nature of the document which he had handed the Japanese envoys.” Neither our War nor Navy department was advised.

The following morning, Lord Halifax called on Undersecretary of State Welles to ask why the proposed *modus vivendi* had been overthrown and a virtual “ultimatum” issued. “[O]ne of the reasons for the determination reached,” Welles replied, “was the half-hearted support given by the British Government to the earlier proposal.” Halifax “could not understand this in as much as he had communicated to Hull the full support of the British Government.” Welles responded that Churchill’s expressed concern with Chiang’s “thin diet” “could hardly be regarded as ‘full support’.” Halifax admitted that he “had been surprised by the vigor of the Chinese objections.” He had thought “that the course proposed by Hull gave positive assurances to the Chinese government that the Burma Road would in fact be kept open if the *modus vivendi* agreement with Japan could be consummated.” He believed that the Chinese government’s attitude

was based partly on faulty information and partly on the almost hysterical reaction because of the fear that any kind

⁴⁷Department of State, *Japan: 1931–1941*, pp. 764–66. State Department memorandum of November 26, 1941 meeting.

⁴⁸Department of State, *The Far East*, p. 666, Telegram #783 to Grew; and p. 666n. Telegram #274 to Gauss.

of an agreement reached between Japan and the United States at this time would result in a complete breakdown of Chinese morale.

Welles told Halifax that in his view the Chinese had real cause for concern. “Japanese troop movements in southern Indochina were already very active. . . . Japanese forces there were being quickly increased in number . . . [indicating] that the threat against Thailand was imminent.” Moreover, Welles pointed out, “it was evident from the information received here that the Japanese were preparing to move immediately on a very large scale. The gravity of the situation . . . could not be exaggerated.”⁴⁹

JAPAN VOWS TO DESTROY BRITISH AND AMERICAN POWER IN CHINA

Another “Purple” intercept, sent from Tokyo on November 14, and deciphered in Washington on November 26, reminded us again, forcibly, of Japan’s intentions in the Far East. This cable had been addressed to “Hongkong” and to the Japanese diplomatic officers in 11 Chinese cities.

“[T]he Imperial Government [still] hopes for great things from the Japan-American negotiations,” it read. However, “they do not permit optimism for the future. Should the negotiations collapse, the international situation in which the Empire will find herself will be one of tremendous crisis.” The Japanese cabinet had made several momentous foreign policy decisions:

- a. We will completely destroy British and American power in China.
- b. We will take over all enemy concessions and enemy important rights and interests (customs and minerals, etc.) in China.

⁴⁹Ibid., pp. 666–67, Welles’s November 27, 1941 memorandum.

- c. We will take over all rights and interests owned by enemy powers, even though they might have connections with the new Chinese government, should it become necessary.

The Japanese were under no illusion as to the problems involved in fighting an expanded war. Their forces were widely extended and their resources severely strained. They wanted to “avoid, insofar as possible, exhausting our veteran troops.” However, they were prepared to “cope with a world war on a long-time scale.” If their “reserves for total war and . . . future military strength wane,” they would “reinforce them from the whole Far Eastern area. This has become the whole fundamental policy of the Empire.”

To carry out these foreign policy objectives, the Japanese would

encourage the activities of important Chinese in their efforts in the occupied territories insofar as is possible. Japan and China, working in cooperation, will take over military bases. Thus, operating wherever possible, we will realize peace throughout the entire Far East.

However, because of the U.S. embargo on exports to Japan, resources were a primary concern; “great importance [was placed] upon the acquisition of materials (especially from unoccupied areas).” The entire Japanese cabinet “concurred.”⁵⁰

The military and administration officials in Washington who read this intercept could have had little doubt as to the seriousness of the consequences if the negotiations with the Japanese ambassadors failed.

⁵⁰Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 12, pp. 126–27.

FDR NOTIFIES THE PHILIPPINES THAT JAPANESE AGGRESSION APPEARS IMMINENT

While Hull was making plans to present the U.S. ten-point note to the Japanese ambassadors, FDR prepared a message to our high commissioner in the Philippines, Francis B. Sayre. Roosevelt explained that the Far East was a veritable tinderbox. "The Japanese are strongly reenforcing their garrisons and naval forces in the Mandates in a manner which indicates they are preparing this region as quickly as possible against a possible attack on them by US forces." However, FDR was not so much concerned by the Japanese attempts to defend themselves against the United States as he was by the "increasing opposition of Japanese leaders and by current southward troop movements from Shanghai and Japan to the Formosa area." It was apparent, he continued, that the Japanese were making preparations in China, Formosa, and Indochina "for an early aggressive movement of some character." However, it was not yet clear whether this move would be "directed against the Burma Road, Thailand, Malay Peninsula, Netherlands East Indies or the Philippines." The most likely target seemed to be Thailand.

FDR was fearful that "this next Japanese aggression might cause an outbreak of hostilities between the U.S. and Japan." He asked Sayre to discuss the situation with the U.S. military commanders in Manila, Admiral Hart and General MacArthur. The commissioner should then "present my views to the president of the Philippine Commonwealth and inform him that as always I am relying upon the full cooperation of his Government and his people." FDR's cable was transmitted by the Navy to the Philippines on the afternoon of November 26.⁵¹

⁵¹Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 11, p. 5214.

JAPANESE CABINET EXPECTED TO DECIDE SOON BETWEEN PEACE AND WAR

Also on November 26, we deciphered a “Strictly Secret” cable sent the day before, via “Purple,” from Hanoi in Indochina, to Tokyo.⁵² Japanese diplomatic officials in Indochina had heard from military sources that the United States was expected to present its reply to the Japanese envoys’ *modus vivendi* proposal that very day, November 25. “If this is true,” Hanoi cabled, if the

U.S. did answer Japan’s request for a *modus vivendi* as expected, the United States’ response would bring matters to a head. In that event, Hanoi assumed that the Japanese Cabinet would be making “a decision between peace and war within the next day or two.”

“[I]f the U.S.-Japanese negotiations are brought to a successful termination,” Hanoi continued, they had plans for launching various enterprises. “Should, however, the negotiations [in Washington] not end in a success,” as the military sources had implied would be the case, “since practically all preparations for the campaign have been completed, our forces shall be able to move within the day.”

Hanoi was disturbed that representatives of Britain, Australia, the Netherlands, and even China had been meeting with U.S. officials in Washington and must be aware of the status of the U.S.-Japanese negotiations. Japan’s officials in Hanoi knew from Tokyo’s circular message #2353 (which we had not intercepted and translated before we read this Hanoi cable to Tokyo) that the situation was “becoming exceedingly critical.”

Our officials in Washington who were privy to MAGIC learned from this telegram that the Japanese cabinet would soon make a decision between peace and war. If the Japanese envoys in Washington succeeded in obtaining an acceptable *modus vivendi*,

⁵²Ibid., part 12, pp. 174–75.

the decision would be for peace. If not, it would be for war. And by handing the Japanese ambassadors a note that we knew their government could not accept, we were rejecting a *modus vivendi*. The Japanese negotiations were *not* ending in success. And this, our reading of MAGIC told us, meant war! Moreover, the Japanese forces in Indochina would “be able to move within the day.”

On the afternoon of November 26, Marshall and several members of his staff flew down to North Carolina from Washington to attend the final phases of the First Army’s maneuvers. For some 36 hours at this crucial time, he was out of touch with Washington.⁵³

⁵³Robert Payne, *The Marshall Story* (Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1952), p. 148; Forrest C. Pogue, *George C. Marshall: Ordeal and Hope, 1939–1942* (New York: Viking Press 1965), p. 208.

7.

Japanese Action Appears Imminent

U. S. WAR PLANS—TO RAID AND DESTROY JAPANESE BASES IN FAR EAST IN SUPPORT OF ASSOCIATED POWERS

Military forces regularly make plans for the defense of their country under various contingencies. However, by 1941 the U.S. military had developed war plans that went far beyond trying to defend the nation against foreign aggressors. Our Army, Navy, and Air forces were operating under a war plan based on a secret agreement reached during the American-British Conversations (ABC) held in Washington early in 1941. This agreement had been “approved by the Joint Board, the Secretaries of War and Navy, and by the president.”¹ Chief of Navy War Plans Richmond Kelly Turner termed it

¹79th Cong., 1st sess. Joint (Congressional) Committee on the Investigation of the Pearl Harbor Attack. *Pearl Harbor Attack*, 39 vols. (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office), part 26, p. 264, testimony of Admiral Turner at Hart Inquiry.

a world-wide agreement, covering all areas, land, sea, and air, of the entire world in which it was conceived that the British Commonwealth and the United States might be jointly engaged in action against any enemy.

In line with the so-called ABC-I agreement,

a joint Army-Navy plan was prepared after a great many talks with the Army . . . [and] was approved by the Secretary of the Navy on May 28, 1941, and by the Secretary of War on June 2, 1941. It bore the short title “Rainbow No. 5.” On the basis of the Joint Army and Navy Basic War Plan the Navy Department promulgated the Navy Basic War Plan on May 26, 1941. This plan bore the short title “WPL-46” . . . The War Plan of the Pacific Fleet was distributed on July 25, 1941.²

It had been customary to name an operating plan by the color code name assigned to the potential enemy concerned. Japan had traditionally been designated “orange,” other countries “blue,” “red,” and so on. However, as ABC-I contemplated action against several enemy nations, it wasn’t feasible to designate its operating plan by a single color. Hence the code name “Rainbow.”³ Several Rainbow operating plans, each numbered consecutively and each providing for a different contingency, were developed to implement the ABC-I agreement. The first four were eventually set aside. It was Rainbow No. 5 that the Navy issued in May 1941 and sent out to the fleet commanders, including Kimmel in Hawaii, for distribution in July 1941 to the various task forces.

The ABC-I agreement called on the United States to employ its Pacific Fleet “offensively in the manner best calculated to

²Ibid., part 6, p. 2502; also Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 17, pp. 2568–600, Exhibit No. 114 (Pacific Fleet Operating Plan—Rainbow Five).

³Mark Skinner Watson, *The War Department: Chief of Staff: Prewar Plans and Preparations* (Washington, D.C.: Department of the Army, Historical Division, 1950), pp. 103–04.

weaken Japanese economic power.”⁴ To accomplish this, our naval forces were to

Support the forces of the Associated Powers in the Far East Area by diverting enemy strength away from the Malay Barrier through the denial and capture of positions in the Marshalls, and through raids on enemy sea communications and positions.⁵

U.S. Pacific Fleet Operating Plan Rainbow No. 5 stipulated that “In the event of an overt act of war by a foreign power against the United States prior to the existence of a state of war,” the senior commander, then Admiral Kimmel at Pearl Harbor, was “to take such action in the defense of his command and the national interests as the situation may require, and report the action taken to superior authority at once.”⁶ The Plan called on the fleet to reconnoiter, sweep, patrol, and protect. However, the primary objective prescribed for the Pacific Fleet under Rainbow No. 5 was to prepare to raid, capture, and destroy the bases in the Japanese-controlled Marshall and Caroline islands. The assignments of each task force were set forth in detail in the plan.⁷

STARK AND MARSHALL AGAIN ASK FOR TIME TO BUILD U.S. DEFENSES

Before Marshall left for maneuvers on November 26, he and Chief of Naval Operations Stark prepared a joint memorandum to the president on the “Far Eastern Situation.”⁸ Dated November 27, their memorandum expressed concern that they might not have enough time to build up their forces before a Japanese strike.

⁴Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 15, pp. 1491–92.

⁵*Ibid.*, p. 1511.

⁶*Ibid.*, part 17, p. 2585.

⁷*Ibid.*, part 17, pp. 2568–600.

⁸*Ibid.*, part 14, p. 1083.

They reminded FDR that if the current negotiations with the Japanese ambassadors failed, “Japan may attack: the Burma Road; Thailand; Malaya; the Netherlands East Indies; the Philippines; the Russian Maritime Provinces.” Navy and Army reinforcements were being rushed to the Philippines. From the U.S. viewpoint, Marshall and Stark wrote, the “most essential thing now . . . is to gain time.” They were especially concerned for the safety of an Army convoy then near Guam and a Marine Corps’ convoy just leaving Shanghai. They cautioned, however, that “so long as consistent with national policy,” we should avoid precipitating any conflict.

Marshall and Stark also wrote it had been agreed, after consultation with the British and Dutch military authorities in the Far East,

that joint military counteraction against Japan should be undertaken only in case Japan attacks or directly threatens the territory or mandated territory of the United States, the British Commonwealth, or the Netherlands East Indies, or should the Japanese move forces into Thailand west of 100° East or south of 10° North, Portuguese Timor, New Caledonia, or the Loyalty Islands.

Japan should be warned that “advance beyond the lines indicated may lead to war.” However, “prior to such warning, no joint military opposition [should] be undertaken.” Moreover, Marshall and Stark said, agreement with the British and Dutch should be sought on issuing such a warning.

The first thing in the morning of November 27, Secretary of War Stimson phoned Secretary of State Hull to find out “what his finale had been with the Japanese.” Had Hull handed them the three-month *modus vivendi* proposal, which had been approved a couple of days before? Or had he put an end to the negotiations, as he had said he might. Hull told Stimson he had broken the whole matter off: “I have washed my hands of it and it is now in

the hands of you and Knox—the Army and Navy.” Later FDR gave Stimson a slightly different view. However, he too said the negotiations had “ended up, but they ended up with a magnificent statement prepared by Hull.”⁹

FDR MESSAGES BRITISH INTELLIGENCE AGENT STEPHENSON, “JAPANESE NEGOTIATIONS OFF . . .”

As soon as the president learned that the negotiations with the Japanese had been broken off, he sent his oldest son, James, as his emissary to British intelligence agent Sir William Stephenson. On November 26, James Roosevelt travelled to New York and informed Stephenson, of the tenuous Japanese situation. Stephenson cabled Churchill on November 27:

JAPANESE NEGOTIATIONS OFF. SERVICES EX-
PECT ACTION WITHIN TWO WEEKS.¹⁰

WASHINGTON WARNS PHILIPPINES OF POSSIBLE JAPANESE ATTACK

On November 27, General Douglas MacArthur and Admiral Hart, Commander-in-Chief of the Asiatic Fleet, met in the office of High Commissioner Francis B. Sayre to discuss the seriousness of FDR’s November 26 warning cable to Sayre. Pacing back and forth and smoking a big black cigar, General MacArthur assured Hart and Sayre that “the existing alignment and movement of

⁹Ibid., part 11, pp. 5434–35.

¹⁰William Stevenson, *A Man Called Intrepid: The Secret War* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1976), p. 299; also Joseph P. Lash, *Roosevelt and Churchill, 1939–1941: The Partnership That Saved the West* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1976), p. 473.

Japanese troops convinced him that “there would be no Japanese attack before the spring.”¹¹ Admiral Hart disagreed.

Reports were arriving in Washington regularly of the daily reconnaissance overflights conducted from the Philippines to keep track of the large Japanese convoy heading south from Shanghai. Thus news of the Japanese expeditionary force came in on November 27, apparently heading toward the Philippines, Burma, the Burma Road, or the Dutch East Indies. And it was expected that a concentration of Japanese troops would move over into Thailand and take a position there, from which an attack could be launched on Singapore. Stimson suggested to FDR that MacArthur in the Philippines be sent “a final alert.” We had already sent MacArthur a “quasi alert,” but Stimson thought he should be given a further warning against a possible Japanese attack. The president agreed.¹²

Arrangements were being made to fly B-17s out to the Philippines to reinforce our defenses there. Army Air Force Commanding General Arnold called on Stimson on November 27 to present the orders for two of our biggest planes to move out of San Francisco en route to Manila and fly over—while photographing—the Japanese mandated islands, where the Japanese were known to be building military bases. These big planes would be able to fly high enough to be out of reach of the Japanese pursuit planes.¹³

Secretary of Navy Knox and Stark called on Stimson on November 27 to talk about the warning to be sent MacArthur in the Philippines. General Leonard T. Gerow, Army chief of war plans, was also present. A message to MacArthur calling for action, such as Stimson was considering, would normally have

¹¹ Francis Bowes Sayers, *Glad Adventure* (New York: Macmillan, 1957), p. 221.

¹² Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 11, p. 5435, from Stimson's November 27, 1941, diary.

¹³ *Ibid.*, part 11, p. 5435, from Stimson's November 27.

been prepared and sent by the Army chief of staff. It was most unusual to send a message to a field commander signed "Marshall," which had not actually been dispatched by him.¹⁴ Marshall was familiar with U.S. military outposts in a way that the secretary of war was not. Also, the responsibility for strategic command decisions flowed from the commander-in-chief (the president) to the chief of staff; the chief of staff reported to the president. The secretary of war's duties lay outside this line of command; they related primarily to personnel requirements and matters of supply. However, Marshall was out of the city. So Stimson, Stark, and Gerow went ahead on their own.

Stark and Gerow, quite naturally, were pressing for more time for the military buildup before a Japanese strike. Stimson said he would be "glad to have time" but not at the expense of backing down. He "didn't want it [time] at any cost of humility on the part of the United States . . . which would show a weakness on our part." Before they finished drafting their message to MacArthur, they called Hull to learn the latest on the situation with the Japanese.¹⁵ They sent the message over Marshall's signature. Although directed primarily to MacArthur in the Philippines, the Stimson-Stark-Gerow cable, with slight changes and also signed "Marshall," went to the Army's commanding generals in Hawaii and the Panama Canal Zone.

IN RESPONSE TO ARMY'S WARNING, GENERAL SHORT (HAWAII) REPORTS SABOTAGE ALERT

The version of the Stimson-Stark-Gerow cable sent to Short in Hawaii advised that "Negotiations with Japan appear to be terminated to all practical purposes. . . . Japanese future action

¹⁴Ibid., part 23, p. 1012.

¹⁵Ibid., part 11, p. 5435, from Stimson's November 27, 1941, diary.

unpredictable but hostile action possible at any moment. If hostilities cannot, repeat cannot, be avoided the United States desires that Japan commit the first overt act." However, this should "not be construed as restricting you to a course of action that might jeopardize your defense." Reconnaissance and other measures necessary should be carried out with caution so as "not, repeat not, to alarm civil population or disclose intent." Short was asked to "Report measures taken."¹⁶

The Army was responsible for protecting the fleet when it was in port. On receipt of this message (No. 472) on November 27, Short called a meeting of his staff. He had been instructed "to undertake such reconnaissance . . . as you deem necessary." At the same time he was "not . . . to alarm civil population."

Adequate reconnaissance to guard Hawaii against surprise attack would have required 360-degree surveillance, 24 hours a day. According to Admiral P.N.L. Bellinger, commander of the Hawaiian Naval Base Air Force, and Commander Logan C. Ramsey, his operations officer at the time of the attack, such wide-ranging reconnaissance was not realistic, given the planes and resources then available there. Most of their B-17s had been sent to the Philippines. Only eight that could have been used for long-range reconnaissance were available at the time of the attack, and not all of those were in flying condition. Planes cannot fly continuously; they wear out and need servicing from time to time. Crews need rest too; it is estimated that crews flying long-range reconnaissance shouldn't be asked to operate more often than one in three days.¹⁷ Thus long-range reconnaissance could not have been maintained indefinitely in Hawaii—its success depended on timely warning of any potential threat.

Marshall was familiar with the shortage of planes in Hawaii. But Stimson, who had drafted the November 27 warning message,

¹⁶Ibid., part 14, p. 1328.

¹⁷Ibid., part 8, p. 3454.

was not. The Hawaiian command had three different alerts from which to choose. Marshall was also familiar with the Army's system of alerts; again, Stimson was not.

In view of the Army's responsibility and the instruction not to alarm the public, a large percentage of whom were ethnic Japanese, Short decided to go on a sabotage alert, clustering the planes and storing the ammunition underground. This was the most effective way to guard against subversive activities in an area surrounded by potential enemies. On the assumption that the cable had come from Marshall, Short wired Washington that afternoon that he had "alerted to prevent sabotage" and had established "liaison with Navy."¹⁸

Short's response was received in Washington on November 28, at 5:57 AM.¹⁹ Under Army rules and regulations then in force, if a junior officer, on receiving an order, reports measures taken and his superior officer does not countermand them, the responsibility for any error or mistake in judgment lies with the superior officer. Short was the junior officer; Marshall his superior. As instructed, Short reported the measures taken. If his action was not considered appropriate, normal Army procedure would have called for Marshall to order him to change his alert. No such order was given. The planes and ammunition remained as they were until the Japanese attack ten days later.

ADMIRAL STARK'S "WAR WARNING" TO HART (PHILIPPINES) AND KIMMEL (HAWAII)

Also on November 27, CNO Stark sent his fleet commanders a "war warning," reporting on the status of U.S.-Japan relations. Admiral Hart, commander-in-chief of the Asiatic Fleet in the Philippines, was the first addressee; Admiral Kimmel,

¹⁸Ibid., part 14, p. 1330.

¹⁹Ibid., part 3, pp. 1027-28.

commander-in-chief of the Pacific Fleet at Pearl Harbor, was second. Information copies went to Admiral King, commander-in-chief of the Atlantic Fleet and to the special naval observer in London.

“Negotiations with Japan looking towards stabilization of conditions in the Pacific have ceased,” Stark told his commanders in this “war warning.” An “aggressive move” on the part of the Japanese was “expected within the next few days . . . an amphibious expedition against either the Philippines Thai or Kra peninsula or possibly Borneo. . . . Continental districts Guam Samoa directed take appropriate measures against sabotage.” The commanders should prepare to put WPL 46 (War Plan 46, Rainbow No. 5) into operation.²⁰

The morning after this dispatch was received, Kimmel discussed its significance with the senior Army and Navy officers in Hawaii—Short; Admiral Bloch, commandant of the 14th Naval District who was in charge of naval shore establishments in Hawaii; the flag officers of the fleet then in port, as well as the members of Kimmel’s staff. After considerable study they “interpreted the warning to mean that war was imminent, and that readiness to undertake active operations was expected.” To Kimmel being ready “to undertake active operations” meant “carrying out the tasks assigned in WPL-46.” And that meant preparing for offensive action in line with War Plan 46, then in operation, against the Japanese in the Marshall and Caroline Islands in the southwestern Pacific.

This November 27 cable did not suggest the possibility of “a surprise aggressive move ‘in any direction’” as had the dispatch sent three days earlier.²¹ Thus the specific mention of “the Philippines, Thai or Kra peninsula or possibly Borneo” as the intended destination of the Japanese expedition served only to reconfirm the

²⁰Ibid., part 14, p. 1406, CNO message #272337.

²¹Ibid., part 14, p. 1405, CNO dispatch #242005.

conclusion they had drawn from the earlier message, namely that the Japanese were most likely to strike in the southwest Pacific or southeast Asia. Other Washington directives served to strengthen this impression. For instance, the Navy had recently been ordered to send “a squadron of submarines . . . to the Philippines, leaving only 5 in Pearl Harbor.” And on November 28, Kimmel was advised that the Marines on the islands of Midway and Wake, in the middle of the Pacific, were to be replaced by Army troops. This would call for a complicated maneuver, occupying for some time a substantial portion of the U.S. Naval forces in Hawaii, thus reducing the Territory’s defensive strength.²²

FDR’S WAR CABINET DISCUSS
JAPANESE TROOP MOVEMENTS;
FDR SHOULD REPORT DANGER TO CONGRESS

Roosevelt scheduled a War Cabinet meeting for noon, November 28. Stimson had asked G-2 (Intelligence) to summarize the information available concerning the movements of the Japanese in the Far East.

The main point of the paper was a study of what the expeditionary force, which we know has left Shanghai and is headed south, is going to do. G-2 pointed out that it might develop into an attack on the Philippines or a landing of further troops in Indochina, or an attack on Thailand or an attack on the Dutch Netherlands, or on Singapore.²³

G-2’s paper was “such a formidable statement of dangerous possibilities” that Stimson decided he should discuss it with the president before the War Cabinet meeting.

²²Ibid., part 39, p. 315, NCI report.

²³Stimson’s November 28, 1941 note in *ibid.*, part 11, p. 5435.

He went to the White House early that morning, even before FDR had gotten up. Analyzing the situation as he sat on his bed, the president saw only three possible alternatives: “first, to do nothing; second, to make something in the nature of an ultimatum again, stating a point beyond which we would fight; third, to fight at once.” Stimson rejected the first out of hand; he “did not think anyone would do nothing in this situation.” Of the other two, he would choose “to fight at once.” Stimson left, but he returned to the White House again for the scheduled noon meeting with the president, Hull, Knox, Stark, and Marshall.

FDR began the meeting by reading the possible destinations of the Japanese convoy. Then he pointed out one further possibility: if the Japanese were to attack the Kra Isthmus, that could lead to an attack on Rangoon, a short distance away, which would enable the Japanese initially to block the Burma Road. Everyone thought this was very likely.

The picture had changed radically since the last time they had discussed sending an ultimatum to Japan. The Japanese expeditionary force of some 25,000 troops at sea, destined to land somewhere, had changed the situation. Everyone agreed that

if this expedition was allowed to get around the southern point of Indochina and . . . land in the Gulf of Siam, either at Bangkok or further west, it would be a terrific blow at all of the three Powers, Britain at Singapore, the Netherlands, and ourselves in the Philippines. . . . It was agreed that if the Japanese got into the Isthmus of Kra [on the Malaysian peninsula], the British would fight. It was also agreed that if the British fought, we would have to fight. And it now seems clear that if this expedition was allowed to round the southern point of Indochina, this whole chain of disastrous events would be set on foot.

The consensus of the War Cabinet was that this should not be allowed to happen, and the members discussed ways to prevent it. They did not believe the United States should strike at the

Japanese force without warning. But they didn't think we should sit still either and allow the Japanese to proceed. They decided the only thing to do was to warn the Japanese that if the convoy "reached a certain place, or a certain line, or a certain point, we should have to fight."

The president was inclined to send a personal telegram to the emperor, as he had done with good results at the time of the *Panay* incident, December 1937²⁴ But Stimson pointed out that this would not be a suitable response in this case.

In the first place, a letter to the Emperor of Japan could not be couched in terms which contained an explicit warning. One does not warn an Emperor. In the second place it would not indicate to the people of the United States what the real nature of the danger was.

Stimson then suggested a message from the president to the people of the United States. He thought the best way to do that would be to report to Congress on the danger and on what action we would have to take if the danger materialized. The president acceded to this suggestion. At first he thought of incorporating the terms of his letter to the emperor in the speech. But again Stimson pointed out that a letter to an emperor could not be publicized in that way. The president's letter should be entirely separate and confidential. Also, his speech to Congress and to the people should be expressed in more understandable terms. FDR agreed and asked Hull, Knox, and Stimson to try to draft such papers.²⁵

²⁴On December 12, 1938, Japanese planes had bombed a U.S. river gunboat, the *Panay* near Nanjing, China. The ship was sunk, killing two and wounding 30. The U.S. demanded apologies, reparations, and guarantees against further incidents. On December 14, the Japanese complied.

²⁵Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 11, pp. 5435–36, account of the War Cabinet meeting based on Stimson's diary.

WAR DEPARTMENT WARNS HAWAIIAN ARMY AND AIR COMMANDERS

Late in the evening of November 28, the War Department adjutant general wired Short in Hawaii:

“[C]ritical situation demands that all precautions be taken immediately against subversive activities.” Short was advised to

initiate forthwith all additional measures necessary to provide for protection of your establishments comma property comma and equipment against sabotage comma protection of your personnel against subversive propaganda and protection of all activities against espionage stop.

At the same time, Short was to avoid “unnecessary publicity and alarm.”²⁶ The cable’s emphasis on sabotage and subversion, reassured Short in his choice of alert.

The next day, Short replied that

full precautions are being taken against subversive activities within the field of investigative responsibility of war department . . . and military establishments including personnel and equipment.²⁷

He also reported on the cooperation in protecting vital installations, such as bridges and power plants being given by Hawaii’s territorial governor, the FBI, and other federal and territorial officers.

The commanding general of the Hawaiian Air Force received a similar cable that day from the War Department. It asked that

all precautions be taken at once . . . to provide . . . protection of your personnel against subversive propaganda comma protection

²⁶Ibid., part 14, p. 1330; idem, part 24, pp. 1778, 1823.

²⁷Ibid., part 24, pp. 1824–25.

of all activities against espionage comma and protection against sabotage of your equipment comma property and establishments period.²⁸

Again Short felt reassured that the sabotage alert he had initiated was appropriate.

NAVY ORDERED TO TRANSPORT ARMY PLANES TO MIDWAY AND WAKE; HAWAIIAN FORCES WEAKENED

The day before the November 27 “war warning,” Kimmel was advised to prepare to send some planes, men, and provisions from Pearl Harbor to two outlying mid-Pacific islands:

In order to keep the planes of the Second Marine Aircraft Wing available for expeditionary use OPNAV [Chief of Naval Operations] has requested and Army has agreed to station twenty-five Army pursuit planes at Midway and a similar number at Wake provided you consider this feasible and desirable.²⁹

The cabled orders that followed called on Kimmel to transport by aircraft carrier these Army planes, which were to support Navy operations, and to supply the islands with ground personnel, provisions, water, spare parts, tools, and ammunition.

In light of WPL-46, stationing men and planes on Wake and Midway made sense. Wake was a couple of thousand miles west of Hawaii and closer to the Japanese mandated Marshall Islands. An outpost on Wake would extend the area over which reconnaissance could be conducted and would permit the United States to watch more closely what was going on in the Marshalls. At the same time, however, it meant depriving Hawaii of about 50 percent of the Army’s pursuit planes then on Oahu. And the

²⁸ *Ibid.*, part 14, p. 1330.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, part 17, p. 2479.

transfer operation itself would occupy for some time the fleet's aircraft carriers, its main striking defense against air attack.³⁰

Admiral William F. Halsey, Jr., in command of the carrier *Enterprise*, left Pearl Harbor for Wake on November 28. With him went three heavy cruisers and nine destroyers.³¹

On December 2 Kimmel responded at length to Stark's cable. He described some of the difficulties in having the Navy reinforce the outlying islands, and he made realistic suggestions for dealing with them.³²

On December 5 Admiral J.H. Newton left Hawaii aboard the carrier *Lexington* with another contingent of Army pursuit planes bound for Midway. Three heavy cruisers and five destroyers accompanied the *Lexington*. En route, the patrol planes conducted reconnaissance, covering a much more extensive area than they could have from their Oahu base.³³

Also on December 5 Admiral Wilson Brown left Pearl Harbor with Task Force 3, aboard the *Indianapolis* with six old destroyers converted to sweepers, to conduct landing exercises on Johnston Island in the mid-Pacific.³⁴

JAPANESE NEGOTIATIONS DEFACTO RUPTURED

On November 28, two days after the United States responded to the Japanese request for a *modus vivendi*, Tokyo sent her two Washington ambassadors a cable, which we deciphered and read that same day, commending them for their "superhuman efforts." However, the U.S. reply had been a "humiliating proposal." The Imperial Government could "by no means use it as a basis for

³⁰Ibid., part 6, p. 2520; see also Husband E. Kimmel, *Admiral Kimmel's Story* (Chicago: Henry Regnery Co., 1955), pp. 46–48.

³¹Ibid., part 26, pp. 317–32, Halsey testimony at Hart Inquiry.

³²Ibid., part 17, pp. 2480–84 (Serial 0114W).

³³Ibid., part 26, p. 343, Newton testimony at Hart Inquiry.

³⁴Ibid., part 26, pp. 141–46, Brown testimony at Hart Inquiry.

negotiations.” The Japanese government had, in effect, thrown up its hands, as Ambassador Kurusu had expected it would.

Tokyo added that a report on the American proposal would be along in two or three days and then “the negotiations will be defacto ruptured.” However, the two ambassadors were not

to give the impression that the negotiations are broken off. Merely say . . . that you are awaiting instructions and that, although the opinions of your Government are not yet clear to you, to your own way of thinking the Imperial Government has always made just claims and has borne great sacrifices for the sake of peace in the Pacific. Say that we have always demonstrated a long-suffering and conciliatory attitude, but that, on the other hand, the United States has been unbending, making it impossible for Japan to establish negotiations. . . . From now on do the best you can.³⁵

JAPANESE EMERGENCY TO BE ANNOUNCED IN “WINDS CODE,” CODED WEATHER FORECAST

In the midst of this diplomatic crisis, one of the most important Japanese messages to be intercepted during this period was read in Washington. It had been sent November 19 from Tokyo in the J-19 (consular code), wasn't deciphered and translated until November 28. “In case of emergency (danger of cutting off our diplomatic relations), and the cutting off of international communications,” a signal will be included “in the middle of the daily Japanese language short wave news broadcast.” Three phrases followed. Each appeared to be a weather forecast, but to each was assigned a special meaning. In an emergency, Tokyo explained, the appropriate phrase “will be repeated twice. When this is heard

³⁵Ibid., part 12, p. 195.

please destroy all code papers, etc. This is as yet to be a completely secret arrangement.”³⁶

This new intercept became known as the “Winds Code” message. The three phrases and their meaning were: HIGASHI NO KAZE AME (East wind rain): Japan-U.S. relations in danger; KITANO KAZE KUMORI (North wind cloudy): Japan-U.S.S.R. relations in danger; and NISHI NO KAZE HARE (West wind clear): Japan-British relations in danger.

When our people read this message, orders went out immediately from both the Army and the Navy to their intercept stations throughout the world, asking them to monitor Japanese short-wave news broadcasts. Because weather was unpredictable and atmospheric conditions often interfered with radio transmissions, reception at our intercept stations was erratic. Therefore, the call went out to all our monitoring stations from Rear Admiral Leigh Noyes of Naval Communications³⁷ and from General Sherman Miles of the Army’s Intelligence Division urging the code clerks to listen for the phrases.³⁸ Three-by-five cards with the three phrases were prepared and distributed:³⁹

HIGASHI NO KAZE AME (East wind rain—war with the U. S.)

KITANO KAZE KUMORI (North wind cloudy—war with the U.S.S.R.)

NICHI NO KAZE HARE (West wind clear—war with Great Britain.)

³⁶Ibid., part 12, p. 154.

³⁷Ibid., part 9, pp. 4126–28.

³⁸Ibid., part 10, pp. 4520–22, testimony of colonel Bratton.

³⁹Ibid., part 8, pp. 3915–18, testimony of Lieutenant Commander Kramer.

8.

The Countdown Begins

U.S.-JAPANESE NEGOTIATIONS BROKEN OFF

U.S. “naval officials in London had been informed by the Navy Department that negotiations between Japan and the United States had been broken off and that an immediate movement by Japan was anticipated.”¹ When British Ambassador Lord Halifax heard this, he abruptly returned to Washington from Philadelphia where he had planned to weekend. The British government was “greatly excited” at the news. Halifax called on Undersecretary of State Welles that Friday evening, November 28, to see if it was actually true. As far as Welles knew, the situation was exactly as it had been the night before: the Japanese ambassadors had submitted the U.S. government’s statement to their government: no reply had as yet been received, so that

¹Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States: Diplomatic Papers, 1941*, vol. 2: *The Far East* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1956), pp. 684–85, Welles November 28 memorandum of conversation with Halifax.

“technically” negotiations had not yet been broken off. However, the U.S. government did not expect the Japanese government to accept its proposals.

Halifax called on Hull the next day to check on the outcome of the conversations FDR and Hull had been having with the Japanese. Hull blamed in part the “hysterical cable messages” sent by Chiang Kai-shek and his aides. Hull wished Churchill had sent a strong cable to Chiang in response to his “loud protest about our negotiations . . . telling him to brace up and fight.” Churchill’s expression of concern at Chiang’s “very thin diet” had resulted in “virtually killing what we knew were the individual views of the British Government toward these negotiations.” Thus Chiang’s November 25 cables to officials all around the world urging that the United States reject any form of a *modus vivendi* with the Japanese had persuaded the United States to drop the U.S. proposal for a three-month *modus vivendi* and to submit in its place a ten point “ultimatum.” The Japanese ambassadors had not been optimistic about their government’s willingness to agree to the United States’ ten points. Although the Japanese government had not as yet replied, Hull said “the diplomatic part of our relations with Japan was virtually over [and] the matter will now go to the officials of the Army and the Navy.” Hull also told Halifax “in great confidence” that he expected some action on the part of the Japanese before long.

[I]t would be a serious mistake for our country and other countries interested in the Pacific situation, to make plans of resistance without including the possibility that Japan may move suddenly and with every possible element of surprise and . . . capture certain positions and posts before the peaceful countries interested in the Pacific would have time to confer and formulate plans to meet these new conditions.²

²Ibid., pp. 685–87, Hull November 29 memorandum of conversation.

TOKYO ORDERS THE JAPANESE AMBASSADORS NOT TO BREAK OFF NEGOTIATIONS BUT TO TRY AGAIN

On Sunday, November 30, U.S. Navy decoders and translators intercepted, deciphered, and translated Cable #857 from Tokyo, informing the Japanese ambassadors in Washington to “make one more attempt verbally.” They should point out that “The United States government has (always ?) taken a fair and judicial position.” Thus,

the Imperial Government is at a loss to understand why it has now taken the attitude that the new proposals we have made cannot be made the basis of discussion, but instead has made new proposals which ignore actual conditions in East Asia and would greatly injure the prestige of the Imperial Government. . . . [W]hat has become of the basic objectives that the U.S. government has made the basis of our negotiations during these seven months?

The two ambassadors were told that “in carrying out this instruction” to continue their conversations with the United States, they should “please be careful that this does not lead to anything like a breaking off of negotiations.”³ In compliance with these instructions, the Japanese ambassadors requested an appointment with Secretary of State Hull.

AN INFLAMMATORY SPEECH IN TOKYO BY JAPAN’S PRIME MINISTER TOJO

The Washington, D.C., newspaper headlines on Sunday, November 30, quoted from an inflammatory speech in Tokyo

³79th Cong., 1st sess. Joint (Congressional) Committee on the Investigation of the Pearl Harbor Attack. *Pearl Harbor Attack*, 39 vols. (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1946), part 12, p. 199. Tokyo to Washington cable #857.

by Japanese Prime Minister Tojo. President Roosevelt was at his retreat in Warm Springs, Georgia. When Hull telephoned him about Tojo's belligerent remarks, he took the overnight train back to Washington.

Tojo had criticized the United States and Britain severely: "The exploitation of the Asiatics by Americans must be purged with vengeance." U.S. Ambassador Grew reported by quoting from Japanese press reports:

[M]any countries . . . are indulging in actions hostile to us. . . . The fact that Chiang Kai-shek is dancing to the tune of Britain, America, and communism . . . is only due to the desire of Britain and the United States to fish in the troubled waters of East Asia by pitting the East Asiatic peoples against each other. . . . For the honor and pride of mankind we must purge this sort of practice from East Asia with a vengeance.⁴

Ambassador Nomura in Washington cabled Tokyo that he was concerned Tojo's speech would "be used extensively for propaganda purposes by the Americans."⁵ Ambassador Kurusu was fearful that Tojo's belligerent remarks would jeopardize their efforts to maintain the pretense of continuing to negotiate. He cautioned the Japanese foreign office in Tokyo by TransPacific Radio Telephone to "watch out about these ill-advised statements."⁶ The Japanese government belittled the reports; it was "flabbergasted." Yamamoto, chief of the American bureau of the Japanese foreign

⁴Department of State, *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States: Japan, 1931-1941* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1943), vol. 2, pp. 148-49.

⁵Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 12, p. 207. Nomura October 30 Washington to Tokyo cable.

⁶*Ibid.*, part 12, pp. 206-07, Kurusu Washington to Tokyo dispatch concerning Tojo.

office, was “nonplused;” he asked, “What speech?”⁷ The Japanese government cabled an explanation.

The Washington embassy’s first secretary, Hidenari Terasaki, called on Joseph W. Ballantine, a State Department official, on December 2, and told Ballantine that he had not come to “vindicate” themselves or to “make any explanation. [He] merely wished to state the facts.”⁸ Relying on his government’s explanation, Terasaki discounted the importance of the speech and also its belligerence. The “so-called speech . . . was originally drafted by members of the office staff of the East Asia Restoration League, a non-governmental organization of which Mr. Tojo happens to be president.” It had been given out to newspaper reporters Saturday evening, November 29,

before the said draft was examined by either the Premier himself or other Government officials, and this unapproved manuscript was printed in the metropolitan newspapers. As a matter of fact, the Premier himself made no speech of any kind on the 30th. . . . It should further be noted that the reported statement “For the honor and pride of mankind we must purge this sort of practice from East Asia with a vengeance” is a mistranslation. . . . The correct translation of the statement should be “For the honor and pride of mankind, this sort of practice must be removed.”⁹

⁷Department of State, *Japan: 1931–1941*, vol. 2, p. 777, as reported by the Japanese Embassy’s First Secretary Terasaki to State Department’s Joseph W. Ballantine.

⁸Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 12, p. 223, message #1234.

⁹Department of State, *Japan: 1931–1941*, vol. 2, p. 777–78, memorandum of Terasaki’s conversation with Ballantine and statement handed Ballantine by Terasaki.

HULL AND THE JAPANESE AMBASSADORS EXCHANGE STRONG WORDS

On December 1 the ambassadors called on Hull as scheduled.

Upon [their] arrival at the State Department, [they] found not only newspaper men, but even some members of the Departmental staff crowding the corridors. Some of these speculators [spectators?] were of the opinion that the issue of war or peace was to be immediately decided upon. In general, the scene was highly dramatic.¹⁰

The meeting with Hull was long, and their conversation got off to a rough start when he brought up Tojo's "bellicose utterances emanating from Tokyo." The ambassadors responded with tact: In the United States, they said, you "seem to take a more serious view of the Japanese Prime Minister's utterances than was warranted." The ambassadors told Hull that the document he had handed them on November 26, the "ultimatum" with its ten points, "had been communicated to the Japanese government," which was now studying the case. They expected "within a few days" to receive their government's "observation thereon." However, they wished the United States would reconsider its rejection of the proposed Japanese *modus vivendi*.

Hull then remarked that we had learned of "heavy Japanese troop movements into Indochina." He criticized Japan for moving into Indochina so suddenly "without any advance notice to this Government." We can't overlook Japan's digging herself into Indochina, Hull said. It

create[s] an increasing menace to America and her friends.
... [W]e will not allow ourselves to be kicked out of the

¹⁰Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 12, pp. 210–11, December 1 cable #1225 of Japanese ambassadors to Tokyo.

Pacific. . . . [W]hen a large Japanese army is anywhere in Indochina, we have to give that situation all the more attention when Japanese statesmen say that they will drive us out of east Asia.

Hull accused the Japanese of using methods in China “similar to those which are being adopted by Hitler to subjugate Europe. . . . [W]e cannot lose sight of the movement by Hitler to seize one-half of the world.” Hull said he believed the Japanese militarists were “moving in a similar direction to seize the other half of the earth. . . . [T]his Government cannot yield to anything of that kind.”

Ambassador Kurusu replied there was

not much difference between Japan’s idea of a co-prosperity sphere and [the U.S. policy of] Pan-Americanism, except that Japanese methods may be more primitive. He denied that it was Japan’s purpose to use force. . . . Japan was motivated by self-defense in the same way as Britain had been motivated by her acts, for example, in Syria.

He pointed out that

Japan needed rice and other materials at a time when she was being shut off by the United States and other countries and she had no alternative but to endeavor to obtain access to these materials. . . . The Ambassador commented that today war is being conducted through the agency of economic weapons, that Japan was being squeezed, and that Japan must expand to obtain raw materials.

Hull pointed out that

we were selling Japan oil until Japan suddenly moved into Indochina; that he could not defend such a situation indefinitely; and that the United States would give Japan all she

wanted in the way of materials if Japan's military leaders would only show that Japan intended to pursue a peaceful course.

Hull said

that we do not propose to go into partnership with Japan's military leaders; that he has not heard one whisper of peace from the Japanese military, only bluster and blood-curdling threats.

He also brought up Japan's ties to Germany through the Tripartite [Germany-Japan-Italy] Pact. In view of Japan's commitment to *her* ally, Germany, he said, Japan could not expect the United States to stop helping *her* friends, Britain and China. Kurusu

felt it was a shame that nothing should come out of the efforts which the conversations of several months had represented. He said he felt that the two sides had once been near an agreement except for two or three points, but that our latest proposals seem to carry the two sides further away than before.

Hull responded

that every time we get started in the direction of progress the Japanese military does something to overturn us. The Secretary expressed grave doubts whether we could now get ahead in view of all the threats that had been made.

The Secretary pointed out that we all understand what are the implications of such terms as "controlling influence", "new order in east Asia," and "co-prosperity sphere." . . . Hitler was using similar terms as synonyms for purposes of conquest.

Kurusu "disclaimed on the part of Japan any similarity between Japan's purposes and Hitler's purposes."

The Japanese ambassador pointed out that “wars never settle anything and that war in the Pacific would be a tragedy.” But he added that

the Japanese people believe that the United States wants to keep Japan fighting with China and to keep Japan strangled. He said that the Japanese people feel that they are faced with the alternative of surrendering to the United States or of fighting. . . .

The Ambassadors said that they understood the Secretary’s position in the light of his statements and they would report the matter to the Japanese Government.¹¹

JAPANESE TROOP MOVEMENTS PORTEND EARLY ATTACK IN FAR EAST

By the end of the month, Captain Arthur H. McCollum, officer-in-charge of the Far Eastern Section of the Navy Department’s Division of Naval Intelligence in Washington, had become seriously concerned by the massive Japanese military buildup in Indochina and the preparations being made for their reinforcement.¹² McCollum’s

duties consisted of evaluating all forms of intelligence received concerning the Far East, correlating it, and advising the Director of Naval Intelligence and through him the Chief of Naval Operations on political developments in the Far East and all forms of information concerning the Japanese Navy

¹¹Department of State, *Japan: 1931–1941*, vol. 2, pp. 772–77. This account of Hull’s December 1 meeting with the Japanese ambassadors is taken from State Department’s Joseph W. Ballantine’s memorandum.

¹²Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 36, p. 13. McCollum testimony before the Hewitt Inquiry.

and other countries in the Far East and their defenses and state of preparation for war.¹³

Because of the mounting evidence of Japanese offensive action, McCollum assembled and evaluated the available data in a memorandum, which he took, on the morning of December 1, to his superior, Admiral Theodore S. Wilkinson, director of naval intelligence. The memorandum reported that Japanese transports had been moving large numbers of fully equipped veteran troops from Shanghai to Indochina. Others were going by rail:

From 21 to 26 November 20,000 troops were landed at Saigon and 4,000 at Haiphong which with 6,000 troops already there were sent South to Saigon and Cambodia by rail. All wharves and docks at Haiphong and Saigon are reported crowded with Japanese transports unloading supplies and men. It is estimated that the following Japanese troops are now in French Indo-China ready and equipped for action.

(a) South and Central Indo-China	70,000
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(b) Northern Indo-China	25,000
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The landing of reinforcements continues and additional troops and supplies are undoubtedly available on nearby Hainan Island and more distant Formosa.

McCollum also reported extensive Japanese naval activities: ships being equipped and repaired, air and surface patrols being established and ships and planes being moved to the Mandated Island area, merchant vessels being fitted out as anti-aircraft ships, naval task groups being reorganized, outlying naval air groups being inspected, and so on. He said the Japanese had under surveillance the U.S. island of Guam, more than 3,000 miles west of Hawaii. Espionage networks were being established throughout

¹³Ibid., part 36, p.13. McCollum testimony before the Hewitt Inquiry.

southeast Asia and the Dutch East Indies. Japanese residents, especially women and children, had been evacuated from British India, Singapore, the Netherlands East Indies, the Philippines, Hong Kong, and Australia, and many had been withdrawn from the United States, Canada, and South America.¹⁴

Admiral Wilkinson made an appointment at noon on December 1 to go with McCollum to see Chief of Naval Operations Stark. As McCollum later testified, “We knew that the Japanese fleet was ready for action. We knew that it had been called home, docked and extensively repaired and was looking for action.” Also the Japanese fleet had just changed its call signs and frequency allocations again after only a relatively short interval. This change in radio transmissions, when considered in conjunction with the various other clues, was one further indication that something was afoot.¹⁵

Wilkinson, in subsequent testimony, said that “On the evidence available we had concluded...that the Japanese were contemplating an early attack, primarily directed at Thailand, Burma, and the Malay Peninsula.”¹⁶ At the meeting with Stark, both Wilkinson and McCollum “urged that a dispatch of warning be sent to the fleet at that time.” Stark assured them that such a dispatch had already been sent—on November 27—and that it had definitely included the phrase, “This is a war warning.”¹⁷

THE ARMY’S DECEMBER 1 VIEW OF ATLANTIC AND PACIFIC THEATERS OF WAR

Under date of December 5, Brigadier General Sherman Miles, acting assistant chief of staff, G-2 (Intelligence), prepared

¹⁴Ibid., part 15, pp. 1839–42; part 36 (Hewitt Inquiry Exhibit #10), pp. 659–60.

¹⁵Ibid., part 36, p. 17, McCollum testimony before the Hewitt Inquiry.

¹⁶Ibid., part 4, p. 1847, Wilkinson testimony before the Joint Committee.

¹⁷Ibid., part 36, p. 19, McCollum testimony before the Hewitt Inquiry.

a long memorandum for the benefit of Marshall, an “Estimate of the Situation December 1, 1941–March 31, 1942.”¹⁸ G-2 was responsible for the collection, interpretation, and distribution of information about our enemies or potential enemies. G-2’s duties included codes and ciphers and liaison with other intelligence agencies.¹⁹ The assistant chief of staff of G-2 was on the list to see MAGIC, and presumably Miles, as acting assistant chief of staff also had access to this information derived from reading the Japanese “Purple” intercepts.²⁰

Miles presented a rather complete analysis of the situation from the Army’s viewpoint. His memorandum²¹ in brief:

This estimate is addressed to the objective of Nazi defeat. Its purpose is to examine the factors of strength and weakness and of strategic positions of the Nazis and of their opponents, in order to present the military possibilities and probabilities during the period December 1, 1941, to March 1, 1942.

Miles went on to review the military situation in the Atlantic, Europe, Middle East, and the Pacific.

Germany, “though weakened by her losses in Russia, will remain the only power capable of launching large scale strategic offensives.” She was not “in a position [at this time] to attempt an invasion of the [British] islands,” and if she did attempt it, it “will be delayed until mid-summer of 1942.”

¹⁸Ibid., part 14, pp. 1373–83.

¹⁹Mark Skinner Watson, *The War Department: Chief of Staff: Prewar Plans and Preparations* (Washington, D.C.: Department of the Army, Historical Division, 1950), p. 73.

²⁰Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 36, p. 23, McCollum testimony before the Hewitt Inquiry.

²¹Ibid., part 14, pp. 1373–84. Miles memorandum and Supporting Estimates.

The battle of the Atlantic is essentially a struggle for the sea lanes radiating from the United Kingdom, this conflict is now trending against Germany. . . . As the weight of the United States Navy continues to increase, success in the Battle of the Atlantic should be assured.

In the Middle East, “The United States is committed to providing great masses of material . . . and is undertaking vast construction projects to facilitate supply.”

In the Pacific, “the initiative rests with Japan in spite of her military overextension.” After listing her alternatives, Miles believed her “most probable line of action is the occupation of Thailand. . . . The forces of all other countries in the Far East are on the defensive before Japan.” He thought the British-Dutch-U.S. “consultative association for the defense of Malaysia” had been “effective in slowing down the Japanese penetration to the southwest.”

China was “containing the equivalent of 30 Japanese divisions,” an important consideration in view of our objective—the defeat of the Nazis. China would remain in the war and “will continue to contain important Japanese forces.” However,

The effective use of China’s unlimited manpower, as an anti-Axis potential depends entirely on the extent to which she is able to equip it [her manpower] particularly in artillery and aviation. . . . For this, she is entirely dependent upon the United States. . . . [and] China is receiving an increasing amount of equipment from this country.

The United States is concerned with southeast Asia and Malaysia in two different capacities: (1) “as a possible belligerent” and (2) “as a prime source of war materials for China, the British Commonwealth and for the Netherlands East Indies.” Although we were “sending a few military airplanes to Thailand . . . this theater will be a secondary one from the point of view of supply. . . .”

Our influence in the Far Eastern Theater lies in the threat of our Naval power and the effort of our economic blockade. Both are primary deterrents against Japanese all-out entry in the war as an Axis partner. If we become involved in war with Japan we could launch a serious offensive against her by Naval and Air Forces based on the Philippines and elsewhere in Malaysia.

Japan was torn between two opposing factions. The government leaders were “aware of the perils of further military adventures; they want to avoid a general war in the Pacific” and seek “a peaceful settlement” with the United States. On the other hand, “army hotheads” and “other intransigents” oppose any major concessions. From the point of view of the government leaders, the situation appeared bleak; the conversations between the Japanese ambassadors and the U.S. government in Washington “can now be said definitely to have ended in failure”

Miles said Japan faced a serious problem:

Because of the ever increasing stringency of the embargo placed on Japan by the United States, Great Britain, and the Netherlands East Indies, the economic situation in Japan is slowly but surely becoming worse. The Japanese have always lacked war materials, adequate foreign exchange, and sufficient foreign trade; the embargo has served to increase sharply the deficiencies in these categories. . . .

The firm united front of the United States, Great Britain, and the Netherlands East Indies in enforcing the embargo has put Japan “on the spot” economically. . . . If she goes to war to achieve her economic objectives, Japan faces ruin; but at the same time she feels that achievement of these objectives are vital to her existence. . . .

[I]n short, economically Japan is in perilous plight. The situation calls for strenuous measures; yet, if she goes to war, she may use up her reserves, especially of oil and steel, before she can force a decision favorable to herself. Thus her economic

situation contributes largely to the indecision of her leaders. This is a problem which she must solve within then next few months.

A basic assumption of Miles's memorandum, in spite of United States' official neutrality, was that we were "committed to the defeat of Nazi Germany." He wrote matter-of-factly about "the continued progress of America from neutrality towards participating in the war." Miles acknowledged that the "Kurusu conference," the negotiations between the Japanese ambassadors and our State Department, "can now be said definitely to have ended in failure." Yet he did not appear to view this rupture with particular concern. Nor did he reflect the sense of urgency that pervaded much of Washington at that time—including the members of FDR's War Council or Cabinet and some of those who were working with the Japanese intercepts, notably McCollum in naval intelligence and Safford in naval communications.

Miles realized that the United States's "consultative association" with the British and the Netherlands East Indies "for the defense of Malaysia" made us "a possible belligerent" in that area. He knew that the "increasing amount of equipment" we were sending China pitted us directly against Japan. Miles also recognized Japan's "perilous [economic] plight." After analyzing all these various factors, he concluded that the intentions of Japan were not predictable. Our economic blockade of Japan and our military forces in the Pacific, Miles wrote,

are primary deterrents against Japanese all-out entry in the war as an Axis partner. If we become involved in war with Japan, we could launch a serious offensive against her by Naval and Air Forces based on the Philippines and elsewhere in Malaysia. But such an attack would fall short of a major strategic offensive because . . . it would be a diversion of forces away from rather than toward our objective, the defeat of the Nazis.

HONOLULU PRESS REPORTS U.S.-JAPANESE CONVERSATIONS CONTINUING

A report of the Japanese ambassadors' December 1 meeting with Hull appeared in the newspapers, including the Honolulu papers, where it was seen by Kimmel and Short. The two Pearl Harbor commanders had no way of knowing what was going on behind the scenes, except as they were informed by Washington. Short had received Stimson's November 27 cable, sent out over Marshall's signature, telling him that "Negotiations with Japan appear to be terminated . . . with only the barest possibilities that the Japanese government might come back and offer to continue." Kimmel "was told on November 27 that negotiations had ceased and 2 days later that they appeared to be terminated with the barest possibilities of their resumption." Neither Kimmel nor Short had received any further official report of the situation, and then, as Kimmel said, they "were left to read public accounts of further conversations between the State Department and the Japanese emissaries in Washington which indicated that negotiations had been resumed."²² They could only assume that the report they had received of a break in negotiations had been superseded.

JAPAN ALERTS BERLIN OF IMPENDING "CLASH OF ARMS" WITH ANGLO-SAXON NATIONS

On December 1, our Navy cryptographers intercepted, decoded, and translated two November 30 messages from the Japanese government to its ambassador in Germany. These were long cables, sent in "Purple," asking the ambassador in Berlin to notify Japan's allies under the Tripartite Alliance (Germany and Italy) of the breakdown in negotiations with the United States.

These cables were sent in three parts. The first part²³ reported to the ambassador the status of the conversations between Tokyo

²²Ibid., part 6, p. 2548, Kimmel statement presented to the Joint Committee.

²³Ibid., part 12, p. 204. #985 (Part 1 of 3).

and Washington. “[I]n spite of the sincere efforts of the Imperial Government,” the negotiations “now stand ruptured—broken. . . . In the face of this our Empire faces a grave situation and must act with determination.” The ambassador was asked to “immediately interview Chancellor HITLER and Foreign Minister RIBBENTROP and confidentially communicate to them a summary of the developments.” He should describe the “provocative attitude” of England and the United States and the plan of the British and Americans to move military forces into East Asia. He should say that this makes it inevitable that Japan

counter by also moving troops. Say very secretly to them that there is extreme danger that war may suddenly break out between the Anglo-Saxon nations and Japan through some clash of arms and add that the time of the breaking out of this war may come quicker than anyone dreams.

In part 3 of this three-part cable,²⁴ the ambassador was to reassure the German officials, if questioned about Japan’s attitude toward their common enemy under the Tripartite Pact, the Soviets with whom the Nazis were then engaged in a fierce struggle to reach Moscow, that Japan did

not mean to relax our pressure against the Soviet and that if Russia joins hands tighter with England and the United States and resists us with hostilities, we are ready to turn upon her with all our might; however right now, it is to our advantage to stress the south and for the time being we would prefer to refrain from any direct moves in the north.

After speaking with the Germans, the ambassador was to have an Italian translation of this cable transmitted to Hitler’s ally, Premier Mussolini, and his Foreign Minister Ciano.

To the Japanese, the breakdown in negotiations with the United States meant war. And they were telling their German

²⁴*Ibid.*, pp. 204–05. #985 (Part 3 of 3).

and Italian allies that they were planning to move south—that is, in the direction of the Philippines, Indochina, and the Malay Peninsula.

The second November 30 cable from Tokyo to Berlin was in two parts. The negotiations had been started in April under the previous Konoye administration. The “intent” of these negotiations, Tokyo reminded the ambassador, had been to restrain the United States from participating in the war. During the negotiations of the last few days, however, the Japanese had found it

gradually more and more clear that the Imperial Government could no longer continue negotiations with the United States. . . . Their views and ours on the question of the evacuation of troops, upon which the negotiations rested (they demanded the evacuation of Imperial troops from China and French Indo-China), were completely in opposition to each other.

Tokyo told the ambassador that

before the United States brought forth this plan [to reject Japan’s *modus vivendi* proposal], they conferred with England, Australia, the Netherlands and China—they did so repeatedly. Therefore, it is clear that the United States is now in collusion with those nations and has decided to regard Japan, along with Germany and Italy, as an enemy.²⁵

JAPAN ORDERS HER EMBASSIES WORLDWIDE TO DESTROY CODES AND CODE MACHINES

On December 1, Tokyo sent two short circular cables to its embassies around the world, giving instructions for abandoning the use of code machines and describing how to destroy them.²⁶

²⁵Ibid., part 12, pp. 205–06.

²⁶Ibid., part 12, pp. 208–09.

Four offices—London, Hong Kong, Singapore, and Manila—were told to destroy their code machines and codes; the office in the United States was told specifically to retain its machines and machine codes. When a government orders the destruction of the code machines at its diplomatic offices in certain countries, that is a strong indication that a break in relations with those countries is imminent. The officials who were reading MAGIC intercepts realized the significance of these cables.

FDR ASSURES BRITISH AMBASSADOR HALIFAX OF U.S. SUPPORT IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

Because of the sense of growing emergency, Roosevelt had returned suddenly from Warm Springs to Washington. On the afternoon of December 1, he and his close aide Harry Hopkins met for a “long interview” with British Ambassador Lord Halifax at the White House. Both Halifax and FDR had considered sending a joint British-American statement to the Japanese, but rejected the idea as they expected it would only evoke an evasive reply from Japan.²⁷ Halifax was concerned about whether the United States would lend support to the British in southeast Asia, as agreed during the American-Dutch-British conversations at Singapore in April. As a signatory to the ADB agreement, the United States was committed to engage in “active military counter-action” in the event of “a direct act of war by Japanese armed forces against the Territory or Mandated Territory of any of the Associated Powers.”

The geographical area encompassed by this pact covered large portions of southeast Asia and the southwest Pacific. The details as to how “active military counteraction” was to be undertaken had not been specifically spelled out. However, the ADB agreement did specify that the U.S. Pacific Fleet headquartered in Hawaii

²⁷Earl of Birkenhead, *Halifax* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1966), pp. 528–29.

“whenever and wherever they can . . . should assume the offensive against Japanese naval forces and sea communications.” In addition to defending its base in Manila, the U.S. Asiatic Fleet was to transfer some of its cruisers with aviation units and destroyers “towards Singapore . . . to operate under [the] strategic direction” of the commander-in-chief, Chin.²⁸

The situation in southeast Asia was becoming increasingly precarious. Large contingents of Japanese troops were moving in that direction. The government of the Netherlands East Indies “had ordered a comprehensive mobilization of its armed forces.”²⁹ Halifax had been instructed by his government to tell the U.S. government that it “expected a Japanese attack on Thailand, and that this attack would include an expedition to seize strategic points in the Kra Isthmus” (the narrow strip of land belonging to Thailand north of the Malay Peninsula and Singapore). The British “proposed to counter this plan by a rapid move into the Isthmus,” and they “wanted to be sure . . . [of] American support.”³⁰

Roosevelt told Halifax that “[i]n the case of a direct attack” on the British or the Dutch, “we should obviously all be together.” However, he wanted to explore some situations which might not be quite so clear, for instance, if there were not a “direct attack” on the British or Dutch, or if the Japanese moved into Thailand without attacking the Kra Isthmus. When Halifax reported this conversation to his government, he said “he thought the United States would support whatever action we might take in any of these cases.”

²⁸ Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 15, pp. 1564, 1568–69, American-Dutch-British agreement, pp. 13, 17, 18.

²⁹ Department of State, *Far East: 1941*, p. 701.

³⁰ Llewellyn Woodward, *British Foreign Policy in the Second World War* (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1962), pp. 185–86.

FDR also told Halifax that the British “could count on American support if we [the British] carried out our move to defend the Kra Isthmus in the event of a Japanese attack, though this support might not be forthcoming for a few days.” FDR then suggested that the British promise the Thai government that they would respect and guarantee the “full sovereignty and independence” of Thailand if the Thais “resisted Japanese attack or infiltration.” Roosevelt said that the U.S. Constitution did not allow *him* to give such a guarantee, but he told Halifax that the British “could be sure” that their guarantee to the Thai government would have “full American support.”³¹

The president’s answer was sufficiently encouraging to enable Halifax to report that in his opinion the United States would support whatever action we might take in any of the contingencies outlined by the president. We could, in any case, count on American support of any operations in the Kra Isthmus.³²

HART (MANILA) DIRECTED TO CHARTER THREE SMALL “MEN-OF-WAR” TO OBSERVE JAPANESE CONVOYS

At the direction of the president, the Navy sent a cable about 7:00 P.M. on December 1 to Admiral Hart, commander-in-chief of our Asiatic Fleet, based at Manila. Hart was asked to charter three small vessels “as soon as possible and within two days if possible” to form a “defensive information patrol.” These three small ships were to have the minimal requirements to be classified as “U.S. men-of-war.” Each was to be commanded by a U.S. naval officer, although the crew members could be Filipinos. For weapons, they needed only a small gun and one machine gun. Their

³¹Ibid., pp. 186–87.

³²Birkenhead, *Halifax*, p. 529.

mission was “to observe and report by radio Japanese movements in west China Sea and Gulf of Siam.” The three small ships were to be stationed off the coast of French Indochina. “One vessel to be stationed between Hainan and Hue one vessel off the Indo-China Coast between Camranh Bay and Cape St. Jacques and one vessel off Pointe de Camau,” all locations in the anticipated path of the Japanese convoys then known to be sailing toward southeast Asia. Hart was also asked to report on the reconnaissance measures—air, surface, and submarine—being performed regularly by both Army and Navy.³³

AMBASSADOR GREW REPORTS GLOOM IN TOKYO

During the last few days of November, U.S. Ambassador Grew in Japan spoke with

a number of prominent Japanese, some of whom have been in direct touch with the Foreign Minister, and most of them appeared to be already familiar with the substance of our Government’s recent ten-point draft proposal. While desirous of continuing the Washington conversations, they all reflect a pessimistic reaction, perceiving the difficulties of bridging over the positions of the two countries and emphasizing what they seem to regard as the unconciliatory “tone” of our proposal.

On the evening of December 1, Grew saw one of his old Japanese friends at the Tokyo Club, looking “gray and worn.” “[T]he cabinet had decided to break off the conversations” with the United States, he told Grew. “[I]n that case,” Grew “feared that everything was over and that [he] would soon be leaving Japan.”³⁴ However, the government-controlled Tokyo newspapers that

³³Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 14, p. 1407. OPNAV CABLE #012356.

³⁴Joseph C. Grew, *Ten Years in Japan* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1944), pp. 484–85.

night reported “that the Cabinet at its meeting today, while realizing the difficulty of adjusting the respective positions of the two countries, nevertheless determined to continue the Washington conversations.”³⁵ Grew cabled Washington to that effect. In spite of this apparent good news, Grew’s friend remained “crushed.”³⁶

³⁵Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 14, pp. 1301–02.

³⁶Grew, *Ten Years in Japan*, p. 485.

9.

Tensions Mount

FDR REMONSTRATES AGAINST INCREASED JAPANESE TROOPS IN INDOCHINA

Secretary of State Hull was laid up with a cold,¹ so Undersecretary of State Welles called the two Japanese ambassadors to the State Department on December 2, and presented them with a statement by President Roosevelt: “[C]ontinuing Japanese troop movements to southern Indochina,” reported during the past several days, represent “a very rapid and material increase in the forces of all kinds stationed by Japan in Indochina.” As FDR understood the Japanese agreement with the French Vichy government, the arrival of these forces brought the number of Japanese troops in Indochina well above the total permitted.

[T]hese increased Japanese forces in Indochina would seem to imply the utilization of these forces by Japan for purposes of

¹Julius W. Pratt, *Cordell Hull: American Secretaries of State and Their Diplomacy*, vols. 12 and 13 (New York: Cooper Square Publishers, 1964), 2 vols., p. 516.

further aggression, since no such number of forces could possibly be required for the policing of that region.

Such aggression could conceivably be directed against the Philippines, the East Indies, Burma, Malaya, or Thailand. This, FDR maintained, would be “new aggression . . . additional to the acts of aggression already undertaken against China.” He wanted to know the intentions of the Japanese government in continuing to move troops into Indochina “because of the broad problem of American defense” and he asked the Japanese ambassadors to inquire as to their government’s purpose in carrying out “this recent and rapid concentration of troops in Indochina.”² Nomura admitted that he “was not informed by the Japanese Government of its intentions;” he would contact them immediately.

Kurusu said, “[I]t was obvious no threat against the United States was intended,” especially as the Japanese government had offered on November 20 “to transfer all its forces from southern Indochina to northern Indochina.” This shift “could not be easily effected,” however, due to the lack of adequate transportation and of communication facilities in Indochina.³

Although Welles stated that the United States government “has not had any aggressive intention against Japan,” Nomura reminded him of the U.S. “economic measures” against Japan, trade embargoes and the freezing of assets. “[E]conomic measures are a much more effective weapon of war than military measures.” The Japanese people believe “they are being placed under severe pressure by the United States to yield to the American position; and that it is preferable to fight rather than to yield to the American position.” The Ambassador added

²Department of State, *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States: Japan, 1931–1941* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1943), vol. 2, p. 779.

³Ibid.

that this was a situation in which wise statesmanship was needed; that wars do not settle anything . . . under the circumstances some agreement, even though it is not satisfactory, is better than no agreement at all.⁴

The Japanese ambassadors reminded Welles that the note we had handed them on November 26 contained several points which, “in view of the actual situation in the Far East . . . the Japanese Government would find it difficult to accept.” The latest U.S. proposal raised “important questions” so that it “seemed to the Japanese Government to require a completely fresh start.” As a result, its response “might take a few days,” although they expected it “shortly.”⁵

With respect to the U.S.-Japanese negotiations, the Japanese government “had been hopeful of being able to work out with us [the United States] some settlement of the three outstanding points on which our draft of June 21⁶ and the Japanese draft of September 25⁷ had not been reconciled.” Nomura said the situation called for “wise statesmanship. . . . [W]ars do not settle anything.” Kurusu thought considerable progress had been made and he expressed an interest in resuming the efforts to reconcile our differences. Welles agreed to refer this question to Hull.⁸

In their cable to Tokyo, the Japanese ambassadors reported:

The United States and other countries have pyramided economic pressure upon economic pressure upon us Japanese. . . . The people of Japan are faced with economic pressure, and I want

⁴Ibid., p. 780.

⁵Ibid., pp. 779–81.

⁶Ibid., pp. 486–92. U.S. draft proposal to Japanese government, June 21, 1941.

⁷Ibid., pp. 637–41. Japanese proposals submitted to U.S. ambassador in Japan, September 25, 1941.

⁸Department of State, *Japan, 1931–1941*, pp. 780–81.

you to know that we have but the choice between submission to this pressure or breaking the chains that it invokes.⁹

Welles's manner gave Nomura the "impression" that he "hoped Japan in her reply to the American proposals of the 26th would leave . . . room" to maneuver. It was "clear" also, from their interview with Hull the day before

that the United States, too, is anxious to peacefully conclude the current difficult situation. I [Nomura] am convinced that they would like to bring about a speedy settlement. Therefore, please bear well in mind this fact in your consideration of our reply to the new American proposals.¹⁰

WOULD U.S. FIGHT IF BRITISH OR DUTCH FOUGHT IN MALAYA AND NEI? FDR STILL PLANS TO ADDRESS CONGRESS

Also on Tuesday, December 2, Roosevelt met with Knox, Welles, and Stimson. Hull was still sick. "The president went step by step over the situation" and reported, through the State Department, on his request to the Japanese that they tell him "what they intended by this new occupation of southern Indochina." He "had demanded a quick reply." FDR seemed to have "made up his mind to go ahead with the message to Congress and possibly also the message to the Emperor," as had been discussed at his War Cabinet meeting on November 28.¹¹

These men "were watching the situation in the Far East very carefully." Stimson, for one, "was in frequent conference"

⁹Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 12, Washington to Tokyo message #1232, part 1 of 2, December 2, 1941, pp. 221–22.

¹⁰*Ibid.*, part 12, Washington to Tokyo message #1232, part 2 of 2, December 2, 1941, pp. 221–22.

¹¹*Ibid.*, part 3, p. 1148, Marshall testimony.

with the top Army officials—Marshall, General Miles of G-2 (Intelligence), and also General Gerow of the War Plans Division of the general staff. They were anxious to strengthen the Philippines' defenses and were

particularly concerned with supplies which were on the way to the Philippines and additional big bombers which [they] were trying to fly over there, some of which were scheduled to start at the end of the week."¹²

Hull had once remarked to Marshall, apropos of the discussions he had been having with the Japanese envoys, "These fellows mean to fight and you will have to watch out."¹³ He

was certain that the Japanese were planning some devilry; and we were all wondering where the blow would strike. The messages we were receiving now indicated that the Japanese force was continuing on in the Gulf of Siam, and again we discussed whether we would not have to fight if Malaya or the Netherlands were attacked and the British or Dutch fought. We all three thought that we must fight if those nations fought. We realized that if Britain were eliminated it might well result in the destruction or capture of the British Fleet. Such a result would give the Nazi allies overwhelming power in the Atlantic Ocean and would make the defense of the American Republics enormously difficult if not impossible. All the reasons why it would be necessary for the United States to fight, in case the Japanese attacked either our British or Dutch neighbors in the Pacific, were discussed at length.¹⁴

¹²Ibid., part 11, p. 5427. Excerpt from Stimson diary.

¹³Ibid., part 3, p. 1148. Quote from Marshall testimony.

¹⁴Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 11, pp. 5428–29, excerpt from Stimson diary.

INTERCEPTED JAPANESE MESSAGE
ANNOUNCES SYSTEM OF CODEWORDS
TO BE USED IN CERTAIN EMERGENCIES

Among the Japanese messages our code people intercepted during this period was a long cable from Tokyo on November 27 addressed to its embassy in Washington and several of the more important Japanese embassies and consuls around the world. We decoded and translated it on December 2. In view of the fact that “international relations [were] becoming more strained,” it read, an “emergency system of despatches” was to be put into effect. The cable contained a long list of codewords, each with a hidden meaning, which would be substituted for other words in case of certain emergencies, which were then enumerated. To distinguish one of these special messages from other messages, it would not use the usual Japanese close, “OWARI.” Rather it would end with the English word, “STOP.”¹⁵

This cable was one more indication that the Japanese government anticipated a serious “emergency” before long. It also gave our hard-worked cryptographers one more thing to keep in mind. They must watch for Japanese cables ending with “STOP” and then not only decode and translate them, but determine the hidden meanings in the special code words.

GOVERNMENT PREPARES FOR WAR

On September 8, 1939, a few days after the start of the war in Europe, Roosevelt had announced a limited “national emergency.” As international tension mounted, especially after FDR’s third term reelection in November 1940, various emergency interventionist measures were enacted aimed at placing this country on a wartime footing. A throng of government agencies were created;

¹⁵Ibid., part 12, pp. 186–88, Tokyo Circular #2409.

some controls on industrial production were initiated; and a system of priorities was established in the attempt to assure that firms producing military equipment and supplies could obtain the materials they needed.¹⁶

The Office of Production Management, headed by William S. Knudsen, Sidney Hillman, Stimson, and Knox, was established on January 7, 1941. On February 20, FDR's personal aide, Harry L. Hopkins, was appointed to a newly created Production Planning Board. By executive order of February 24, the production of aluminum and machine tools was granted government priority. On February 25, "in the interest of national defense," export licensing procedures were instituted for a long list of items, and the list was lengthened substantially in March and April. A National Defense Mediation Board was formed on March 19, to mediate strikes of labor-union members in defense industries. The Office of Price Administration and Civilian Supply, headed by Leon Henderson, was set up on April 11. The Office of Civilian Defense was organized on May 20, with New York Mayor Fiorello H. LaGuardia in charge.

Then on May 27 FDR declared an "unlimited national emergency." By this declaration the president gained control over labor, management, and other elements of the economy. Also, his authority to eliminate internal strife and to suppress subversive activities was increased. The "emergency" agencies continued to proliferate. On May 31 Secretary of Interior Harold Ickes was appointed to the newly created position of petroleum coordinator for national defense. As of June 2 "mandatory priorities of wartime scope" were imposed on industry. On June 25 U.S. air

¹⁶U.S. House Committee on Foreign Affairs. *Events Leading up to World War II: Chronological History of Certain Major International Events Leading up to and During World War II with the Ostensible Reasons Advanced for their Occurrence, 1931-1944*, 78th Cong., 2nd sess., 1944, p. 216, September 8 entry. The dates in this and the following paragraphs are taken from the 1942 *World Almanac*.

space was “zoned” by the Civil Aeronautics Board to “facilitate the movement of military aircraft.” On August 3, to conserve gasoline, nighttime sales (7:00 P.M. to 7:00 A.M.) were banned to motorists on the eastern seaboard, and on August 15 gasoline deliveries to 17 eastern states were cut 10 percent. On August 9, steel was placed under 100 percent priority control by the Office of Production Management. On August 11, by executive order, installment credit for consumers’ durable goods was curbed. On August 16 the president signed a bill extending from one to two and a half years the period of military duty required of draftees under the Selective Service Act and of members of the Army and National Guard.¹⁷ Then on August 28 the Supply Priorities and Allocations Board (SPAB) was set up, with Donald M. Nelson, then on leave from Sears, Roebuck & Co., as executive director, to handle procurement and to coordinate national-defense purchases.¹⁸

TOP WASHINGTON OFFICIALS CONSIDER WAR IMMINENT

Early in the first week in December, Roosevelt called Nelson to his office to talk about a priorities meeting. Their discussion had hardly begun when the president’s appointment secretary, “Pa” Watson, “came into the room and said, ‘Mr. President, Secretary Hull is outside with the two Japs.’” FDR then told Nelson, “Don, I think we shall have to postpone this discussion; I am very anxious to conclude the discussions with Nomura and Kurusu.” As Nelson got up to leave, he asked, “How does it look?” FDR “shook his head gravely and replied, ‘Don, I wouldn’t be a bit surprised if we were at war with Japan by Thursday [December 4].’”

¹⁷E. Eastman Irving, ed., *The World Almanac* (New York: New York World-Telegram, 1942), p. 71.

¹⁸Donald M. Nelson, *Arsenal of Democracy: The Story of American War Production* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1946), p. 156.

Nelson had “a second shock” later in the week. He was giving a dinner Wednesday evening for Vice President Henry A. Wallace and had invited the members of SPAB. Wallace sat at Nelson’s right and his fellow Chicagoan, Navy Secretary Frank Knox, was on his left. Remembering the president’s presentiment of war, Nelson “made guarded inquiries of Knox concerning the Japanese situation.” Knox “was not at all reticent” in his reply. “Don,” he said, “we may be at war with the Japs before the month is over.” Nelson asked, “Is it that bad?” Knox replied, “You bet your life it’s that bad.” Then Nelson asked Knox “what kind of a fight would we have out there in the Pacific.” Knox replied, “we’ll hunt their navy down and blow it right out of the water’.”¹⁹

TREASURY SECRETARY MORGENTHAU ASKS IF ANYTHING MIGHT DISTURB A U.S. BOND SALE

Treasury Secretary Morgenthau was responsible for arranging the government’s financing. On December 1 he was preparing to make an offering on the market of \$1.5 billion in U.S. bonds. Before settling on a date for the offer, he wanted to know the likelihood that some crisis might occur to disturb the financial markets. As Morgenthau was not privy to MAGIC, he lacked detailed inside knowledge of the international situation; he asked Roosevelt’s advice. FDR told him to go ahead with the bond offer. But he said, “I cannot guarantee anything. It is all in the laps of the gods,” adding, “it was apt to be worse in the following week than in the week just beginning.”

Morgenthau also asked Welles “if something would be happening Wednesday, Thursday, or Friday [December 3, 4, or 5] of real importance—I mean that might upset the people of this country.” Welles was reassuring: “I don’t anticipate anything within that brief period.”

¹⁹Ibid., pp. 182–83.

Morgenthau spoke with Roosevelt again on December 3. FDR said “he had the Japanese running around like a lot of wet hens” and thought “the Japanese are doing everything they can to stall until they are ready.” Morgenthau had long been anxious for the United States to become involved in the war against Hitler, so from Morgenthau’s viewpoint, “The most important thing” was that the president was “talking with the English about war plans as to when and where the USA and Great Britain should strike.”

When Morgenthau learned that the New York branch of the Bank of Japan was going to close down on December 4 or 5, he became still more worried about the market for his bond offer. He contacted the president again and finally got “an all clear signal.” So on Thursday, December 4, he announced “the Treasury offering—\$1 billion of 2-1/2 per cent bonds maturing 1967–1972, and \$500 million of 2 per cent with a shorter maturity 1951–1955.”²⁰

JAPANESE CONSUL IN HAWAII ASKED TO REPORT WEEKLY ON SHIPS IN PEARL HARBOR

For some months, U.S. intelligence officers in Hawaii had been intercepting Japanese messages to and from the Japanese consul in Hawaii and Tokyo, messages sent in the J-19 (consular) code. U.S. intelligence personnel in Hawaii did not have the facilities to decipher these coded intercepts and were under instructions to airmail them as they were intercepted to Washington. Airmail from Hawaii to Washington took two or three days.²¹ Once in Washington, their decoding and translation was often delayed still further, for “Purple” messages, which usually dealt with urgent and sensitive matters, had priority.

²⁰John Morton Blum, *From the Morgenthau Diaries: Years of Urgency, 1938–1941* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1965), pp. 391–93.

²¹Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 2, p. 791, General Miles testimony before the Joint Committee.

On October 9 Washington cryptographers had deciphered a September 24 “berthing plan” intercept, instructing the Japanese consul in Hawaii to plot the location of ships in Pearl Harbor on a grid system and to notify Tokyo.²² However, the Pearl Harbor commanders were not notified. On December 3 Navy cryptanalysts in Washington decoded and translated a J-19 message more than two weeks old (November 15), sent from Tokyo to its consul in Hawaii. It read: “As relations between Japan and the United States are most critical, make your ‘ships in harbor report’ irregular, but at a rate of twice a week.”²³

Again, this information was not passed on to our commanders in Hawaii—not to General Short, who was responsible for the safety of the fleet while in port, and not to Admiral Kimmel, commander-in-chief of the Pacific Fleet based in Pearl Harbor. Thus the U.S. commanders in Hawaii remained ignorant of the fact that the Japanese consul in Honolulu was keeping a close watch on the ships of the U.S. fleet in Pearl Harbor.

JAPAN ORDERS ITS EMBASSY IN WASHINGTON TO DESTROY CODES; U.S. NAVAL INTELLIGENCE WARNS OUTPOSTS

On December 2, Tokyo time, the Japanese government cabled its embassy in Washington further instructions about destroying its codes. This message was promptly decoded and translated by our Army cryptographers on December 3.²⁴ It said that all codes but those now being used with the machine and all secret files and documents were to be destroyed. Also, “[s]top at once using one code machine unit and destroy it completely.” On the completion

²²Ibid., part 12, p. 261, Tokyo September 24 J-19 message to Honolulu, translated October 9, 1941.

²³Ibid., part 12, p. 262, Tokyo J-19 message to Honolulu #111, translated December 3, 1941.

²⁴Ibid., p. 215.

of these tasks, the embassy should wire back the one code word, “haruna.”

This code-destroy message and others addressed to Japanese embassies and consulates indicated to anyone familiar with such matters that the Japanese were planning to go to war *very soon*. Junior officers in Naval Intelligence, who were working with these Japanese intercepts, were disturbed. Navy Captain Arthur H. McCollum, who was in charge of the Far Eastern section of Naval Intelligence’s foreign branch, suggested that warning messages be sent to the U.S. outposts in the Pacific, and he drafted the following cable:

Highly reliable information has been received that categoric and urgent instructions were sent yesterday to Japanese diplomatic and consular posts at Hongkong x Singapore x Batavia x Manila x Washington and London to destroy most of their codes and ciphers at once and to burn all other important confidential and secret documents x From foregoing infer that Orange [Japan] plans early action in Southeast Asia.²⁵

McCollum’s superior, Admiral Theodore S. Wilkinson, chief of the intelligence division, sought permission from Admiral Royal E. Ingersoll, assistant chief of naval operations, to send this cable. When asked during the Pearl Harbor hearings if the destruction of codes “necessarily mean[s] war, that a country that destroys its codes is going to commit an overt act of war or declare war,” Ingersoll replied, “It meant that to us, particularly the destruction of codes in the consulates.”²⁶ Therefore, Ingersoll apparently assumed that the last sentence of the proposed cable was unnecessary. In any event, he okayed the code-destruction message, *with the final sentence deleted*. The shortened message

²⁵Ibid., part 15, p. 1866, exhibit No. 83. #031850 to CINCPAC, CINCAF, Coms. 14, 16 concerning Japanese instruction to destroy codes and ciphers.

²⁶Ibid., part 9, p. 4269, Ingersoll testimony before the Joint Committee.

was dispatched priority on December 3 at 6:50 P.M. Greenwich time (1:50 P.M., Washington time), to Admiral Hart (Manila), Admiral Kimmel (Pearl Harbor), and to commandants of the naval districts in Hawaii and the Philippines.²⁷

Navy Captain L.F. Safford in the Office of Naval Communications knew of the latest Japanese intercept regarding the destruction of codes in London, Hong Kong, Singapore, and Manila.²⁸ Then he learned that the Japanese embassy in Washington also had been ordered “to destroy everything they had except one copy of their high-grade [decoding] machine.” And “on the 3rd we received a signal from Admiralty London that [the Japanese embassy in] London had already complied.”²⁹

Lieutenant Commander A.D. Kramer, who was attached to the far eastern section of Naval Intelligence, told Safford that McCollum was “greatly worried by the lack of information that was being sent to the Commander-in-Chief of the Pacific Fleet.” Safford phoned McCollum and asked “if he had read the messages which we had been getting in the last three days.” McCollum said he had. “Do you appreciate their significance?” Safford asked. McCollum said he did. Then Safford asked, “Are you people in Naval Intelligence doing *anything* to get a warning out to the Pacific Fleet?” “*We* are doing everything *we* can”—McCollum emphasized both “*we*’s”—“to get the news out to the Fleet.”³⁰

Safford didn’t learn then that McCollum had finally succeeded in having a warning sent, even if a watered-down one. So Safford and Kramer set out to draft their own warning. According to Safford,

²⁷Ibid., part 14, p. 1407, OPNAV #031850, December 3, 1941.

²⁸Ibid., part 12, p. 209, Tokyo to Washington #2444, December 1, 1941.

²⁹Ibid., part 29, p. 2396. Safford testimony before the APHB.

³⁰Ibid.

The C.I. [Communications Intelligence] Unit in Washington had no authority to forward to the C.I. Units in Pearl Harbor or Corregidor, or to the Commanders-in-Chief direct, any information other than technical information pertaining to direction finding, interception, and so forth. The dissemination of intelligence was the duty, responsibility, and privilege of the Office of Naval Intelligence as prescribed in Communication War Plans approved by the Chief of Naval Operations in March, 1940.³¹

Therefore, the dissemination of intelligence was not permitted to Safford's unit. He acted because he "thought McCollum had been unable to get his message released."³²

Safford's message, OpNav 031855, was "released by Captain [Joseph R.] Redman, Assistant Director of Naval Communications." It was addressed to the Philippines (CinCAF and Com 16) for action and routed to Hawaii (CinCPac and Com 14) for information. It was "written in highly technical language and only one officer present at Pearl Harbor, the late Lieutenant H. M. Coleman, U.S.N., on CinCPac's Staff, could have explained its significance."³³ Safford's message advised that on December 1 Tokyo had ordered London, Hong Kong, Singapore, and Manila to destroy their "Purple" machines; Batavia's machine had already been returned to Tokyo. Then on December 2 the Japanese embassy in Washington had been told to destroy its secret documents, its "Purple" machine, and all but one copy of other systems. It also reported that the Japanese embassy in London had complied.³⁴ When Safford's message reached Pearl Harbor, Kimmel's intelligence officer had to ask Coleman what a "Purple" machine was. The Pearl Harbor command had never heard of the Japanese

³¹Ibid., part 26, pp. 392–93, Safford testimony before the Hart Inquiry.

³²Ibid., p. 392.

³³Ibid.

³⁴Ibid., part 14, p. 1408.

diplomatic code, a code machine named “Purple,” or of MAGIC, the valuable intelligence derived from “Purple.”

McCullum’s watered-down dispatch (#031850)³⁵ had actually been released by Wilkinson just five minutes before Safford’s (#031855).³⁶ McCullum’s message had been sent for action to Hart in Manila, Kimmel in Pearl Harbor, and to the commandants of the 14th (Hawaii) and 16th (Philippines) naval districts. Safford’s message went for action to the Philippines, with an information copy to Hawaii.

U. S. ORDERS DESTRUCTION OF CODES AT SOME OVERSEAS EMBASSIES

The repeated reminders that the Japanese were planning some aggressive action in the very near future spurred Army officials in Washington to action. General Sherman Miles, head of G-2, the military intelligence division of the Army general staff, was responsible for the collection, analysis, estimation, and dissemination of information primarily for the chief of staff and the secretary of war.³⁷ On December 3, he cabled the U.S. military attaché at the U.S. embassy in Tokyo to destroy its codes.³⁸

The office of the chief of naval operations (OPNAV) also acted. Late in the evening of December 3, Washington time, instructions to destroy the Navy’s codes were sent to U.S. naval attachés in the Asiatic theater—ALUSNA (naval attaché) in Tokyo and Bangkok, and ASTALUSNA (assistant naval attaché for air) in Peiping and Shanghai, China. Information copies only were sent to CINCAF (commander-in-chief, Asiatic Fleet), that is Admiral Hart in Manila, COM 16 (commandant, 16th

³⁵Ibid., part 14, p. 1407.

³⁶Ibid., p. 1408.

³⁷Ibid., part 2, p. 777, Miles testimony before the Joint Committee.

³⁸Ibid., p. 841, Miles testimony before the Joint Committee; part 29, p. 2445, Bratton testimony before the APHB. See also part 14, p. 1409.

naval district, Philippines), and ALUSNA, Chungking, China. No copy was sent to Kimmel in Pearl Harbor, 14th naval district, Hawaii.³⁹ A similar message was sent a few minutes later to the naval attaché in Peiping and to the marine commander in Tientsin, China.

Some 17 hours later a message (042017) was sent to the naval station on Guam, the mid-Pacific island more than 3,000 miles west of Hawaii, which lay practically in the midst of the Japanese mandated islands. Guam was told to “destroy all secret and confidential publications and other classified matter,” except that necessary “for current purposes and special intelligence” and to be “prepared to destroy instantly” any other classified matter retained.⁴⁰ Information copies were sent to Hart and the 16th naval district in the Philippines, and to Kimmel and the 14th naval district in Hawaii.

On December 4, just two minutes after the one to Guam, a cable (042019) was dispatched from OPNAV in Washington to the naval attachés at Tokyo and Bangkok and to the assistant naval attachés in Peiping and Shanghai. They were told to “destroy all secret and confidential files with the exception of those which are essential for current purposes.” Also “all other papers which in the hands of an enemy would be of disadvantage to the United States” were to be destroyed.⁴¹

These code-destroy messages meant Japanese action was imminent—in the west Pacific and southeast Asia, probably in Indochina and Thailand. Hawaii was an ACTION addressee in only one of these urgent cables—McCullum’s #031850. (Manila was a second addressee). However, the information reported in that message, gleaned from a Japanese intercept, had concerned primarily southeast Asia, ordering the destruction of codes and

³⁹Ibid., part 14, p. 1408. OPNAV #040339.

⁴⁰Ibid., OPNAV #042017.

⁴¹Ibid., part 29, p. 2397, Safford before the APHB.

ciphers at Japanese diplomatic and consular posts in Hong Kong, Singapore, Batavia, and Manila, as well as Washington and London.

No one in Washington seemed concerned about Hawaii.

10.

Significant Information Known in Washington

U.S. WAR¹ PLANS PUBLISHED

On December 4, 1941, a front-page story in the *Washington Times Herald* and its parent newspaper, the *Chicago Tribune*, sent shockwaves throughout the nation:

F.D.R.'s WAR PLANS
GOAL IS 10 MILLION ARMED MEN:
HALF TO FIGHT IN AEF
PROPOSED LAND DRIVE BY JULY 1, 1943, TO SMASH NAZIS

The nation was still officially neutral. Yet here was evidence that plans had been made to build an army to fight abroad, that is, to create an American Expeditionary Force (AEF), “to smash” the Nazis. The people were stunned.

¹Mark Skinner Watson, *The War Department: Chief of Staff: Prewar Plans and Preparations* (Washington, D.C.: Department of the Army, Historical Division, 1950), p. 337.

The war plans announced here were those prepared under Marshall's orders by Lt. Col. Albert C. Wedemeyer. Wedemeyer had been assigned the task in May 1941 of compiling a "complete statement of Army needs—not for 1941 and 1942 but for the actual winning of a war not yet declared." Then in July 1941, almost immediately after Hitler attacked Russia, Roosevelt had expanded the scope of Wedemeyer's assignment to include not only the needs of the Army, but also those of the Navy and Air.² On August 30, FDR had enlarged it still further to encompass also the "distribution of expected United States production of munitions of war as between the United States, Great Britain, Russia and the other countries to be aided."³

The project had been carried out in utmost secrecy, and Wedemeyer had completed his Herculean task by September 10. The result of his efforts was known as the "Victory Program." To preserve the security of the project, the number of copies and their distribution were strictly limited.⁴ Nevertheless, rumors had circulated in October that "the Army was currently preparing an expeditionary force for duty in Africa." To protect the secrecy of the plans, Marshall had "categorically" denied their existence. "There is no foundation whatsoever," he stated, "for the allegation or rumor that we are preparing troops for a possible expedition to Africa or other critical areas outside this hemisphere."⁵ And now, to the chagrin of all involved, the security surrounding the program had been breached.

The military's war plans had been leaked and published for all the world to see in the anti-administration *Chicago Tribune*. There was consternation and embarrassment in the administration. An

²Ibid., pp. 338–39.

³Ibid., pp. 347–49.

⁴Albert C. Wedemeyer, *Reports!* (New York: Henry Holt, 1958), pp. 20–21.

⁵Watson, *The War Department*, pp. 358–59.

investigation was launched to discover who had been responsible for the leak.

JAPANESE “WINDS CODE” EXECUTED: WAR WITH ENGLAND; WAR WITH THE U.S.; PEACE WITH RUSSIA

On November 28, we had intercepted the November 15 Japanese “Winds Code” setup (Tokyo Circular #2353), a message announcing special weather code words to be used by the Japanese “[i]n case of emergency (danger of cutting off our diplomatic relations), and the cutting off of international communications.”⁶ By introducing these weather words, each with a hidden meaning, into daily Japanese language news broadcasts, the Japanese would be able to communicate secretly to their diplomatic officers throughout the world, even if they could no longer transmit via their cryptographic channels. Also on November 28, we had intercepted a Japanese message with the schedule of Japanese news broadcasts and the kilocycles on which transmissions were to be made.⁷ The significance of the “Winds Code” message became apparent when on December 1 we translated a Japanese intercept ordering the Japanese diplomatic offices in some countries to destroy their codes and code machines.

When Captain Safford, director of the Security Section of Navy Department’s Communications, read the cable giving the times and frequencies of Japanese news broadcasts in conjunction with the Japanese “Winds Code” message, he put two and two together. According to him,

⁶79th Cong., 1st sess. Joint (Congressional) Committee on the Investigation of the Pearl Harbor Attack. *Pearl Harbor Attack*, 39 vols. (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1946), part 12, p. 154, Tokyo Circular #2353.

⁷Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 34, p. 111.

everyone in authority from the president down believed that this [a “Winds Execute”] would be the Japanese Government’s decision as to peace or war announced to their own officials overseas.

We looked on it as “our chance of a tip-off, [our chance] to gain the necessary time to prevent a surprise attack on our fleet.”⁸

Interception of a “Winds Execute” was given top priority. Safford immediately alerted U.S. intercept stations to monitor Japanese-language weather and news broadcasts at the scheduled times.⁹ It was expected that the message would be transmitted in Japanese Morse code. Those monitoring the broadcasts were given cards with the three Japanese phrases listed in the “Winds Code” message—HIGASHI NO KAZE AME, KITA NO KAZE KUMORI, and NISHI NO KAZE HARE—and were instructed to listen closely for an “Execute,” i.e., for an actual broadcast of any one of the three crucial Japanese weather phrases.¹⁰

“Our prospects for interception looked somewhat dubious,” Safford said later.¹¹ The Navy even feared that “this winds execute might have been sent out before the 28th, when we began listening for it¹² and that we might have missed it entirely. After all, the Japanese message had gone out on November 15, almost two weeks before we decoded and translated it. All these uncertainties

⁸ *Ibid.*, part 8, p. 3640, Safford testimony before the Joint Committee.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 3580.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, part 33, p. 853, Kramer testimony, September 13, 1944, at Navy Court of Inquiry; *ibid.*, part 8, pp. 3915–18, and *ibid.*, part 9, pp. 4126–28, Kramer testimony before the Joint Committee; and *ibid.*, part 10, p. 4624, Bratton testimony before the Joint Committee.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, part 8, p. 3581, Safford statement before the Joint Committee.

¹² *Ibid.* p. 3640.

made the Navy “very jittery.”¹³ Moreover, radio reception was not only poor but unpredictable.

[T]he radio frequencies used between Japan and the United States were quite erratic in performance. . . . It is not at all surprising that the frequency used [by the Japanese] to reach Washington, Rio, and Buenos Aires skipped over the West Coast and Hawaii.¹⁴

Even the Japanese themselves in Washington and Rio “objected to the new frequency assignments and Rome complained about the poor quality of the Tokyo Voice Broadcasts.”¹⁵

In view of the urgency of intercepting the “Winds Execute” and the uncertain nature of radio reception, Navy communications took the exceptional precaution of alerting all stations with any possibility of intercepting this important message. Nevertheless, the Navy Department was “very much worried” that, even with “all the stations which were known to be listening for it, by some freak chance we might fail to catch it.”¹⁶

Since reception of Tokyo transmissions was often clearer on the east coast of the United States than on the west coast, “Station M” at Cheltenham, Maryland, was one of the several interception stations to which the alert was sent. Station chief Daryl Wigle “put a notation in the supervisor’s instruction file,” and Radioman Ralph T. Briggs, then assistant supervisor on his particular watch, saw the report. Briggs had been especially trained by the Navy in the interception of Japanese communications, and he recognized the three Japanese phrases as weather phrases. They were the

¹³Ibid.

¹⁴Ibid., p. 3615, Safford 1945 memorandum re “Winds Execute” prepared for Sonnett.

¹⁵Ibid., p. 3581. See also pp. 3581–85 for Safford statement to the Joint Committee (February 1, 1946) concerning radio reception at our various intercept stations and our preparations for picking up the “Winds Execute.”

¹⁶Ibid., p. 3640, Safford testimony before the Joint Committee.

kinds of phrases Briggs had often picked up when searching various radio spectrums at random to practice interception and to see what kind of traffic was being transmitted.

Briggs wondered why Navy intelligence was all of a sudden targeting weather reports, and, being on good terms with his station chief, he asked why. Wigle was reluctant to explain, but he finally showed Briggs the card with the three phrases and their hidden coded meanings. Wigle couldn't give Briggs all the details, "but [he said] it's important that we get those. . . . [I]f you get any of them, if any of those shows up in any broadcast, be sure and transmit them immediately to OP-20-G," Captain Safford's office in Washington, D.C.

The only broadcast on which such weather phrases might appear was the "Tokyo scheduled weather and news broadcast," transmitted at different hours of the day and on different frequencies to Japanese ships and stations worldwide. The Cheltenham communication intelligence trained radiomen began to monitor that broadcast. To each of the five watch sections Wigle assigned at least one operator who was qualified in Katakana, the difficult written form of squarish Japanese characters based on Chinese ideographs, as contrasted with the simpler Kanji.

On December 4 Briggs had the "mid-watch," from midnight to 8:00 A.M. Some time after midnight, probably between 3:00 and 8:00, when he was to be relieved, Briggs intercepted in Japanese Morse code a message containing the phrase "Higashi no kaze ame." He excitedly rushed down the corridor to the OP-20-G teletype terminal and sent the message off immediately to OP-20-G in Washington. He then phoned Wigle, who lived on the station, got him "out of the sack," and told him what had happened. When Wigle checked the log sheet and the station copy of the intercept later, he confirmed to Briggs that he had gotten "the real McCoy."¹⁷

¹⁷These three paragraphs based on Bettina B. Greaves's interview of Ralph T. Briggs in Las Vegas, Nevada, August 14, 1988. See also John Toland's

The “Execute,” forwarded by teletype (TWX) from Cheltenham, was received in the Navy Department in Washington by the watch officer, who notified Lieutenant Commander Kramer, who was in charge of the translation section of the Navy Department communication intelligence unit. As soon as Kramer saw the TWX from Cheltenham, he rushed into Safford’s office with the long yellow teletype paper in his hands.¹⁸ The time was shortly before 9:00 A.M. on December 4.¹⁹

“This is it!” Kramer said, as he handed the message to Safford. “This was the broadcast we had strained every nerve to intercept. This was the feather in our cap. . . . This was what the Navy Communication Intelligence Division had been preparing for since its establishment in 1924—War with Japan!”²⁰

As Safford later recalled,

The Winds Message broadcast was about 200 words long, with the code words prescribed in Tokyo Circular 2353 appearing in

interview of Briggs, April 13, 1980, filed with Toland papers at Franklin Delano Roosevelt Library, Hyde Park, N.Y. Also see John Toland, *Infamy: Pearl Harbor and Its Aftermath* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1982), pp. 195–99.

¹⁸Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 8, p. 3619. Safford testimony; also *ibid.*, part 18, p. 3344.

¹⁹Considerable confusion has surrounded the actual time when the “Winds Execute” was received. Safford’s recollection, based on the timing of messages he dispatched immediately upon receipt, was that it was picked up on the morning of December 4 (*ibid.*, part 8, pp. 35 86–88). Briggs’s surmise, when he was interviewed by Toland (April 13, 1980), was that he may have intercepted a winds message during his mid-watch at Cheltenham from 0001 [12:01 A.M.] to 0800 [8:00 A.M.], Washington, D.C., time on December 2. He came to this conclusion on the basis of missing messages as recorded on his Station “M” log sheet. However, later Briggs’s investigations convinced him that the date was actually December 4, as Safford maintained consistently throughout his testimony and interrogations.

²⁰Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 8, p. 3586. See also Kramer testimony, September 13, 1944, before the Naval Court of Inquiry, Joint Committee, part 33, p. 853.

the middle of the message. . . . Kramer had underscored all three “code phrases” on the original incoming teletype sheet. Below the printed message was written in pencil or colored crayon in Kramer’s handwriting, the following free translations:

War with England (including NEI, etc.)

War with the U.S.

Peace with Russia²¹

Safford immediately sent the original teletype of the “Winds Execute” with one of his officers up to the office of his superior, Rear Admiral Noyes, director of naval communications. Safford did not explain the message or its significance to the courier; he only told him “to deliver this paper to Admiral Noyes in person.” If Noyes wasn’t there, the officer was “to track him down and not take ‘no’ for an answer.” If Noyes could not be found within a reasonable time, the officer was to let Safford know. In a few minutes, however, Safford received a report that the message had been successfully delivered to Noyes.²²

Meanwhile over at the Japanese embassy in Washington, Japanese Petty Officer Ogimoto, an intelligence officer posing as a code clerk, had been on the alert since November 19, when the government in Tokyo had announced the “Winds Code.” We knew, of course, that the Japanese embassies and legations throughout the world must have been listening for the “Winds Execute” just as intently as we had been, although we had no way of knowing just what arrangements they had made. However, in the naval attaché room, Ogimoto had been straining his ears listening to shortwave broadcasts on their sophisticated radio. At about 4:00 P.M. on December 4, Ogimoto heard what he had been waiting for, “East Wind Rain.” He shouted out, “The wind

²¹ *Ibid.*, part 8, p. 3586, Safford testimony before the Joint Committee.

²² *Ibid.* See also p. 3611 and *ibid.*, part 18, p. 3347, the memorandum of May 14, 1945, prepared by Safford for Lieutenant Commander John F. Sonnett, legal assistant to Admiral Hewitt.

blew.” Ogimoto heard the phrase “East Wind Rain” repeated several times. In the next room Assistant Naval Attaché Yuzuru Sanematsu heard Ogimoto’s shout and rushed into the radio room. The room was electric with excitement. The two men looked at one another and said, “What had to come has finally come.” They immediately started making preparations for the destruction of the embassy’s secret codes, ciphers, and code machines.²³

SAFFORD (NAVAL COMMUNICATIONS, SECURITY)
ALERTS U.S. OUTPOSTS TO DESTROY
CLASSIFIED DOCUMENTS

Indications were mounting that some form of aggressive action by the Japanese was imminent. But when? Where?

Safford was concerned for the safety of the cryptographic equipment and all the classified documents at our mid-Pacific stations. The U.S. Naval Station on Guam was only 60 miles or so from Saipan, one of the islands mandated to Japan after World War I, and “according to War Plans [Guam was] not to be defended except against sabotage.” So Safford thought we should “clean house early there.”²⁴ Therefore, when the “Winds Execute” came in on December 4, he prepared four messages to our stations in the far-western Pacific which were dispatched that afternoon.

The first of Safford’s four messages was released by his superior, Noyes, and the other three by Admiral Ingersoll. Safford’s

²³ Yuzuru Sanematsu, *Nichi-bei Joho Senki* (Tokyo: Tosho Shuppansha, 1980), pp. 146, 235; 1982, pp. 191, 232. This paragraph is based on translations by Kentaro Nakano and Toshio Murata of pertinent passages in the autobiography of naval historian Sanematsu. At the time of the attack, Sanematsu was the ranking assistant naval attaché and chief intelligence officer in the Japanese embassy in Washington. After the war he was tried in the Japanese war crimes tribunal and served time in prison.

²⁴ Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 29, p. 2398, Safford testimony before the APHB.

first message ordered Guam (more than 3,000 miles west of Hawaii) and Samoa (2,260 miles south and west of Hawaii) to destroy certain codes immediately and to substitute a new code, RIP 66, for RIP 65, then in use. It was sent Priority to Kimmel at Pearl Harbor, Hart in Manila, the commandants of their respective naval districts, and the Naval Stations at Guam and Samoa. Because military intelligence, that is, the analysis, interpretation, and dissemination of information, was the prerogative of the Office of Naval Intelligence, it was outside the jurisdiction of Safford's Security Section of Naval Communications. Therefore, Safford's cable was drafted in technical terms and refrained from interpretation.²⁵

Safford then drafted a second message ordering Guam to

destroy all secret and confidential publications and other classified matter except that essential for current purposes. . . . Be prepared to destroy instantly in event of emergency all classified matter you retain.

It was directed to the naval station at Guam for action, with information copies to the commanders of the fleets and naval districts in the Philippines and Hawaii, who might have occasion to communicate with Guam.²⁶ It was imperative that Safford's first message get there first, as the second message "was sent in the new RIP 66, which had just been made effective by the previous message." Noyes revised Safford's draft somewhat and softened the "degree of warning" it contained, and it was dispatched 17 minutes after Safford's first message. However, it was sent Deferred Priority, thus downgrading its urgency.

[B]y Navy regulations or by communication instructions deferred messages are not expected to be delivered until the

²⁵Ibid., p. 2397.

²⁶Ibid., p. 2398, Serial No. 042017. See also *ibid.*, part 14, p. 1408.

beginning of working hours the next morning. In other words, any message which comes in in deferred priority automatically is not going to be considered a war warning, regardless of how you stated it.²⁷

Safford's third December 4 message was sent to Hart in Manila, which lay on the flank of the route the Japanese convoys were traveling. It ordered that the communications room be "stripped of all secret and confidential publications and papers which in the hands of an enemy would be of disadvantage to the United States."²⁸

The fourth message was directed for action to the U.S. naval attaches in Tokyo, Peiping, Bangkok, and Shanghai, with an information copy to Hart. No copy of this message was sent to Kimmel in Pearl Harbor. This message, also prompted by our receipt of the "Winds Execute," ordered our outposts in the western Pacific to destroy secret and confidential materials "which in the hands of an enemy would be a disadvantage to the United States."²⁹

Safford was proud of the Navy crew at Cheltenham for having intercepted the vital "Winds Execute," and he did not forget them. In the midst of the growing tension, he took time to send them a message: "Well done. Discontinue coverage of the target." A day or so later, he followed that up with a bouquet of roses, not exactly the traditional gift for one man to give a group of men. But "cryppies" (cryptologists) had the reputation for being odd balls, and Safford was a "cryppy."³⁰

Safford recognized that our interception of the "Winds Execute" had been due partly to "good luck," the fact that the Japanese hadn't transmitted it between November 15, when their "Winds Code" setup message had gone out, and November 28,

²⁷Ibid., part 29, p. 2398, Safford testimony before the APHB.

²⁸Ibid., p. 2397, Serial No. 042018.

²⁹Ibid., Serial No. 042019.

³⁰Briggs interview, August 14, 1988, by Bettina B. Greaves.

when we decoded and translated it. It had been due “partly to foresight,” the ability of Intelligence to put several clues together so as to anticipate it. But our successful interception had also been due to “the high quality of the Navy operators and receiving apparatus at Cheltenham.”³¹

TOKYO TO HONOLULU: INVESTIGATE “SHIPS IN HARBOR;” TOKYO TO EMBASSY: DESTROY CODES

Also intercepted and translated on December 4, was a significant J-19 Tokyo-Honolulu cable. Honolulu was asked to “investigate comprehensively the fleet bases in the neighborhood of the Hawaiian military reservation.”³²

The usual procedure for handling Japanese J-19 messages—interception in Hawaii and airmailing to Washington as picked up, still encrypted and untranslated—had been followed in this case. As a result, it was not until two weeks after its transmission from Tokyo that this cable was decoded and translated in Washington. However, it was available there on December 4, well before the attack. And it provided confirmation of the “Ships in Harbor” messages.³³ In light of the other intercepts, this new reminder that the Japanese in Hawaii had our fleet at Pearl Harbor under close surveillance should have set off flashing lights and piercing alarms among those in military intelligence, arousing them to alert the commanders in Hawaii. Yet no hint of either the earlier “Ships in Harbor” messages, or of this follow-up, was forwarded to Pearl Harbor.

A “Purple” December 4 Tokyo cable added to the crisis atmosphere in Washington. This cable instructed the Japanese

³¹Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 8, p. 3586, Safford testimony before the Joint Committee.

³²*Ibid.*, part 12, p. 263.

³³*Ibid.*, part 12, pp. 261–63.

ambassadors in Washington how to dispose of their codes. The key, or guide to deciphering the code, however, was to be kept “until the last moment” and then sent to the Japanese ministry in Mexico.³⁴

TOKYO TO AMBASSADORS: MAINTAIN PRETENSE THAT NEGOTIATIONS CONTINUE

Also on December 4, the Navy translated the Japanese government’s instructions to their ambassadors in Washington as to how to quiet Roosevelt’s concern, as expressed in his December 2 press conference, over Japanese troop movements in Indochina. The ambassadors were told to point out, while maintaining the pretense that the negotiations were continuing, that the movements in the southern part of the country, as well as in the north, have been in response to “an unusual amount of activity by the Chinese forces in the vicinity of the Sino-French IndoChina border.” The movements, they maintained, “have in no way violated the limitations contained in the Japanese-French joint defense agreement.”³⁵

Nevertheless, the Japanese ambassadors in Washington were still concerned. If Japan’s troop movements into Indochina continued, they feared the United States might take steps to close down the Japanese consulates. So they wired Tokyo again: “[C]onsideration should be given to steps to be taken in connection with the evacuation of the Consuls.”³⁶

³⁴Ibid., p. 231.

³⁵Ibid., p. 224. Tokyo to Washington, #875.

³⁶Ibid., p. 227. Washington to Tokyo, #1243.

FDR AND BRITISH AMBASSADOR DISCUSS
WARNING JAPANESE AGAINST ATTACKING
BRITISH MALAYA AND NEI

Roosevelt followed the Japanese situation closely, insofar as it was revealed by the MAGIC intercepts he saw.³⁷ Judging from the clues to Japan's intentions revealed in the messages we were intercepting, it was apparent the Japanese were preparing to strike. "[T]he only question that remained was when and where."³⁸ Without revealing his reasons, on December 4 FDR "asked Congressional leaders not to recess for more than three days at a time."³⁹ He was keeping the door open so that he could address Congress should he decide events and public opinion warranted it.

Late that evening, British Ambassador Lord Halifax called on the president to express his government's "very deep appreciation" for his promise the evening before of "armed support." The two men discussed whether or not it would be advisable for the British, Dutch, and the U.S. governments to issue jointly a "simultaneous warning" to the Japanese against attacking Thailand, Malaya, the Dutch East Indies, or the Burma Road through Indochina. FDR was "doubtful about including the Burma Road, but otherwise agreed to the warning." However, he did not believe the warning should be a joint one. He

thought that each of the three Governments should give it independently, and that the American warning should come first, since he wanted to assure opinion in the United States

³⁷Henry M. Adams, *Hopkins: A Biography* (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1977), p. 257.

³⁸*Ibid.*, p. 256.

³⁹*Ibid.*, p. 257.

that he was acting in the interest of American defence, and not just following a British lead.⁴⁰

FDR “had not given up all hope of a temporary agreement with the Japanese.” He led Halifax to believe that

Mr. Kurusu had let him know indirectly that an approach to the Emperor might still secure a truce, and even lead to a settlement between Japan and China. Mr. Kurusu’s plan was that the President should try to act as an “introducer” between China and Japan with a view to their dealing directly with each other.

Roosevelt suggested that the “lines of settlement” in such an agreement “might be the withdrawal of the bulk of Japanese troops from Indo-China, and a similar withdrawal from North China on an agreed timetable.”⁴¹

FDR also told Halifax that the Japanese would have to have “some economic relief.” Actually, he said, he “did not put too much importance on Mr. Kurusu’s approach, but he could not miss even the chance of a settlement.” Besides FDR believed “his own case [that the U.S. was negotiating in sincerity with Japan] would be strengthened if he had been in communication with the Emperor.”⁴²

There was “some danger,” Halifax believed, “in postponing the warning.” He even “suggested that the communication to the Emperor might serve as a definite warning.” The president agreed but said he would decide on December 6, “after getting the Japanese reply to his enquiries [concerning the Japanese troop movements], whether to approach the Emperor.” FDR told

⁴⁰Llewellyn Woodward, *British Foreign Policy in the Second World War* (London: Her Majesty’s Stationery Office, 1962), pp. 187–88.

⁴¹*Ibid.*, p.188.

⁴²*Ibid.*

Halifax that he hoped that, if he did contact the Emperor, “the three-Power warning might be postponed until he had had an answer.”⁴³

BRITISH FORCES IN SOUTHEAST ASIA TOLD OF PROMISED U. S. ARMED SUPPORT

On December 5 in southeast Asia (December 4 in the United States)

the Dominions received from the United Kingdom Government information that it had received assurance of armed support from the United States (a) if Britain found it necessary either to forestall a Japanese landing in the Kra Isthmus or to occupy part of the isthmus as a counter to Japanese violation of any other part of Thailand; (b) if Japan attacked the Netherlands East Indies and Britain at once went to their support; (c) if Japan attacked British territory.⁴⁴

Sir Robert Brooke-Popham, British commander-in-chief in the Far East stationed in Singapore, had finally received the authority he had been requesting; he was free to launch “Matador,” the operation intended to forestall a Japanese landing on the Kra Isthmus. However, London’s instructions were worded in such a way as to require that he withhold any action until he was absolutely “sure that a Japanese expedition was making for the Isthmus of Kra.” Such a delay would mean that “the chances of its [a British operation] succeeding were greatly reduced, for it would be too late to take action.”⁴⁵

⁴³Ibid.

⁴⁴Lionel Wigmore, *The Japanese Thrust* (Canberra: Australian War Memorial, 1957), p. 109.

⁴⁵S. Woodburn Kirby, *The War Against Japan*, vol. 1: *The Loss of Singapore* (London: Her Majesty’s Stationery Office, 1957), p. 175.

The volume of Japanese intercepts being decoded and translated in Washington during this time was almost overwhelming. The purpose of such cryptanalysis is, of course, to use the intelligence effectively to gain an advantage over one's adversaries. The record reveals that our cryptanalysts and translators were doing a remarkable job; they were intercepting, decoding, translating, and disseminating promptly countless Japanese messages. Thus, a great deal of information was coming into Washington. However, precious little "intelligence" was going out—to the men in the field who might have been able to use it.

11.

Further Indications of Impending Japanese Action

TOKYO: "UTTERLY IMPOSSIBLE FOR
JAPAN TO ACCEPT" U.S. TERMS

Page One of *The New York Times* reported on December 5 that Tokyo "was struck as by a bombshell . . . with the revelation of the substance of the Japanese-American negotiations." Japan's government-controlled news agency, Domei, had announced, "It is utterly impossible for Japan to accept the stipulations of the American document" presented to the two Japanese ambassadors on November 26 by Secretary of State Hull. Domei was owned by the Japanese government and "carefully controlled by the Japanese Government." Any Domei report was "simply what the Japanese Government wanted to have passed on to the public."¹ The terms of the U.S. document were not reported. However, according to the story, "a lively debate" had taken place

¹79th Cong., 1st sess. Joint (Congressional) Committee on the Investigation of the Pearl Harbor Attack. *Pearl Harbor Attack*, 39 vols. (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1946), part 2, p. 688, Testimony of Joseph C. Grew, U.S. Ambassador to Japan.

the day before at a session of the entire Japanese Privy Council. Furthermore, Domei asserted, the document

cannot serve as a basis of Japanese-American negotiations henceforth. Hull's statement means that the United States is still scheming to impose on Japan the provisions of old and obsolete principles, which are incompatible with the actual Far Eastern conditions, even of bygone days.²

JAPANESE EXPEDITIONARY FORCE IN THE SOUTHWEST PACIFIC

The Dutch and British, with possessions in the southwest Pacific, were concerned that huge concentrations of Japanese forces were assembling and apparently preparing to move in their direction. The commander-in-chief of all Dutch naval forces, stationed in London since the German invasion of the Netherlands in May 1940, "had received information that the Japanese were concentrating an expeditionary force in the Pelew [Palau] Islands" in the Carolines, only about 600 miles northwest of Dutch New Guinea.³ The Dutch in London conferred with Anthony Eden, secretary of state for foreign affairs. They were seeking some type of "a joint declaration of a defense zone by the United States or Great Britain" to assist their defense against the Japanese.⁴ Eden cabled Lord Halifax, the British ambassador in Washington, setting forth "the British view that the time has now come for immediate cooperation with the Dutch East Indies by mutual understanding. . . . This of course relates to the matter of defense

²*New York Times*, December 5, 1941, pp. 1, 4.

³Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States: Diplomatic Papers, 1941*, vol. 2: *The Far East* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1956), vol. 4, p. 717.

⁴*Ibid.*, pp. 717-19.

against Japan.”⁵ Halifax asked to see Secretary of State Hull and he called at Hull’s apartment on the morning of December 5, to discuss Eden’s cable.

TOKYO REPLIES TO FDR CONCERNING JAPANESE TROOPS IN INDOCHINA

On December 5 the two Japanese ambassadors called at the State Department to present formally the Japanese government’s answer to FDR’s question “with regard to the reported movements of Japanese troops in French Indo-china.” The two men handed Hull the Japanese government’s reply. It was short. The ambassadors waited while the secretary read.

“Chinese troops have recently shown frequent signs of movements along the northern frontier of French Indo-china bordering on China.” Hence, “Japanese troops . . . have been reinforced to a certain extent in the northern part of French Indo-china,” for the principal purpose of “taking precautionary measures.” As a result, some Japanese troop movements have been carried out in southern Indochina and apparently “an exaggerated report has been made of these movements.” However, the Japanese government said, “no measure has been taken on the part of the Japanese Government that may transgress the stipulations of the Protocol of Joint Defense between Japan and France.”⁶

When Hull had finished reading, he asked the ambassadors “whether the Japanese considered that the Chinese were liable to attack them in Indochina.” He said the Chinese contended they were “massing troops in Yunnan [a province of China on the northern border of Indochina] . . . in answer to Japan’s massing troops in Indochina.” Ambassador Nomura said that

⁵ Ibid., p. 719.

⁶ Department of State, *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States: Japan, 1931–1941* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1943), vol. 2, p. 784.

as the Chinese were eager to defend the Burma Road . . . the possibility of a Chinese attack in Indochina as a means of preventing Japan's attacking the Burma Road from Indochina could not be excluded.

Hull responded that he had "never heard before that Japan's troop movements into northern Indochina were for the purpose of defense against Chinese attack." This "was the first time that he knew that Japan was on the defensive in Indochina." Hull sounded sarcastic.

The ambassadors said the Japanese were "alarmed over increasing naval and military preparations of the ABCD powers in the southwest Pacific area." They said that "an airplane of one of those countries had recently flown over Formosa," then Japanese territory.

Nevertheless, Kurusu said, the Japanese government was "very anxious to reach an agreement with this [U.S.] Government," and it felt we should be "willing to agree to discontinue aid to China as soon as conversations between China and Japan were initiated." Hull countered by bringing up the aid Japan was giving Hitler. Kurusu asked "in what way was Japan aiding Hitler." Hull replied, "by keeping large forces of this country and other countries immobilized in the Pacific area."⁷ At this point the Japanese ambassador said under his breath, "[T]his isn't getting us anywhere." Nevertheless, the conversation continued. The secretary and the two ambassadors recapitulated their respective positions more or less as they had done many times before—with respect to U.S. aid to China, the presence of Japanese troops in Indochina, Japan's desire for oil, and the attitude of the United States toward supplying that oil.

Hull criticized Japan's "bellicose" slogans and the "malignant campaign conducted [in Japan] through the officially controlled

⁷Ibid., pp. 781–82, Joseph W. Ballantine report of December 5 meeting between Hull and the Japanese ambassadors.

and inspired press which created an atmosphere not conducive to peace." Kurusu pointed out that "on the American side we were not free from injurious newspaper propaganda." One press report had cast "aspersions on" him personally, saying he had been sent here "to check on" Nomura. Hull "replied that he had heard only good reports in regard to Mr. Kurusu and the Ambassador."

In spite of the formal pleasantries, the Japanese ambassador's *sotte voce* remark had been correct—the discussions weren't getting anywhere. The two ambassadors made "the usual apologies for taking so much of the Secretary's time" and withdrew.⁸

FDR AND STIMSON DENOUNCE FOR LACK OF PATRIOTISM THOSE WHO LEAKED U.S. WAR PLANS

The December 4 *Chicago Tribune* story on "F.D.R.'s War Plan" had aroused the country. At a White House press conference the next day, Roosevelt parried questions of reporters and referred them to Secretary of War Stimson. Almost 200 newspaper correspondents immediately "flocked to his [Stimson's] press conference."⁹ After reading a short statement, Stimson asked the reporters,

What would you think of an American general staff which in the present condition of the world did not investigate and study every conceivable type of emergency which may confront this country, and every possible method of meeting that emergency?

He questioned the patriotism of the person or newspaper that would publish confidential studies and make them available to our enemies. The newspaper report was about an unfinished

⁸Ibid., pp. 782–83.

⁹*New York Times*, December 6, 1941, p. 3.

study that had “never constituted an authorized program of the Government.”¹⁰

Stimson continued,

While their publication will doubtless be of gratification to our potential enemies and a possible source of impairment and embarrassment to our national defense, the chief evil of their publication is the revelation that there should be among us any group of persons so lacking in appreciation of the danger that confronts the country.

He denounced those who were “so wanting in loyalty and patriotism to their government that they would be willing to take and publish such papers.” Stimson “declined to answer questions or enlarge upon it, but indicated that more would be announced after he had completed the task . . . of finding out how the ‘leak’ occurred.”¹¹

JAPAN ANTICIPATES A BREAK WITH ENGLAND AND THE UNITED STATES

On December 3 the Japanese ambassadors in Washington notified Tokyo by cable (which we decoded and translated on December 5) that the indications were that “some joint military action between Great Britain and the United States, with or without a declaration of war is a definite certainty in the event of an occupation [by Japan] of Thailand.”¹²

Also on December 5 we read a December 1 message from Tokyo to the Japanese embassy in London: “Please discontinue the use of your code machine and dispose of it immediately.” To

¹⁰Mark Skinner Watson, *The War Department: Chief of Staff: Prewar Plans and Preparations* (Washington, D.C.: Department of the Army, Historical Division, 1950), p. 359.

¹¹*New York Times*, December 6, 1941 p. 3.

¹²Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 12, p. 227.

acknowledge receipt of these instructions, the embassy was to cable Tokyo “in plain language . . . the one word SETUJU.” When the code machine had actually been destroyed the embassy was to wire Tokyo, also in plain language, “HASSO.”¹³ Thus communications in code between the Embassy in London and Tokyo were being shut down.

Some in U.S. intelligence realized that this was what Japan had been preparing for when it set up the “Winds Code.” Radio reception in those days was not reliable. Routine Japanese news and weather broadcasts, into which Japan inserted the special weather words with their secret meanings, could not usually be heard in the countries surrounding the Pacific. But due to freak atmospheric conditions, they “could be heard . . . in the North Atlantic Ocean, the British Isles and Western Europe.” Thus the primary reason for sending the “Winds Execute” must have been to notify the Japanese ambassador in London, after his code machine had been disposed of, that war with England and the United States was coming. “[T]his was the only way that Tokyo could get news to him secretly.”¹⁴

That same day we intercepted a December 4 cable from the Japanese ambassador in Berlin to Tokyo. Berlin was asking Tokyo to arrange, “[i]n case of evacuation” from London, for the transfer to Berlin of certain embassy personnel. Why would the Japanese ambassador in Berlin anticipate the evacuation of the Japanese embassy in London, unless he expected Japan and Great Britain soon to be at war with each other?¹⁵

¹³Ibid., part 12, p. 209.

¹⁴Ibid., part 8, p. 3585, Safford statement prepared for Joint Committee.

¹⁵Ibid., part 12, p. 234.

CONFIRMATION FROM BATAVIA, NEI, OF SIGNIFICANCE OF JAPAN'S "WINDS CODE"

The naval attaché in Batavia, Netherlands East Indies, also picked up the Japanese "Winds Code" setup message and notified Washington "deferred priority" on December 4, 6:21 A.M. Greenwich time (December 4, 1:21 A.M. Washington time). The attaché advised the United States that "Japan will notify her consuls of *war decision* in her foreign broadcasts as weather report at end" (*italics added*). Then the cable quoted the special weather words, each with its hidden meaning.¹⁶

The "Winds Execute" picked up in Cheltenham, Maryland, on December 4 was open to several interpretations. It could have indicated simply that Japanese relations with the nations mentioned would be in danger; that Japanese negotiations would be discontinued; that diplomatic relations would be broken off; or that actual war was imminent. Thus Batavia's explicit interpretation, that the transmission of a "Winds Execute" would forebode war, lent credence to Safford's and Kramer's interpretation that it was actually a portent of war. However, since the cable from Batavia had not been classified URGENT, it was not decrypted immediately, but held for the December 4–5 nightshift of Army's G-2, Intelligence Division. When we finally read it on the morning of December 5, it was "old hat," for we had already picked up the "Winds Execute."

THE NAVY'S DECEMBER 5 VIEW OF THE U.S.-JAPANESE SITUATION

When Navy Director of War Plans Turner heard from Admiral Noyes that a "Winds Execute" referring to a break in

¹⁶Ibid., part 9, p. 4214, Kramer testimony before the Joint Committee. See also *ibid.*, part 18, p. 3350. #031030 (5 Dec. 1941) from ALUSNA, Batavia (Thorpe).

U.S.-Japanese relations, had been received, he assumed Kimmel in Pearl Harbor had it. At a December 5 meeting, three top Washington Navy officials—Chief of Naval Operations Stark, Assistant Chief Ingersoll, and Turner—concluded that “all necessary orders had been issued to all echelons of command preparatory to war and that nothing further was necessary.”¹⁷

¹⁷*Ibid.*, part 33, p. 886. Turner testimony before the NCI.

12.

December 6, Part 1

COLLECTING “INTELLIGENCE” AND DETERMINING POLICY

With the perspective of hindsight, it is easy to spot the significant clues that should have given warning that the Japanese might attack Pearl Harbor. Out of fairness to the participants in the drama that was unfolding in 1941, however, we should keep in mind the situation as it appeared to them. A mass of information was coming into Washington in many forms from all over the world. Bits and pieces of information came from various sources—from diplomatic contacts, from cable intercepts, including MAGIC, from our military and naval attachés, from direct observations, overflights, radio direction findings, and so on. Much of it was not in English. And much of this foreign-language material was in code as well. We were able to decode, translate, and read a great deal of that, although not all, quite promptly. The coded cable traffic alone was extremely heavy. Thus the amount of this material that was available toward the end of 1941 was almost overwhelming.

Many persons, each with his or her own expertise, played a role in the process of collecting the raw data that go to provide “intelligence.” There were code specialists, communications specialists, security specialists, decoders, translators, and couriers. There were code clerks who listened to foreign radio broadcasts and could decipher Morse code, linguists familiar with Japanese, and radio technicians who could determine the location of naval vessels and military units by intersecting radio beacons. There were others at our various stations all over the world who picked cable intercepts out of the air and transmitted them to Washington. Each was familiar with only a small part of the total picture. No single person had access to all this information. Few of the many specialists were sufficiently aware of the broad picture to be able to comprehend the significance of the data they accumulated. And no one had any reason to feel a sense of urgency because no one knew what was going to happen on December 7.

The responsibility for collecting, analyzing, disseminating, and employing information was divided among various offices and divisions of the military and the administration, each with its own specialized experts. Roughly speaking, data was collected by technical personnel in “communications.” Raw data was then integrated and analyzed by specialists in “intelligence” offices or divisions, persons who had the training, experience, background, and knowledge of policy sufficient to sift the wheat from the chaff, to recognize what was pertinent and what was not, to analyze and interpret it, and to decide what information should be disseminated and to whom. These “intelligence” specialists needed to understand not only military operations, the defensive and offensive capabilities of our forces and of our potential allies and enemies, but also the diplomatic situation and government policy.

Once the raw data collected was converted into “intelligence,” other specialists were responsible for disseminating it and issuing commands to the field commanders. This responsibility was

usually in the hands of “War Plans” or “Operations” divisions. Final policy decisions were then made on the basis of the diplomatic and political situation by the government’s administrative officials, the president and his cabinet, after taking into consideration the advice of the Army’s chief of staff and the chief of naval operations.

The various specialists cooperated. But at the same time they were protective of the prerogatives of their own office or division, and anxious to prevent outsiders from invading their department’s turf. Thus the jurisdiction of each office or division was carefully prescribed. To avoid conflict, each was careful to follow channels. “Communications” collected data; “Intelligence” analyzed and interpreted it; orders to field officers, in line with the administration’s policy decisions, went out from “War Plans” or “Operations.” Although the system usually functioned smoothly, its operation was sometimes disturbed as changes were made in procedure and personnel.

In the Army, the Signal Intelligence Service (SIS) collected information and transmitted it to Army Intelligence (G-2). The War Plans Division (G-5) formulated plans under the direction of the Army chief of staff (ACS). The president, the commander-in-chief, was responsible for overall policy. But orders to the field were issued by the chief of staff, “the immediate advisor of the Secretary of War” and “the Commanding General of the Field Forces.”¹

In the Navy, the Office of Naval Communications collected data. Traditionally, the Office of Naval Intelligence (ONI) had had the responsibility for collating, analyzing, and disseminating this information to officers in the field. However, when Rear Admiral Theodore S. Wilkinson became director of ONI on

¹Mark Skinner Watson, *The War Department: Chief of Staff: Prewar Plans and Preparations* (Washington, D.C.: Department of the Army, Historical Division, 1950), p. 64.

October 15, 1941, he found that it had been reduced to a fact-gathering agency and the Navy's War Plans Division had assumed the responsibility for analyzing the information that came in.² The Navy's top officer, the Chief of Naval Operations (CNO), was responsible for keeping the Navy's commander-in-chief, the president, informed. And orders to the Navy's field commanders were sent out by the CNO.

Step by step, as data journeyed through channels, from the technical specialists who collected it to the officers with training and experience who interpreted it, it became meaningful "intelligence." "Intelligence" formed an extremely important component of the total 1941 picture. The Army's chief of staff, General Marshall, and the Chief of Naval Operations, Admiral Stark, relied on the available "intelligence" when advising their field commanders on military strategy. The top administration officials, that is the secretaries of State, War, Navy, and the president himself, also strove to keep abreast of current "intelligence." In 1941, this meant keeping up to date on the Japanese position through the diplomatic cables and other sources.

In the course of assembling, interpreting, and analyzing the data available, the most important "intelligence" was channeled to the men at the top. Even though each technical specialist involved in the complicated procedure was familiar with only a small segment of the total picture, the president and his top civilian and military advisers, who had the final responsibility for the "common defense" of the nation and for resolving diplomatic and political differences, had a bird's-eye view of the overall situation. They were also provided with the country's most perceptive military advice. By December 6, they were well aware, as a

²79th Cong., 1st sess. Joint (Congressional) Committee on the Investigation of the Pearl Harbor Attack. *Pearl Harbor Attack*, 39 vols. (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1946), part 36, pp. 229–31, testimony of Admiral Wilkinson, June 5, 1945, before the Hewitt Inquiry.

result of their access to MAGIC and other sources, that a clash with Japan was at hand. Their constitutional responsibility for national defense obligated them to protect this country and its citizens and to see to it that, insofar as possible, U.S. forces, wherever stationed, were properly provisioned, prepared, and alerted. Their constitutional responsibility did not call for inviting foreign intervention or defending other nations.

“PILOT MESSAGE” ALERTS WASHINGTON TO EXPECT JAPAN’S REPLY TO U.S. “ULTIMATUM”

Ever since November 26, when Washington officialdom had rejected the Japanese proposal for a *modus vivendi*, we had been anxiously awaiting Tokyo’s reply. We knew from reading cable intercepts that the Japanese considered our statement “humiliating” and that relations between our two countries were considered to be “de facto ruptured.” It was clear to us that U.S.-Japanese relations were at an impasse. But we had also read their government’s instructions to the two Japanese ambassadors to keep on talking and not “to give the impression that the negotiations are broken off.” So we knew their interest in continuing to meet with Secretary of State Hull was merely for the sake of appearances; it did not mean a change in their deadline.³

On Friday, December 5, Rear Admiral Theodore S. Wilkinson, Director of the Office of Naval Intelligence, had set up “a 24-hour watch in the Far Eastern Section” and had established “a watch of the senior officers of the Department.”⁴ According to Navy Captain William A. Heard, then in charge of the foreign branch, Office of Naval Intelligence, “There was an elaborate arrangement for prompt notification to the Director of Naval Intelligence of

³Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 12, p. 195, Tokyo to Washington “Purple” message #844.

⁴*Ibid.*, part 4, p. 1761, Wilkinson testimony.

any matter of interest to him.” Captain Heard had personally arranged for “a special week-end telephone line between the Office of Naval Intelligence and the State Department,” which “included my [Heard’s] telephone communication with both Military Intelligence and with the State Department.”⁵

On Saturday, December 6, at 7:15 A.M., Washington, D.C., time, the Navy’s intercept station on Bainbridge Island (Washington state), across the Puget Sound from Seattle, started picking up a message in “Purple” addressed to the Japanese ambassadors in Washington.⁶ This coded message was relayed almost immediately, as was customary by TWX (teletype wire exchange) along with other messages that had been intercepted that morning, to Washington, D.C.⁷ It was received in Washington that same day, at 12:05 P.M.

Until a message had been decoded and translated, there was no way, of course, to know if it was important. Army and Navy had only just, on December 1, worked out an arrangement to share responsibility for handling the heavy traffic of Japanese intercepts, the Army had the responsibility for decoding and translating on even-numbered dates, the Navy on uneven-numbered dates. December 6 was an Army day. So when this message from Bainbridge came in, the Navy relayed it to the Army’s SIS⁸ and an Army cryptographic unit went to work right away. That was fortunate, for this message proved to be Tokyo’s announcement to her two Washington ambassadors that Japan’s formal reply to the U.S. note of November 26 was on its way. This message came to be known among those familiar with MAGIC as the “Pilot

⁵Ibid., part 32, p. 356, Testimony of Navy Captain William S. Heard before the NCI.

⁶Ibid., part 8, p. 3559, Safford testimony before the Joint Committee.

⁷Ibid., part 8, p. 3560, Safford testimony.

⁸Ibid., part 14, p. 1413.

Message.”⁹ By 2:00 it had been decoded, translated, and typed up in finished form by the SIS men.¹⁰ Presumably the Japanese code clerks in their embassy were decoding and typing this same message at the same time as were our Army decoders.

This “Pilot Message” stated that the Japanese government had “deliberated deeply” with respect to the U.S. note and had drawn up a long 14-part memorandum that would be sent to the ambassadors separately. The reply would be transmitted in English, so it would only have to be decoded before it could be submitted to Hull. The situation was “extremely delicate,” Tokyo warned. When the ambassadors received the long memorandum, they should keep it secret for the time being. They would be wired special instructions separately “concerning the time of presenting this memorandum to the United States.”¹¹

About 2:00 Saturday afternoon, as soon as the “Pilot Message” was ready, SIS sent it to the Military Intelligence Division of the War Department’s general staff. From Military Intelligence it was distributed at about 3:00, either by Colonel Rufus S. Bratton, then chief of Military Division’s Far Eastern Section, or by one of his assistants, to the Army’s list of recipients—Hull, Stimson, Marshall, and Chief of War Plans Division Leonard T. Gerow (G-2).¹²

The Navy courier, responsible for delivering Japanese intercepts to the White House and the others on the Navy’s list, was Lieutenant Commander A.D. Kramer. The White House was usually first on Kramer’s list and apparently Admiral Beardall, naval aide to the president at the White House, received the

⁹Ibid., part 12, pp. 238–39.

¹⁰Ibid., part 9, p. 4510, testimony of Colonel Rufus Bratton before the Joint Committee.

¹¹Ibid., part 12, pp. 238–39.

¹²Ibid., part 9, pp. 4508–10, 4512–13, 4536, 4574, Bratton testimony before the Joint Committee.

“Pilot Message” at about 4:00 in the afternoon, shortly before leaving his office for the evening.¹³ Admiral Wilkinson, Director of Naval Intelligence, was planning a party that Saturday evening for some of his fellow staff officers and he said he received the message in his office at about 6:00 P.M., just before he left for home.¹⁴

After reading the “Pilot Message,” the top officers in the administration, Army, and Navy anxiously awaited the 14-part Japanese reply. Watching for the long Japanese memorandum was given top priority. Since FDR’s naval aide Beardall had plans for the evening, he arranged for a communication watch officer, Lieutenant Schulz, to stand by at the White House to deliver to the president any message that might come in during the evening.¹⁵

The first part of Japan’s 14-part English-language message, heralded by the “Pilot Message,” began to come into Washington during the afternoon of December 6. And then the decoding began.

U.S. OVERFLIGHTS SIGHT JAPANESE CONVOYS IN SOUTH CHINA SEA HEADING TOWARD MALAYA

The steady stream of Japanese messages we were intercepting gave us substantial insight into the deliberations of the Japanese government. However, these intercepts were not our only source of information about their activities. Planes from Manila conducted reconnaissance flights on a regular basis over the South China Sea and reported on Japanese movements at sea. A December 6 cable from Admiral Hart, commander-in-chief of the Asiatic

¹³Ibid., part 10, p. 4668, Schulz testimony before the Joint Committee; *ibid.*, part 11, p. 5271, Beardall testimony before the Joint Committee.

¹⁴Ibid., part 4, pp. 1761, 1874, Wilkinson testimony before the Joint Committee.

¹⁵Ibid., part 11, pp. 5277–81, Beardall testimony.

Fleet in the Philippines was received in the Navy Department in Washington at about 8:00 A.M. that same morning. It reported that two Japanese convoys consisting of 35 ships escorted by eight cruisers and 20 destroyers had been sighted south of Indochina heading toward Malaya.¹⁶ These convoys were dangerously close to the line drawn by the ADB powers (American/Dutch/British) and designated in their secret April 1941 Singapore meeting as the limit beyond which the Japanese could not advance without inviting “active military counter-action.”¹⁷ Both convoys were south of the southern tip of French Indochina, so they had already crossed latitude 10° North. Since they were heading west toward the Isthmus of Kra, and had arrived at longitudes 106.20° East and 105° East, they were expected soon to pass the critical north-south line, 100° East. Hart’s message also reported “30 ships and one large cruiser” sighted by his scouting force anchored in Camranh Bay off the southeast coast of Indochina, a couple of hundred miles north of Saigon (since renamed Ho Chi Minh City).

Shortly after Hart’s cable reached the Navy Department, the State Department received a message from U.S. Ambassador John G. Winant in London confirming that these convoys were converging on waters the ADB powers considered inviolable.¹⁸ It was not clear, however, just where they were headed. The British undersecretary of foreign affairs, Sir Alexander Cadogan, was “uncertain as to whether destination of parties is Kra [Malaya] or Bangkok [Thailand].”¹⁹ But there could be no doubt that Japanese ships and troops were moving into position for some operation in the vicinity of the Malaysian Peninsula and/or the Dutch East

¹⁶Ibid., part 17, p. 2485.

¹⁷Ibid., part 15, p. 1564, ADB (April 1941) Conversations.

¹⁸Ibid., part 14, p. 1246. See also *ibid.*, part 2, p. 493.

¹⁹Ibid., part 14, p. 1247. See also *ibid.*, part 2, p. 494.

Indies. The Dutch were much alarmed at the proximity of such large concentrations of Japanese troops.

On December 5, U.S. Military Attaché Merle-Smith in Australia had sent information about these convoys to General MacArthur in the Philippines and to General Short in Hawaii. The fact that Japanese troops were on the move in the southwest Pacific was taken as confirmation in Hawaii of the word they had received from Washington: that the immediate threat of a Japanese strike was to southeast Asia.²⁰

INTERCEPTED MESSAGES FROM ITALY,
JAPANESE EMBASSY (WASHINGTON), TOKYO,
INDICATE WAR IS IMMINENT

In Europe the three Axis Powers—Germany, Italy, and Japan—were following the diplomatic events unfolding in Washington. We learned on December 6, that Premier Benito Mussolini had told the Japanese ambassador to Italy that he had “been carefully watching the progress of the Japanese-U.S. talks.” Mussolini charged the United States with “utter bull-headedness” and FDR with being of a “meddlesome nature.” Mussolini told the ambassador that he was in complete sympathy with Japan’s desire to create “a New Order in East Asia.” The ambassador then asked, “[S]hould Japan declare war on the United States and Great Britain . . . would Italy do likewise immediately?” Mussolini replied: “Of course.”²¹

A December 5 message addressed to the Japanese ambassadors in Washington from Tokyo, also decoded and translated in Washington on December 6, provided one more clue to Japan’s intentions. This cable was short: “Will you please have Terasaki,

²⁰*Ibid.*, part 34, pp. 59–61, Lieutenant Robert H. O’Dell testimony before Clarke Inquiry, October 6, 1944.

²¹*Ibid.*, part 12, pp. 228–29.

Takagi, Ando, Yamamoto and others leave by plane within the next couple of days.”²² When delivered to the Navy recipients of MAGIC, a penciled footnote identified Terasaki, second secretary in the Japanese embassy, as “head of Japanese espionage in Western Hemisphere. He and his assistants,” the note read, “are being sent to South America.”²³

Also on December 6, we translated two other “Purple” messages dealing with the destruction of codes at the Japanese embassy in Washington. One message from the embassy in Washington advised Tokyo that the codes had been destroyed but requested permission, “since the U.S.-Japanese negotiations are still continuing[,]” to delay “the destruction of the one code machine.”²⁴ The wire from Tokyo explained that the embassy was “to burn one set” of code machines but “for the time being to continue the use of the other.”²⁵

That same afternoon we intercepted and decrypted another short Japanese message from Tokyo reminding the embassy in Washington of the importance of “preserving secrecy” with respect to the “aide memoire,” the 14-part reply to our note of November 26. “[B]e absolutely sure not to use a typist or any other person” in its preparation.²⁶

Still another significant Japanese intercept from Honolulu to Tokyo was read that day. This message, transmitted in a code not yet decrypted, had been picked up in San Francisco on November 18 and airmailed to the SIS in Washington on or about November 21. It could be decoded and translated only after the cipher was solved on or about December 3, but it was available to our people

²²Ibid., p. 234.

²³Ibid., part 9, p. 4201. Note added by courier Kramer for the benefit of Navy recipients, Kramer testimony before the Joint Committee.

²⁴Ibid., part 12, pp. 236.

²⁵Ibid., p. 237.

²⁶Ibid., part 12, p. 245.

in Washington on December 6.²⁷ This intercept reported movements of U.S. naval ships in and out of Pearl Harbor. No hint of its contents, or of its existence, was relayed to the commanders there.

JAPANESE OFFICES WORLDWIDE ACKNOWLEDGE CODE-DESTRUCT ORDER

Japanese diplomatic offices all around the world seemed to be preparing for an emergency. On December 3 we had translated a Tokyo message to the Japanese embassy in Washington ordering them to destroy all but one code machine and to burn all codes but the one used with the surviving machine. When this had been done the embassy was to cable one word to Tokyo: "haruna."²⁸ On delivering this intercept to FDR, his naval aide Beardall called it to FDR's attention. The president read it and asked, "Well, when do you think it will happen?" In other words, when did he expect war to break out? Beardall replied, "Most any time."²⁹

On receipt of this intercept, a young officer, at Colonel Bratton's request, went by the Japanese embassy in Washington during the night. He saw officials of the Japanese embassy actually burning their code book and ciphers. On December 6, the Office of Naval Intelligence learned about this and reported to military intelligence that the embassy had complied with the Tokyo order to destroy its codes.³⁰

Also on December 3, SIS began picking the word "haruna" in messages being transmitted by the Japanese consuls in New York, New Orleans, and Havana. Its significance may not have been

²⁷Ibid., part 5, p. 2082.

²⁸Ibid., part 12, p. 215. Tokyo to Washington #867.

²⁹Ibid., part 11, p. 5284, Beardall testimony before the Joint Committee.

³⁰Ibid., part 8, p. 3780, memorandum on the stationery of the War Department General Staff, Military Intelligence Division G-2, Washington, dated December 6, 1941.

fully appreciated at the time, for the cable directing the Japanese embassy in Washington to cable “haruna” to Tokyo after destroying their codes and code machines had only been intercepted, decoded, and translated that very day. The next day we intercepted transmissions of “haruna” from Portland and Panama. On December 5 the Japanese consuls in Hollywood, Seattle, and Vancouver (Canada) also cabled Tokyo “haruna.” Ottawa did the same the following day.³¹

SECURITY OF U.S. COMMUNICATIONS IN PACIFIC IN JEOPARDY

In compliance with U.S. Pacific Fleet Operating Plan, Rainbow No. Five, Admiral Kimmel had sent reinforcements to the mid-Pacific islands under his command—Wake (1,994 miles west of Pearl Harbor)³² and Guam (located 1,334 miles farther out in the midst of the Japanese mandated islands, 3,340 miles west of Pearl Harbor).³³

In Washington, toward the end of the office day on December 5, one of the women employed in the Registered Publication Section realized that the forces which had gone to Wake had taken with them a lot of registered publications. Captain Safford, who was in charge of the security section of the Navy’s Communications Division, had warned Guam the day before to destroy all “secret and classified publications and other classified matter.” Safford now became concerned about Wake; he asked the persons in the Registered Publication Section “to make a complete inventory” of the sensitive materials there. One or two officers and a couple of civilians in the Section worked on the assignment until about 1 o’clock in the morning. “[T]he next morning they gave [Safford]

³¹Ibid., part 5, p. 2077.

³²Ibid., part 12, p. 339, table of distances.

³³Distances as cited in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (1955), “Guam” entry, vol. 10, p. 929.

an inventory of 150 different registered publications on that little island where, you see, they had almost nothing” in the way of defense. “And at that time,” in Safford’s view, “war was right around the corner.”³⁴

As communications officer, Safford was responsible for safeguarding the security of our lines of communications. “Intelligence” was not within his purview; he could not convey to the field his judgment that “war was right around the corner.” However, the safety of the “registered publications” on Wake, under the jurisdiction of the Pacific Fleet, was one of his responsibilities. Therefore, Safford drafted a message for the fleet’s commander-in-chief, Kimmel, and for the information of the senior officers on Wake. “In view of imminence of war,” it read, they were to “destroy all registered publications except this system and current editions of aircraft code and direction finder code.”³⁵ Before such a message could go out, it had to be approved by Safford’s superior, Admiral Noyes, director of Naval Communications. So Safford took his draft to Noyes.

Noyes: “What do you mean by using such language as that?”

Safford: “Admiral, the war is just a matter of days, if not of hours.”

Noyes: “You may think there is going to be a war, but I think they are bluffing.”

Safford: “Well, Admiral, if all these publications on Wake are captured we will never be able to explain it.”

Noyes then “rewrote the message and left out any reference to Wake Island or the 150 publications exposed to capture, which

³⁴Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 29, pp. 2398–99, Safford testimony at APHB.

³⁵*Ibid.*

included all our reserve publications for the next six months.” The message as it was actually released, addressed to Kimmel under date of December 6, for transmission to Wake, read as follows:

In view of the international situation and the exposed position of the outlying Pacific islands you may authorize the destruction by them of secret and confidential documents now or under later conditions of greater emergency.

This “ambiguous” message was released by Assistant Chief of Naval Operations Ingersoll and sent to Kimmel at Pearl Harbor, who still had to relay it to Wake. Moreover, it “was sent deferred precedence, which meant delivery by 9:00 on Monday morning, December 8, 1941.”³⁶

BRITISH AND DUTCH ON THE *QUI VIVE* IN SOUTHEAST PACIFIC

By November 29, Singapore had begun to go on the alert. “[A]ll troops away from barracks . . . had been ordered back.” British Air Chief Marshall Sir Robert Brooke-Popham had “ordered the second degree of readiness, and the Volunteers were being mobilized. Soon troops were recalled from leave and other precautions were taken, including the rounding up of Japanese civilians.”³⁷

All Singapore was on the *qui vive*. More ships than usual were on the move. Troops were being recalled to duty. Our naval observer in Singapore, Captain John M. Creighton, was busy shuttling back and forth between his two offices, 18 miles apart. He wanted to be physically acquainted with the dockyard so that “if contingents of our fleet came there [he] could guide them to

³⁶Ibid. For text of message #061743, see Joint Committee, part 14, p. 1408.

³⁷Lionel Wigmore, *The Japanese Thrust* (Canberra: Australian War Memorial, 1957), pp. 121–22.

all the shops” and arrange for them “to get repairs on guns, batteries, or anything else.” He was also busy routing American merchant ships in that area. And he frequently had to arrange special passes for the many American visitors arriving at the airports with dispatches, money, and sometimes pistols, which were not always allowed into the country.³⁸

A report reached Singapore during the night of December 4 or 5 that a pilot of a British reconnaissance airplane, flying from a certain point “northeast of Malaya on a regular patrol up toward Siam . . . in the late afternoon . . . had encountered a large [Japanese] convoy of what looked to him like transports, several old battleships, an aircraft carrier, and attendant destroyers.” They were already south and west of Indochina and were “headed west and almost south of the south point of Siam. . . . [W]hen he went closer in his plane to observe them . . . Japanese fighter planes came up off the deck of the carrier and went straight at him, making it perfectly evident that they would keep him from approaching the convoy.” It was presumed that “after nightfall they would [either] continue west to the Kra Peninsula, north of Malaya, or shift northwest toward Bangkok, toward which many threats had been made recently.”³⁹

Two big British ships, *Repulse*, a battle cruiser, and *Prince of Wales*, a battleship that was undergoing repairs so as to be ready for sea duty once more, had been sent out to Singapore. Admiral Sir Tom Phillips, recently appointed commander-in-chief of the Eastern Fleet, had arrived there ahead of the ships and had flown on December 4 to Manila for a conference with Admiral Hart. Their talks “ended abruptly” with the news of the large Japanese convoy on its way from Camranh Bay towards the Gulf of Siam. “As Phillips was leaving for Singapore . . . Hart

³⁸Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 10, p. 5081, Creighton testimony before the Joint Committee.

³⁹*Ibid.*, p. 5083–84.

told him that he had just ordered four of his destroyers, then at Balikpapan (Borneo), to join Phillips's force."⁴⁰ Phillips arrived back in Singapore on the morning of December 7 (December 6, Washington time).

The entire region was on the alert. "[B]ecause of the movement of Japanese task forces southward and possibly into the China Sea," a conference was called in Australia early in December by Air Chief Marshall Sir Charles Burnett, chief of staff, of the Royal Australian Air Force. In attendance were representatives of the British, Dutch, and American governments—Colonel Van S. Merle-Smith, U.S. military attaché at the legation in Melbourne; Commander Salm, the Dutch Indies naval liaison officer to the Australian government; Lieutenant Robert H. O'Dell, then assistant military attaché in Australia; and Air Commodore Hewitt, the Royal Australian Air Force intelligence officer, who came and went during the conference.⁴¹

"[U]pon learning of Japanese naval movements out of Palau," one of the Caroline Islands less than 600 miles north of the Dutch East Indies, the Netherlands Far East Command had ordered on December 6 the execution of mobilization Plan A-2.⁴² War Plan A-2 was "a mutual agreement among Britain, Holland (the Indies), America and Australia" in line with the ADB conversations at Singapore in the spring of 1941.⁴³

The Australians had offered to furnish some aircraft to the Dutch. But then planes reached Koepang on the island of Dutch Timor and the Netherlands command did not consider Australian

⁴⁰Wigmore, *The Japanese Thrust*, p. 122.

⁴¹Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 29, p. 2300, testimony before APHB of O'Dell.

⁴²Ibid., part 30, p. 3223 (APHB Exhibit No. 70, Exhibit A, "Summary of Far Eastern Documents" paragraph FE 366). See also *ibid.*, part 9, p. 4565, Bratton testimony before the Joint Committee.

⁴³Ibid., part 29, p. 2303, O'Dell testimony before the APHB.

air assistance necessary. However, the Australian Air Corps chief decided to go ahead just the same and furnish the Dutch with aircraft as planned.⁴⁴

With respect to Thailand, or Siam, the situation was “complicated.” The Thai prime minister, “who expected an attack within the next few days—asked on December 5 for an immediate declaration” from the British that they “should go to war with Japan if the latter attacked Thailand. . . . Churchill proposed to send the Thai Prime Minister a message telling the Thais to defend themselves, if attacked, and promising to come to their aid.”⁴⁵

Sometime during the day, December 6, Britain’s ambassador in Washington, Lord Halifax, got in touch with Roosevelt to tell him of Churchill’s intentions to contact the Thais. “The president agreed with the [Churchill] proposal (subject to a change in wording) and said that he [FDR] intended to send a similar message. Mr. Churchill accepted the president’s formula and sent his [Churchill’s] message on the night of December 6–7.”⁴⁶

ADMIRAL HART (MANILA) LEARNS OF U.S. COMMITMENT OF “ARMED SUPPORT” TO BRITISH AND DUTCH IN S.E. ASIA

In Singapore, Captain Creighton learned that the United States was committed to lend “armed support” to the British or Dutch in the event that the Japanese attacked in that part of the world. He so wired Hart at 10:26 A.M. on December 6. Creighton reported to Hart that Brooke-Popham, commander of the Royal Air Force in Malaya and of the British Army Forces, had been advised on Saturday by the War Department in London that they

⁴⁴Ibid., p. 2301.

⁴⁵Llewellyn Woodward, *British Foreign Policy in the Second World War* (London: Her Majesty’s Stationery Office, 1962), p. 188n.

⁴⁶Ibid.

had “now received assurance of American armed support” in three eventualities: (1) if the British were obliged to forestall a Japanese landing on the Isthmus of Kra (Malayan Peninsula), or on any other part of Siam, (2) if the Dutch Indies were attacked and the British went to their defense, or (3) if the Japanese attacked the British. Moreover, Brooke-Popham could “put plan in action [without reference to London] if you [Brooke-Popham] have good info Jap expedition advancing with apparent intention of landing in Kra second if the Nips violate any part of Thailand.” Also if the Netherlands East Indies were attacked he should put into operation the British-Dutch plans agreed upon.⁴⁷

Hart was dumbfounded at the news that the British had been “assured of American armed support.” He had just agreed to send four of his destroyers to join Phillips’s force. However, this news from Singapore was apparently Hart’s first intimation that the United States had a definite commitment to support the British or Dutch militarily if the Japanese should attack either of them at Thailand, the Isthmus of Kra, or the Netherlands East Indies. Any such commitment would necessarily involve the Asiatic Fleet under his command. Hart wired Washington for instructions.⁴⁸

⁴⁷Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 10, pp. 5082–83; Creighton testimony before the Joint Committee, quoting War Department London telegram, relayed from Singapore to Manila December 7, Manila time.

⁴⁸*Ibid.*, part 14, p. 1412, Exhibit No. 40.

13.

December 6, Part 2

FIRST 13 PARTS OF JAPAN'S REPLY TO U.S. NOTE OF NOVEMBER 26

U.S. officials assumed the Japanese government had not been bluffing when it wired its ambassadors in Washington setting a deadline after which “things [were] automatically going to happen” if they could not reach agreement in their negotiations with the United States by November 29. Thus special arrangements had been made to assure that our top officials in Washington would receive promptly whatever reply the Japanese might make to our November 26 note, the so-called “ultimatum.” The director of Naval Intelligence was to be notified immediately; a special weekend phone line connected Naval Intelligence and the State Department, and a special deputy communication watch officer was assigned duty at the White House on the evening of December 6.

The “Pilot Message,” advising the Japanese ambassadors in Washington to expect their government’s reply to the U.S. note shortly, had been intercepted, decoded, translated, and delivered

Saturday afternoon, December 6.¹ After Commander Kramer delivered it to the Navy personnel on his list—by then it was mid-afternoon—he stopped by the Navy Department to make

a final check with the Teletype Watch to see whether there was anything apparently hot coming in. . . . In view of other developments that we [the United States] had seen taking place in the diplomatic traffic and otherwise it was apparent things were shaping up to some sort of a crisis.²

Japan's 14-part English-language reply to the U.S. "ultimatum" began to come in at Bainbridge intercept station on the west coast very early Saturday morning, December 6. The first part reached there at 5:03 A.M. (8:03 A.M. Washington, D.C. time). From then until 8:52 A.M. (11:52 A.M. Washington, D.C. time), when the 13th part came in, Bainbridge was busy intercepting and relaying the messages, by teletype, still in code, to Washington, D.C.³ The first 13 parts had all been received in Washington, D.C., by 2:51 P.M. on December 6. Part 14 did not come in until more than 12 hours later.

In 1941, before the attack on Pearl Harbor, most government offices closed down at noon on Saturdays. "The War Department [cryptographic] unit at that time was observing normal office hours and secured from work at noon on Saturday, December 6, 1941, with the intention of doing no work until 8:00 on Monday, December 8, 1941."⁴ Therefore, just past noon, after decoding the "Pilot Message," the Army closed up shop for the weekend.

¹79th Cong., 1st sess. Joint (Congressional) Committee on the Investigation of the Pearl Harbor Attack. *Pearl Harbor Attack*, 39 vols. (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1946), part 12, pp. 238–39, Tokyo "Purple" message #901.

²*Ibid.*, part 33, p. 857, Kramer testimony before the NCI, September 13, 1944.

³*Ibid.*, part 14, pp. 1413–15, exhibit No. 41.

⁴*Ibid.*, part 36, p. 66, Safford testimony at Hewitt Inquiry, May 21, 1945.

The Navy Department was operating on a different schedule. To keep in touch with developments, Admiral Wilkinson, chief of the Office of Naval Intelligence, “had set up a 24-hour watch in the Far Eastern Section alone.” “[W]hen it appeared that the Japanese advance in the China Sea was becoming more and more critical,” he had established “a watch of the senior officers of the Department, the heads of the branches, and the Assistant Director” so that responsible officers were on duty “in rotation” to cover the 24 hours each day. Admiral Beardall, himself, the President’s naval aide, was on call. So was Captain Kramer.⁵ Therefore the Navy decoders and translators were on duty that Saturday afternoon, even though this work was an Army responsibility on even-numbered dates.

When Kramer stopped in at the department “at 3:00 on the 6th, the message was coming in . . . [which] turned out to be a part of the [14-part Japanese] reply.” The Japanese government was transmitting it in English so that their ambassadors in Washington would not have to translate it before submitting it to Secretary of State Hull. This made the task of the Navy cryptographers somewhat easier. But the message was in “Purple;” it still had to be decoded. Kramer waited and “held [his] team of translators.”⁶

The Navy cryptographers “turned to”⁷ and began decoding and translating. However, they were soon swamped by the heavy work load. At about 3:00 P.M., they sent “an urgent call” to the Army for help “and got some of the Army people back and they assisted the Navy throughout the night of December 6th in

⁵Ibid., part 4, p. 1761, Wilkinson testimony before the Joint Committee, December 17, 1946.

⁶Ibid., part 33, p. 857, Kramer testimony before the NCI.

⁷Ibid.

translating [sic] the very long and very important fourteen-part message.”⁸

[B]y 9:00 P.M. Saturday, the evening of the 6th of December, [we] had received, broken down, translated [sic], and had typed ready for delivery thirteen of those parts, several of them somewhat garbled.⁹

FDR TELLS AUSTRALIAN MINISTER HE PLANS TO ADDRESS HIROHITO

Late in the afternoon of December 6, Australia’s minister to the United States, Richard G. Casey, spoke with FDR. Roosevelt confided to Casey that he was planning to send a special message to Hirohito. If no answer was forthcoming by Monday evening, December 8, he intended to issue Japan another warning the following afternoon or evening, asking that it be followed by warnings from the British and others.¹⁰

STIMSON REQUESTS INVENTORY OF U.S. SHIPS AROUND THE WORLD

While the cryptographers were busy decoding the 14-part Japanese message, War Department people, at Stimson’s request, were trying to determine the location of U.S. ships around the world. At about 8:00 P.M. December 6, Major George L. Harrison, an aide to Stimson, phoned the office of the Chief of Naval Operations asking for the following information by 9:00 A.M. the next morning:

⁸Ibid., part 36, p. 66, Safford testimony at Hewitt Inquiry, May 21, 1945.

⁹Ibid., part 33, p. 857, Kramer testimony before the NCI.

¹⁰Ibid., part 11, pp. 5166–67.

Compilation of men-of-war in Far East, British, American, Japanese, Dutch, Russian. Also compilation of American men-of-war in Pacific Fleet, with locations, and a list of American men-of-war in the Atlantic without locations.

Admirals Ingersoll, Stark and the Secretary of the Navy were consulted and the Secretary directed that the information be compiled and delivered to him [Stimson] prior to 1000 Sunday, 7 Dec.¹¹

FIRST 13 PARTS OF JAPANESE REPLY DELIVERED TO FDR

Between October 1 and December 7, 1941, Kramer, attached to the Office of Naval Intelligence in Washington, was on loan to OP-20-G, Office of Naval Communications. He was a Japanese language student and headed the translation section of the communications security group, then made up of a staff of three civilian translators. Kramer reviewed their translations and did an occasional translation himself. He was also responsible for seeing that the decoded and translated intercepts were delivered to the authorized Navy personnel. As the volume of intercepts increased in the weeks before December 7, Kramer necessarily assumed more responsibility for organizing the intercepts with background material and assembling them for delivery.¹²

Before Beardall left for home at about 5:30 p.m. that Saturday afternoon, he turned over his post to the special deputy communication watch officer, Lieutenant Lester Robert Schulz, on temporary assignment with the Office of Naval Communications. He told Schulz "to remain there that night to receive [a] special

¹¹Ibid., part 19, pp. 3536–37. See also memorandum read into the record, Joint Committee, part 11, pp. 5247–54.

¹²Ibid., part 33, pp. 848–52, Kramer testimony before the NCI, September 13, 1944.

message for the president.” Schulz was to take it to Roosevelt immediately.¹³

When the first 13 parts of the 14-part answer were in clear form, typed up, and ready for distribution, Kramer

proceeded at once to the White House, left a folder [with Beardall’s aide, Schulz] with that 13-part message and one or two others with rather emphatic instructions to get to the president as quickly as possible. Schulz immediately left with the locked pouch for the president’s study. The president was entertaining at the moment,¹⁴

but when he learned the courier had arrived he left his guests for his White House study. Schulz opened the pouch and personally handed the president the papers, “perhaps 15 typewritten pages” clipped together, which included the first 13 parts of Japan’s 14-part reply to our November 26 note. Schulz waited—“perhaps 10 minutes”—while “[t]he president read the papers.” “Then he [FDR] handed them to [his friend and close associate] Mr. [Harry] Hopkins,” who read them and returned them to the president.¹⁵

The president then turned toward Mr. Hopkins and said in substance . . . “This means war.” Mr. Hopkins agreed, and they discussed then, for perhaps 5 minutes, the situation of the Japanese forces, that is, their deployment.

The Japanese had already landed in Indochina. Indochina was the only geographical location they mentioned. FDR and Hopkins speculated as to where the Japanese would move next.

¹³*Ibid.*, part 10, pp. 4661, 4668, Schulz testimony before the Joint Committee.

¹⁴*Ibid.*, part 33, p. 857, Kramer testimony before the NCI, September 13, 1944.

¹⁵*Ibid.*, part 10, pp. 4659–71. Schulz testimony before Joint Committee.

Neither mentioned Pearl Harbor. Nor did they give any “indication that tomorrow was necessarily the day.” And “[t]here was no mention made of sending any further warning or alert.”¹⁶

“[S]ince war was imminent,” Hopkins ventured, “. . . since war was undoubtedly going to come at the convenience of the Japanese, it was too bad that we could not strike the first blow and prevent any sort of surprise.”

The president nodded. “No, we can’t do that. We are a democracy and a peaceful people.” Then he raised his voice: “But we have a good record.” FDR implied we would have to stand on that record, that “we could not make the first overt move. We would have to wait until it came.”¹⁷

Roosevelt went on to tell Hopkins that he had prepared a message for Hirohito, the Japanese emperor, “concerning the presence of Japanese troops in Indochina, in effect requesting their withdrawal.”¹⁸ FDR had not followed the usual procedure in sending this cable, he said. Rather than addressing it to Tojo as prime minister, FDR “made a point of the fact that he had sent it to the Emperor as Chief of State.” The president must have been thinking also about how he would describe the situation in the speech that had been prepared in the State Department for him to present to Congress if he did not receive a satisfactory reply from Hirohito.

FDR tried, unsuccessfully, to phone Chief of Naval Operations Stark. When told Stark was at the theater, Roosevelt said he could reach Stark later and hung up. FDR then returned the papers to Schulz, who left.¹⁹

¹⁶Ibid. Schulz testimony before the Joint Committee.

¹⁷Ibid., part 10, pp. 4659–71, especially pp. 4662–63, Schulz testimony before the Joint Committee.

¹⁸Ibid., p. 4663. Schulz testimony before the Joint Committee.

¹⁹Ibid., pp. 4663–64, Schulz testimony before the Joint Committee.

FIRST 13 PARTS OF JAPAN'S LONG-AWAITED REPLY DELIVERED TO NAVY AND ARMY

After leaving the locked pouch with Schulz at the White House a little after 9:00 P.M., Kramer delivered the papers to Navy Secretary Knox²⁰ at his Wardman Park apartment. After some discussion, Knox told Kramer “there would be a meeting at the State Department at 10:00 the following morning, Sunday.” Knox wanted Kramer there “with that material and anything else that had come in.” Kramer then drove to Admiral Wilkinson’s home in Arlington, Virginia, where Admiral Beardall and General Miles were having dinner. Beardall and Miles saw the papers then at Wilkinson’s dinner party.²¹ Wilkinson asked Kramer to have that material plus anything new at the Navy Department the next morning.

At about 11:30 P.M., Admiral Turner was roused out of bed at his home to receive the 13-part message.²² A courier with the message called at Admiral Ingersoll’s home at about midnight.²³

After making his deliveries, Kramer checked in at the Navy Department—about 12:30 A.M.—to see if anything of importance had come in from Tokyo or Berlin. As nothing had, he went home. In any event, he “was on tap any hour of the day and night by GY Watch Officers.”²⁴

Meanwhile, the Army courier, Colonel Rufus S. Bratton, distributed the locked pouch with the intercepts to Chief of Staff Marshall’s secretary, Colonel Bedell Smith,²⁵ announcing “that

²⁰*Ibid.*, part 33, p. 857, Kramer testimony before the NCI. Also *ibid.*, part 9, p. 4514, Bratton testimony before the Joint Committee.

²¹*Ibid.*, p. 857, Kramer testimony before the NCI.

²²*Ibid.*, part 4, p. 1970, Turner testimony before the Joint Committee.

²³*Ibid.*, part 33, p. 809, Ingersoll testimony before the NCI.

²⁴*Ibid.*, p. 858, Kramer testimony before the NCI.

²⁵*Ibid.*, part 29, pp. 2421, 2423, Bratton testimony before the APHB.

it was an important document. . . . And that the Chief of Staff should know about it.” Also to General Gerow’s executive officer, Colonel Gailey,²⁶ and to the night duty officer in the State Department for delivery to Hull.²⁷

FDR ADDRESSES EMPEROR HIROHITO DIRECTLY

According to Hull, “On December 6, our Government received from a number of sources reports of the movement of a Japanese fleet of 35 transports, 8 cruisers, and 20 destroyers from Indochina toward the Kra Peninsula. . . . The critical character of this development, which placed the United States and its friends in common imminent danger, was very much in all our minds, and was an important subject of my conference with representatives of the Army and Navy on that and the following day.”²⁸

Sometime during the day, December 6, Hull drafted and forwarded to the White House a message for FDR to send the Japanese emperor.²⁹ Roosevelt had written a draft of his own and preferred it.³⁰ After a few editorial changes by the State Department, to which FDR agreed, he sent the revised version to Hull with his handwritten “OK.”³¹

In his note to the emperor the president said that recent developments in the Pacific area “contain tragic possibilities.”³² The president desired peace, he wrote, but

²⁶Ibid., p. 2421.

²⁷Ibid., part 9, p. 4514, Bratton testimony before the Joint Committee.

²⁸Ibid., part 2, p. 441, Hull’s 1945 deposition to the Joint Committee.

²⁹Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States: Diplomatic Papers, 1941*, vol. 2: *The Far East* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1956), vol. 4, pp. 722–23.

³⁰Ibid., pp. 723–25.

³¹Ibid., p. 762n. Transmitted in Telegram No. 818, December 6, 9 P.M.

³²Department of State, *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States: Japan, 1931–1941* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1943), vol. 2, pp. 784–86.

During the past few weeks it has become clear to the world that Japanese military, naval and air forces have been sent to Southern Indo-China in such large numbers as to create a reasonable doubt on the part of other nations that this continuing concentration in Indo-China is not defensive in its character. . . . It is clear that a continuance of such a situation is unthinkable.

In his message, the president sought to assure Japan that “There is absolutely no thought on the part of the United States of invading Indo-China if every Japanese soldier or sailor were to be withdrawn therefrom.”

He continued:

I think that we can obtain the same assurance from the Governments of the East Indies, the Governments of Malaya and the Government of Thailand. I would even undertake to ask for the same assurance on the part of the Government of China. Thus a withdrawal of the Japanese forces from Indo-China would result in the assurance of peace throughout the whole of the South Pacific area.³³

Roosevelt did not address Japan’s economic problems, which had been aggravated by the U.S. embargoes barring her from world markets. Nor did FDR refer to the decades-long Russian-inspired conflict in Manchuria and China, the source of Japan’s difficulties on the Asian mainland. And he offered no assurance that he could, or would try to, keep the Chinese from stirring up still more trouble. (By this time, the American taxpayers were actually furnishing aid to the communist troublemakers in China and the communist forces fighting against Germany in Europe.)

The message for Emperor Hirohito was transmitted in “our nonconfidential code at that time, the gray code, which was

³³Ibid.

perfectly open to anybody.”³⁴ It left Washington at 9:00 in the evening of December 6. Our ambassador in Japan, Joseph C. Grew, was instructed “to communicate the president’s message to the Japanese Emperor in such manner as deemed most appropriate by the Ambassador and at the earliest possible moment.”³⁵ A copy went also to Chiang Kai-Shek in China.³⁶

Roosevelt announced to the press and the world that he had sent a message of peace to the Emperor.³⁷ However, the text of his message was not released at the time.

SATURDAY NIGHT, DECEMBER 6-7, AT THE WHITE HOUSE

A meeting of FDR’s “inner circle” was held late Saturday night, a meeting which must have lasted from about midnight into the wee, small hours of December 7. With the president on this occasion were Stark, Marshall, Knox, Stimson, and Hopkins. These five men “spent most of the night . . . at the White House with FDR, all waiting for what they knew was coming after those intercepts.”³⁸

As far as we know, no record was made of their conversation. In view of the intelligence they had been receiving of a massive buildup of Japanese forces in the southwest Pacific, apparently headed for Thailand, Malaya, or British or Dutch territory, we can only imagine what they discussed. The six men in the White

³⁴Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 2, p. 692, Grew testimony before the Joint Committee.

³⁵Department of State, *Japan: 1931-1941*, p. 784n. See also Department of State, *Far East: 1941*, p. 726n.

³⁶Department of State, *The Far East*, p. 727.

³⁷Department of State, *Japan: 1931-1941*, p. 784n. See also Department of State, *The Far East*, p. 726n.

³⁸Letter from James G. Stahlman to Admiral Kemp Tolley, USN (Ret.), November 26, 1973. Copy in author’s files.

House that night must surely have speculated on how to respond if the Japanese attacked the Isthmus of Kra in Malaya, Thailand, the Dutch East Indies, or British Singapore. What action should the United States then take? What should FDR say to Congress? Should we go to the aid of the British and Dutch militarily, as FDR had promised British Ambassador Halifax? If we did, how would FDR and his associates justify to the American people this military intervention so far from the shores of continental United States? On the other hand, if the U.S. did *not* give the British and Dutch the “armed support” they had been promised, how would the administration explain to them, and to the world, the failure of our president to honor an agreement he had made?

With the crisis developing in southeast Asia, it looked as if the United States was losing the opportunity to take the initiative as Stimson had suggested a week earlier—namely to “maneuver them [the Japanese] into the position of firing the first shot without allowing too much danger to ourselves.” Of course, it was still possible that the three small vessels outfitted, as FDR had directed, as minimal U.S. men-of-war might get to sea before a Japanese strike. If they did sail in time and arrive at the paths of the Japanese convoys, they could still provoke an incident “without too much danger to ourselves.” But events were crowding in around us thick and fast.

14.

The Morning of the Fateful Day

NEW YORK TIMES DECEMBER 7, 1941
REPORTS: NAVY SECRETARY KNOX SAYS:
U.S. NAVY “SUPERIOR TO ANY”

While the authorities in Washington had been deeply concerned for months behind the scenes with the significance of the Japanese intercepts being decoded daily by U.S. Army and Navy cryptographers, they were also sensitive to public opinion. Especially so, since the leak on December 4 of the government’s secret war plans.

On December 6, Secretary of Navy Knox released the July 1, 1940, to June 10, 1941, annual report of the Navy Department, which included a statement on “the current state of the Navy and its enlargement on a basis indicated by operations in the last fiscal year.” *The New York Times* headlined its page one announcement of this Navy report on Sunday, December 7, 1941: “NAVY IS SUPERIOR TO ANY, SAYS KNOX.” According to the news report,

The United States Navy, now in the midst of a record expansion program and recently placed on a war footing with full personnel manning the ships of three fleets, has at this time no superior in the world. . . . On any comparable basis, the United States Navy is second to none.

Knox was “proud to report that the American people may feel fully confident in their Navy.” In view of the uncertain international situation,

Our aim must always be to have forces sufficient to enable us to have complete freedom of action in either ocean while retaining forces in the other ocean for effective defense of our vital security. Anything less than this strength is hazardous to the security of the nation and must be considered as unacceptable as long as it is within our power to produce and man the forces necessary to meet these requirements.

In substance, the department’s report announced that the U.S. Navy was “second to none” and that it was capable of operating in both the Atlantic and Pacific. Moreover, it was being further strengthened and expanded. Thus the public was assured on the morning of December 7, 1941, that the U.S. Navy constituted an effective and reliable arm of our national defense.

PART 14 OF JAPAN’S REPLY TO U.S. NOTE

The 13 parts of the Japanese reply to our November 26 note, received in Washington late on Saturday, December 6, were a fairly sober review of the U.S.-Japanese negotiations to date and the various points of agreement and disagreement—notably, the economic restrictions imposed on Japan, the embargo, the freezing of assets, the fact that the United States was assisting China, and the United States’s determined insistence (a) that Japan withdraw from China and (b) that she refuse to honor her mutual

assistance pact with Germany and Italy. Part 9 of Japan's reply was more inflammatory; it asserted that the United States

may be said to be scheming for the extension of the war . . . aiding Great Britain and preparing to attack . . . Germany and Italy . . . and exercising . . . pressure [on Japan] by economic power.¹

After seeing these 13 parts, the top administration, Army, and Navy officials were anxious to learn the content of the 14th part.

Part 14 was picked up by Station S at Bainbridge Island on the west coast on Sunday, December 7, at 3:05 A.M. Washington, D.C. time and was in the hands of our decoders, still in code, in Washington, D.C. by about 4:00.² Like the earlier 13 parts, it was in English. It was decoded "completed and ready for delivery to Commander Kramer at 7 A.M., December 7."³

In part 14, Japan charged that it was the

intention of the American Government to conspire with Great Britain and other countries to obstruct Japan's efforts toward the establishment of peace . . . by keeping Japan and China at war.

Therefore, Japan's attempt "to preserve and promote the peace of the Pacific through cooperation with the American Government has finally been lost." The Japanese government regretted

to have to notify hereby the American Government that in view of the attitude of the American Government it cannot but

¹79th Cong., 1st sess. Joint (Congressional) Committee on the Investigation of the Pearl Harbor Attack. *Pearl Harbor Attack*, 39 vols. (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1946), part 12, pp. 239–45, Tokyo to Washington 14-part #902.

²Ibid., part 14, p. 1415.

³Ibid., part 33, pp. 803–04.

consider that it is impossible to reach an agreement through further negotiations.⁴

This strong language left little room for doubt as to Japan's intentions. According to Wilkinson, these were "fighting words." He was "more impressed by that language than by the breaking off of negotiations, which of itself might be only temporary. Those would be hard words to eat."⁵

Another message from Tokyo to the Japanese ambassadors was also intercepted and teletyped from Bainbridge at the same time as part 14. It was received in Washington during the watch that ended at 7:00 A.M. Sunday morning, "passed to the Army for translation by the Navy" and then received back in the Navy "at about 7:15 A.M." There it was held for Commander Kramer, the only person authorized to distribute translations to higher authorities.⁶ This message, in Japanese, specified the precise time—1:00 P.M. Washington time, December 7—at which the ambassadors were to deliver their government's 14-part reply to the U.S. government. The ambassadors were to hand the Japanese reply, "if possible," directly to the secretary of state. Because of the time specified, this cable came to be known as the "One P.M. Message."⁷

ADMIRAL HART (MANILA) INQUIRES ABOUT U.S. COMMITMENTS IN SOUTHEAST PACIFIC

Two other important messages also arrived in Washington during the night of December 6–7 from Admiral Hart in the Philippines. However, as a result of the heavy intercept traffic, they were not decoded immediately and did not become available to our

⁴Ibid., part 12, p. 245.

⁵Ibid., part 4, p. 1766, Wilkinson testimony before the Joint Committee.

⁶Ibid., part 33, pp. 803–04. Testimony of Lt. Cmdr. Alfred V. Pering at NCI.

⁷Ibid., part 12, p. 248.

officials in Washington until the following morning. One of these messages consisted of five parts and was signed jointly by Hart and by the British commander-in-chief, Eastern Fleet, Admiral Tom S.V. Phillips. The other was a frantic plea from Hart for advice from Washington; Hart had just learned of U.S. promises to support the British militarily in the event of a Japanese strike in southeast Asia.

Phillips had flown from Singapore to Manila to meet Hart and discuss with him “the problems with which we are faced in the Far Eastern area.” Their joint cable was dispatched from Manila at 3:27 A.M. Greenwich Mean Time (GMT), December 7 (10:27 P.M. December 6, Washington time) and received in Washington about 11:00 P.M. on December 6.⁸

Hart and Phillips had conferred about preparations for the war with Japan they both anticipated. They assumed that “the initiative must inevitably rest with the Japanese.” The two commanders considered it important to coordinate British and U.S. operations, but they agreed that each would retain strategic control of his own forces. Hart expected that his fleet’s operations would be in accordance with plan “Rainbow V,” the plan prepared as the basis for U.S. offensive operations, the same plan under which Kimmel in Hawaii had been directed to operate. Their joint message discussed the disposition to be made of British ships in the Far East and recommended that Manila be made available as a base for the British battle fleet.

As soon as Phillips heard of the Japanese convoy setting out for the Gulf of Siam from Camranh Bay, on the eastern coast of French Indochina, he left Manila to return to Singapore. As he was leaving, Hart told him that four of Hart’s destroyers then at Borneo would soon be joining Phillips’s forces.⁹

⁸Ibid., part 4, pp. 1933–35.

⁹Lionel Wigmore, *The Japanese Thrust* (Canberra: Australian War Memorial, 1957), p. 122.

In spite of Hart's willingness to cooperate with the British, he was startled by the news he received just after Phillips's departure from U.S. Naval Observer John M. Creighton in Singapore. Creighton reported that Brooke-Popham, commander of the Royal Air Force in Malaya and of the British Army Forces, had been advised on Saturday by the War Department in London that they had "now received assurance of American armed support" in three eventualities: (1) if the British were obliged to forestall a Japanese landing on the Isthmus of Kra, or on any other part of Siam, (2) if the Dutch Indies were attacked and the British went to their defense, or (3) if the Japanese attacked the British. Moreover London had advised Brooke-Popham that if he had reliable information that the Japanese were advancing with the apparent intention of landing on Kra or in Siam, he need not consult London to put his operation plan into action. London also advised him that the British-Dutch plan was to be put into operation if the Netherlands East Indies was attacked.¹⁰

If the United States was committed to helping the British militarily in the event of a Japanese attack in southeast Asia, it could not be long before we would be asked to fulfill that promise. The immediacy of a possible call for U.S. "armed support" led Hart to wire Washington about Creighton's report, saying he had "received no corresponding instructions."¹¹ Hart's message left Manila three-and-a-half hours after the one sent by Hart and Phillips jointly—6:45 A.M. GMT (2:45 P.M., December 7, Manila time, or 1:45 A.M. December 7 in Washington). It reached Washington during the night of December 6–7 but wasn't decoded immediately. An information copy went to Kimmel

¹⁰Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 10, pp. 5082–83. See Creighton (ALUSNA), Singapore telegram, December 6, 1941, to Admiral Hart in Manila, included in Creighton testimony before Joint Committee hearings.

¹¹*Ibid.*, part 14, p. 1412.

in Hawaii, further reinforcing Kimmel's impression that it was southeast Asia that was threatened by Japanese attack.

Under our Constitution the only justification for having U.S. military outposts is to protect U.S. citizens and U.S. interests within and around our national borders. Yet Hart was being told by our naval observer in Singapore that the U.S. government had agreed to go to the aid—not of U.S. territory or U.S. citizens—but of British military forces should they decide to take action against Japanese soldiers landing in Thailand, the Dutch East Indies, British Malaya, or Singapore. President Roosevelt had apparently committed U.S. forces to helping the British thousands of miles from any U.S. territory. This was news to our top naval commander in the Far East.

PART 14 OF JAPAN'S REPLY DELIVERED TO NAVY PERSONNEL

This particular Sunday morning, anticipating he would have to deliver some messages earlier than usual, Navy courier Kramer went in to the Navy Department at about 7:30.¹² According to official records, both part 14 of the Japanese reply and the "One P.M. Message" were available before Kramer reached the department.¹³ However, when Kramer set out on his first delivery trip of the day, the "One P.M. Message," which required translation, was apparently not included in his locked pouch. With the receipt of part 14, the text of the Japanese government's reply to our note of November 26 was complete, so Kramer left on his rounds.

Kramer's first delivery that morning at about 8:00 A.M. was to the Navy Department, to Commander McCollum, head of the Far Eastern Section, Navy Intelligence. Kramer soon left McCollum's office, but returned very shortly with a copy of the entire 14-part

¹²*Ibid.*, part 33, pp. 858–59, Kramer testimony at NCI, September 13, 1944.

¹³*Ibid.*, part 33, p. 803, Pering testimony.

message for McCollum's boss, Rear Admiral Wilkinson, Director of Naval Intelligence, who had just arrived. Wilkinson sent for McCollum and for 15 or 20 minutes the two men discussed the Far East situation. Then they heard that Admiral Stark, Chief of Naval Operations, had arrived in the Navy Department—it was quite unusual for Stark to come in to the office that early on a Sunday morning¹⁴ and they went down to talk with him.

When Kramer arrived at Stark's office with the 14 parts together with the other new material, it was "about 9:00 Sunday morning, or possibly earlier, nearer 8:30." Wilkinson and McCollum were there discussing the situation with Stark.¹⁵ McCollum stepped out of the office for a moment and was handed "the final note to be delivered on the United States by the Japanese ambassadors."¹⁶

Other Navy officers of the Division of Operations began to appear in Stark's office—Admirals Ingersoll, Brainard, Noyes, and Turner, possibly Captain Schuirmann also, as well as a few others. All joined in the discussion. McCollum himself "was in and out of Stark's office at about 0900 or 0930" and "on one of his entries into Admiral Stark's office [he] met General Marshall coming out of the office . . . accompanied by his aide," Colonel Bratton.¹⁷ Kramer left to continue on to the State Department, anxious to arrive before 10:00 A.M., when Secretary of Navy Knox's meeting

¹⁴*Ibid.*, part 8, p. 3905, Kramer testimony before the Joint Committee. See also part 33, p. 869.

¹⁵*Ibid.*, part 36, p. 25. McCollum testimony before the Hewitt Inquiry.

¹⁶*Ibid.*, p. 26.

¹⁷*Ibid.*, p. 27. McCollum testimony before the Hewitt Inquiry. See also this author's interviews of McCollum (May 18, 1945, with Admiral Kimmel and Kimmel's attorneys, Charles Rugg and Captain Robert A. Lavender; and May 3, 1961, at the Army and Navy Club, Washington, D.C., with Admirals Samuel Morison, Walter DeLany, John Shafroth, also Dr. Charles Tansill, and Mrs. Wohlstetter present).

with Secretaries Hull and Stimson was scheduled to begin.¹⁸ He did not take a car to cover the eight to ten blocks but walked “almost on the double . . . at least trotted part of the way.” Kramer arrived in time “almost exactly 10 minutes to 10.”¹⁹ He had a brief discussion with the Army courier—he thought it was Bratton—and Mr. Hull’s private secretary.²⁰

Kramer returned to the Navy Department and then went to the White House with part 14. Roosevelt’s aide Beardall immediately took the MAGIC pouch to the president, who was still in his bedroom. As FDR read the intercept, he commented, “it looks like the Japanese are going to break off negotiations.”²¹ Beardall returned the pouch to the Navy Department, about 11–11:30 A.M.²² As far as he knew, no other deliveries were made to FDR that morning.²³

DELIVERY OF “ONE P.M. MESSAGE” TO NAVY DEPARTMENT

After delivering part 14, Kramer returned to the Navy Department to assemble several other intercepts that had been received in the interim. It was about 10:20. Undoubtedly the most important intercept he found there was the separate “One P.M. Message” advising the Japanese ambassadors “in rather emphatic language that delivery [of the 14-part Japanese reply] be made to the Secretary of State at 1300,” that is 1:00 P.M. Washington time. Among the other newly received intercepts was one that

¹⁸Ibid., part 9, p. 4043, Kramer testimony before the Joint Committee.

¹⁹Ibid., part 8, p. 3907. Kramer testimony before the Joint Committee.

²⁰Ibid., part 33, p. 868.

²¹Ibid., part 11, p. 5283, Beardall testimony before the Joint Committee.

²²Ibid., part 11, p. 5287. Beardall testimony before the Joint Committee.

²³Ibid., part 11, p. 5283. Beardall testimony before the Joint Committee.

directed final destruction of Japanese codes still on hand. . . . There was another message thanking the ambassador for his services, another addressed to the embassy staff, and one or two others of like nature.²⁴

A fourth intercept was a circular telegram addressed to Japanese diplomatic offices around the world concerning relations between Japan and England.²⁵ These new messages made it obvious that the Japanese government was giving up all thought of negotiating further with the U.S. government, breaking relations with England, winding down its operations in Washington, and abandoning the embassy staff to their own devices.

Because the circular telegram closed with the telltale English word “STOP” instead of the usual Japanese “OWARI,” Kramer realized it was an emergency dispatch containing code words. The Tokyo-Washington Circular #2409, containing the setup for this message and defining the hidden meanings of the code words, had been translated by the Navy on December 2.²⁶ Presumably it was distributed to the usual recipients of MAGIC, but it was not a subject on which witnesses were questioned during the hearings. Despite the urgency to deliver the “One P.M. Message” promptly, Kramer thought

that delay to get this one [the circular intercept] into that folder was warranted; otherwise delivery probably wouldn't have been made until after noon since the meetings then in progress at the State Department and in CNO's office would probably have been adjourned and the recipients not accessible, out to lunch or one thing and another.²⁷

²⁴Ibid., part 33, p. 859, Kramer testimony at NCI. For intercepts referred to, see *ibid.*, part 12, pp. 248–49.

²⁵Ibid., part 12, p. 251.

²⁶Ibid., pp. 186–87, part 37, pp. 665–66, and part 36, p. 77.

²⁷Ibid., part 36, pp. 344, Kramer testimony before the Hewitt Inquiry.

Therefore, Kramer “dictated on [his] feet while the book concerning the 1:00 delivery and other late urgent messages was being made up.”²⁸ His translation of the crucial sentence in this cable read: “Relations between Japan and England are not in accordance with expectation.”²⁹ Kramer delivered this new material, including the “One P.M. Message,” “within ten to fifteen minutes to Admiral Stark’s office” in the Navy Department building.³⁰ Stark’s meeting was still going on, so Kramer sent word in that he had something more of importance. According to McCollum, he

held a short discussion with Lieutenant Commander Kramer as to the significance at [sic] the [1 P.M. delivery] time, and he it was who pointed out the times at Honolulu as 7:30 and in the Far East as dawn, and so on.³¹

McCollum took the “One P.M. Message” in to Stark. The significance of the 1:00 P.M. delivery time was discussed. McCollum pointed out that

1:00 P.M. Washington time would mean about 8:00 in the morning Honolulu time . . . 7:30 . . . very early in the morning out in the Far East, that is, out in the Philippines and those places . . . we didn’t know what this signified, but that if an attack were coming, it looked like . . . it was timed for operations out in the Far East and possibly on Hawaii.

There was no way of knowing just where the Japanese might strike, but, McCollum reasoned, “because of the fact that the exact time for delivery of this note had been stressed to the

²⁸Ibid., part 36, p. 343, Kramer testimony before the Hewitt Inquiry.

²⁹Ibid., part 36, pp. 82–83, 343, Kramer testimony at Hewitt Inquiry. See also part 9, pp. 4071, 4073, Kramer testimony before the Joint Committee.

³⁰Ibid., part 33, p. 859, Kramer testimony at NCI.

³¹Ibid., part 36, p. 27, McCollum testimony before the Hewitt Inquiry.

ambassadors, we felt that there were important things which would move at that time.”³²

Stark “immediately called the White House on the telephone.”³³ McCollum thought Stark also phoned Marshall.³⁴ There was considerable coming and going; not everyone was there all the time.³⁵ There is no record of what these top naval officers talked about in Stark’s office that morning in the light of the crucial intercepts they had just received. In any event, no special notice or advice of impending conflict was sent out by CNO Stark to the field commanders.

DELIVERY OF “ONE P.M. MESSAGE” TO STATE DEPARTMENT

Kramer was anxious to get to the State Department before the Hull-Knox-Stimson meeting broke up.³⁶ When he, Kramer, arrived at Hull’s office with the “One PM. Message,” he talked, not with Hull, but with “a State Department Foreign Service Officer who regularly handled this material for Mr. Hull.” He explained the importance of the material he was delivering and pointed out that “the directive for delivery of the Japanese note at 1300 was a time which was 7:30 at Pearl Harbor and was a few hours before sunrise at Kota Bharu [British Malaya].” In talking with the foreign service officer, Kramer “made a point of . . . inviting the attention of Mr. Knox to the times involved.” He thought “that Mr. Knox, being a civilian, even though Secretary of Navy, might not have seen at first glance the implications of the times.” So he “simply pointed out the coincidence of those

³²Ibid., pp. 25–26.

³³Ibid.

³⁴Ibid., p. 27.

³⁵Ibid., p. 26.

³⁶Ibid., part 9, p. 4052. Kramer testimony before the Joint Committee.

times to the Secretary.” The officer then “took the folder into Mr. Knox, together with [Kramer’s] remarks.”³⁷

Kramer proceeded across the street to the White House for his second delivery that morning. Kramer handed the new intercepts to a senior assistant to Beardall, possibly Lieutenant Commander Leahy.³⁸

When Kramer returned to the Navy Department this time— at about 12:30—he discovered that, in his haste to translate the circular message containing code words, so as to be able to deliver it along with the “One P.M. Message” and the other Japanese intercepts, he had failed to note an important code word, “minami,” meaning “United States.” Thus the sentence he had translated as “Relations between Japan and England are not in accordance with expectations” was wrong; it should have read, “Relations between Japan, and England *and the United States* are not in accordance with expectations.” Kramer made a few phone calls, but it was lunchtime and he found his recipients scattered. No re-translation was made and delivered, as was usual when messages were garbled or misinterpreted. That afternoon, after the attack had occurred, Kramer realized it would be pointless to send out a corrected translation.³⁹

DELIVERY OF “ONE P.M. MESSAGE” TO ARMY PERSONNEL

The Army courier, Colonel Bratton, drove into Washington at about 9:00 A.M. on Sunday morning, December 7, with Colonel John R. Deane.⁴⁰ Bratton was in charge of the Far Eastern section

³⁷Ibid., part 33, pp. 859–60, Kramer testimony at NCI.

³⁸Ibid., part, 33, p. 865, Kramer testimony at NCI.

³⁹Ibid., part 36, pp. 82–83, Kramer testimony at Hewitt Inquiry. Also *ibid.*, part 9, pp. 4071–73, Kramer testimony before the Joint Committee. See Friedman testimony at Hewitt Inquiry (*ibid.*, part 36, p. 308).

⁴⁰John R. Deane interview, January 2, 1964, by the author.

of Military Intelligence. He went at once to his office in G-2. Deane proceeded to his office in the Munitions Building, right across the hall from the office of Army Chief of Staff Marshall.

Because of the furor created nationwide by the *Chicago Tribune's* publication on December 4 of the secret U.S. war plans, Congress had called on our top military officials to answer some questions. Marshall was scheduled to testify on December 8,⁴¹ and he had asked Deane to compile a one-page summary statement on the number of planes, anti-aircraft guns, etc., in the United States, together with basic information on the war plans. FDR had also asked Marshall to have this information available, all on a single sheet, when he came to the meeting the president had called for 3:00 P.M. Sunday.⁴² That was why Deane went into his office early.⁴³

Prior to December 7 there was no officer on duty around the clock in the office of the Army's chief of staff, no 24-hour per day duty officer (D.O.), so his office was not officially open. However, Deane opened his office in the Munitions Building.⁴⁴

As soon as Bratton reached his office in G-2, he received the "One P.M. Message" from the Navy Department. It was "immediately apparent" to Bratton that this message

was of such importance that it ought to be communicated to the Chief of Staff [Marshall], the A.C. of S. [assistant chief of staff military intelligence, Miles], and Chief of WPD [war plans chief, Gerow] with the least practicable delay.⁴⁵

⁴¹Ibid.

⁴²Forrest C. Pogue, *George C. Marshall: Ordeal and Hope, 1939-1942* (New York: Viking Press, 1965), p. 221.

⁴³Deane interview.

⁴⁴Ibid.

⁴⁵Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 29, p. 2346, Bratton testimony at APHB.

It was then “about 9:00 or shortly before.” Bratton was

immediately stunned . . . into frenzied activity because of its implications and from that time on [he] was busily engaged trying to locate various officers of the General Staff and conferring with them on the exclusive subject of this message and its meaning.⁴⁶

He “washed [his] hands of all other matters, turning them over to [his] assistant, Colonel Dusenbury, and proceeded to take steps with the 1:00 P.M. delivery message.”⁴⁷

Bratton could not locate in their offices any of the generals for whom he was looking. He phoned Marshall’s quarters at Fort Myer. Marshall had three orderlies, one of whom was always on duty when Marshall was out—“to answer the telephone, to be there until [Marshall] got back.”⁴⁸ When Bratton phoned that morning, “[o]ne of his orderlies answered the telephone and informed [Bratton] that the General had gone horseback riding.”⁴⁹

“Well,” Bratton said, “you know generally where he has gone. You know where you can get ahold of him?”

“Yes, I think I can find him.”

“Please go out at once,” Bratton continued,

get assistance if necessary, and find General Marshall, ask him to—tell him who I am and tell him to go to the nearest telephone, that it is vitally important that I communicate with him at the earliest practicable moment.

The orderly said “he would do so.”⁵⁰

⁴⁶Ibid., part 9, p. 4517, Bratton testimony before the Joint Committee.

⁴⁷Ibid., p. 4524.

⁴⁸Ibid., part 3, p. 1430, Marshall testimony before the Joint Committee.

⁴⁹Ibid., part 9, p. 4524, Bratton testimony before the Joint Committee.

⁵⁰Ibid.

Bratton then called his boss, General Miles. Bratton told him what he had done and also “recommended that he [Miles] come down to the office at once.” One of them telephoned Gerow to summon him to the office.⁵¹

Miles arrived at his office about 10:00 A.M., and Bratton joined him there. They discussed “this whole business.” Thus “General Miles was thoroughly conversant with the entire matter” before the two men met with Marshall later that morning.⁵²

Bratton held on to Marshall’s copy of the “One P.M. Message,” waiting anxiously for the general to call back. Marshall did phone, finally, “sometime between ten and eleven.” Bratton told Marshall that he had a message “of extreme importance which he [Marshall] should see at once.” Bratton offered to take it out to his quarters and could be there in ten minutes. But Marshall told him not to do that, “to report to him in his office, as he was on his way there.”⁵³

There were two doors into Marshall’s office. One opened directly into the hall, the other from the anteroom, the secretary’s office. The anxious Bratton waited in the anteroom while watching the hall door. Marshall finally arrived through the hall door.⁵⁴ According to Bratton, it was 11:25.⁵⁵ Bratton immediately reported to him. Miles arrived shortly thereafter.⁵⁶

⁵¹Ibid., part 29, p. 2346, Bratton testimony at APHB.

⁵²Ibid., part 9, p. 4525, Bratton testimony before the Joint Committee.

⁵³Ibid., part 34, pp. 19–20, Bratton testimony at Clarke Investigation, September 14, 1944.

⁵⁴Ibid., part 9, p. 4517. Bratton testimony before the Joint Committee.

⁵⁵Ibid., part 29, p. 2420, Bratton testimony at APHB. Marshall believed he arrived earlier, “more nearly 11;” see his testimony before the Joint Committee (ibid., part 3, p. 1431).

⁵⁶Ibid., part 34, pp. 19, 29–30. Also ibid., part 29, p. 2346. Bratton at Clarke and APHB, testifying both times from notes made by him and General Miles on or about December 8, 1941.

“ONE P.M. MESSAGE” SPURS ACTION—FINALLY!

When Bratton and Miles walked into Marshall’s office, Marshall “had this 14-part message arranged in a book in front of him” and “was reading the 14 parts.” Since Bratton and Miles were both concerned about the deadline implied in the “One P.M. Message,” they “attempted to interrupt General Marshall to get him to read this One P.M. message.”⁵⁷ But Marshall continued reading the fairly lengthy 14-part message, re-reading parts of it, and reflecting on it, which took a while, even though Marshall said he read “much more rapidly than the average man.”⁵⁸

When Marshall had finally finished, Bratton handed him the short “One P.M. Message,” which Bratton had been trying to deliver to Marshall since about 9:00 A.M. Only then did Marshall read it. He then “asked General Miles and [Bratton] what [they] thought it meant.” Both men were

convinced it meant Japanese hostile action against some American installation in the Pacific at or shortly after 1:00 that afternoon. At about this time General Gerow and General Bundy came into the room and there was some discussion of the 14 parts, which were then regarded in the light of an ultimatum, and of the One P.M. delivery message.⁵⁹

Marshall asked each of the men in turn, starting with Miles, “for an evaluation of the situation.” They thought it

probable that the Japanese line of action would be into Thailand but that it might be into any one or more of a number of other areas. Miles urged that the Philippines, Hawaii, Panama, and the West Coast be informed immediately that

⁵⁷Ibid., part 9, p. 4518, Bratton testimony before the Joint Committee.

⁵⁸Ibid., part 33, p. 827, Marshall testimony at NCI.

⁵⁹Ibid., part 29, p. 2346, Bratton testimony at APHB. See also *ibid.*, part 34, pp. 19–20, Bratton testimony at Clarke Investigation.

the Japanese reply would be delivered at one o'clock that afternoon, Washington time, and that they, the Commanders in the areas indicated, should be on the alert."⁶⁰

After the men had all

concurred in urging that our outlying possessions be given an additional alert at once by the fastest possible means, Marshall drew a piece of scratch paper toward him and picked up a pencil and wrote out in longhand a message to be sent to our overseas commanders. When he reached the bottom of the page he picked up the telephone and called the Chief of Naval Operations, Admiral Stark. . . . General Marshall, in a guarded way, told Admiral Stark what he had in front of him and . . . that he was going to send a warning to Hawaii, Panama, and the Philippines and so on.⁶¹

After some conversation with Stark, Marshall put down the phone and said: "Admiral Stark doesn't think that any additional warning is necessary."⁶² Stark said that "all the forces had already been several times alerted,"⁶³ they had "sent so much"⁶⁴ that he "feared that that [another warning] would tend to confuse them."⁶⁵ More discussion. Marshall again phoned Stark.⁶⁶ He read Stark the message he had just written. This time apparently

⁶⁰Ibid., part 29, p. 2346. Bratton testimony before the APHB. Also *ibid.*, part 34, pp. 19–20. Bratton testimony at Clarke Investigation.

⁶¹Ibid., part 9, p. 4518. Bratton testimony before the Joint Committee.

⁶²Ibid.

⁶³Ibid., part 34, p. 20. Bratton statement during Clarke Inquiry.

⁶⁴Ibid., part 32, p. 136. Stark testimony before the NCI.

⁶⁵Ibid., part 3, p. 1111. Marshall testimony before the Joint Committee.

⁶⁶Ibid. The record of phone calls through the White House switchboard on the morning of December 7, 1941, lists two A.M. calls by Marshall to Stark 10 minutes apart, 11:30 and 11:40.

Stark concurred and asked Marshall to add a phrase to the effect “that the naval forces be also informed.”⁶⁷

“[T]o safeguard the codes,” messages to Army officers in the field frequently included a request that the Navy be notified, and vice versa. Since two similar coded cables containing essentially the same message made the task deciphering a code that much easier, Marshall and Stark “tried to avoid . . . both sending a message about the same things, to the various commanders concerned at Panama, Western Department, Hawaii, and the Philippines.” So Marshall penciled a short sentence at the bottom of his message, “Notify naval opposite.”⁶⁸

During their second conversation, Stark asked Marshall if he wouldn't like to use the Navy's more powerful transmitting facilities, its 25,000-kilowatt versus the Army's 10,000-kilowatt radio station.⁶⁹ The Navy's station had little difficulty transmitting messages, while the Army's was “normally out of service with Honolulu between 11 and 1:00.”⁷⁰ Atmospheric conditions over the Pacific at that time of the year were poor. Marshall declined Stark's offer.

Marshall's handwritten message read,

Japanese are presenting at 1:00 P.M., Eastern Standard Time today what amounts to an ultimatum. Also, they are under orders to destroy their code machines immediately. Just what significance the hour set may have we do not know but be on alert accordingly. Inform naval authorities of this communication.⁷¹

⁶⁷Ibid., part 34, p. 20. Bratton statement during Clarke Inquiry.

⁶⁸Ibid., part 33, p. 822. Marshall testimony before the NCI. See also Bratton testimony, *ibid.*, part 9, p. 4541. Bratton said sending the same message in different codes “jeopardized” code security.

⁶⁹Ibid., part 32, p. 136. Stark testimony before the NCI.

⁷⁰Ibid., part 27, p. 114, Colonel French testimony before the APHB.

⁷¹Ibid., part 14, p. 1334, Washington to Fort Shafter #529. See also *ibid.*, part 15, p. 1640, Exhibit 61. Also *ibid.*, part 3, p. 1112, Marshall testimony before the Joint Committee.

Marshall gave his handwritten message to Bratton and told him “to take it to the Message Center and see that it was dispatched at once by the fastest safe means.”⁷²

When Bratton was about to leave, the question was raised as to whether Marshall’s message shouldn’t be typed. Because “time was an important factor,” however, Bratton was asked “to take it in its draft form to the Message Center.” As he was leaving, Gerow called out, “If there is any question of priority, give the Philippines first priority.” Bratton took the message down the hall to the Army Message Center. As he handed it to Colonel Edward F. French, the signal officer in charge, Bratton said: “The Chief of Staff wants this sent at once by the fastest safe means.”⁷³ French found the penciled message “rather difficult to read;”⁷⁴ neither he nor his clerk could interpret Marshall’s handwriting. So French asked Bratton to “help [him] get this into readable script.” Bratton dictated it to a code-room typist, which took perhaps a minute, then “verified and authenticated the message”⁷⁵ and put it into code. According to Bratton, it was then about 11:58 A.M.⁷⁶

French started processing the message immediately, “giving the Philippines first priority.”⁷⁷ He went to the Signal Center himself and had the operator check the channel to Honolulu. Due to atmospheric conditions, Honolulu had been out of contact since about 10:20 that morning.⁷⁸ Transmitting the message to Honolulu via Army facilities would not only have slowed it down, but would have run a risk of garbling when it was copied

⁷²Ibid., part 9, p. 4519, Bratton testimony before the Joint Committee.

⁷³Ibid.

⁷⁴Ibid., part 34, p. 32, French statement before the Clarke Inquiry.

⁷⁵Ibid., p. 33.

⁷⁶Ibid., part 9, p. 4519, Bratton testimony before the Joint Committee.

⁷⁷Ibid., part 34, p. 20, Bratton statement before the Clarke Inquiry.

⁷⁸Ibid., part 27, p. 108, French testimony before the APHB.

and retransmitted in San Francisco. The Army's normal method when atmospheric conditions prevented sending messages via its own radio station was to use commercial facilities that were available in the Army's Signal Center—Western Union to San Francisco, tube relay across the city, and then RCA to Honolulu.⁷⁹ So French decided "the quickest method of dispatch would be via commercial service," especially as RCA had just installed a teletype circuit to Fort Shafter, Army headquarters in Hawaii, on the western outskirts of Honolulu.⁸⁰

When Bratton returned to Marshall's office, Marshall asked him to go back to the Message Center and find out how long it would take for his message to reach its several addressees. Bratton returned, talked with French, who told him "that the messages would be encoded in about three minutes, on the air in about eight minutes, and in the hands of the addressees in about 30 minutes."⁸¹ With respect to the message to Honolulu, French estimated that it would reach there "within a half hour to 45 minutes."⁸² Bratton "looked at [his] watch at that time and, as [he] remember[ed] it, it was about 11:58 A.M."⁸³ Bratton reported back to Marshall.

Marshall's message was in code by 11:52 A.M. (Washington D.C. time) and was dispatched to Panama at noon, to the Philippines at 12:05, to the Presidio in San Francisco at 12:11, and to Hawaii at 12:17.⁸⁴ It was Marshall's understanding that his message went right through to the Philippines, Panama, and San Francisco. The only problem came in raising Hawaii.⁸⁵

⁷⁹Ibid., part 34, p. 33, French testimony during Clarke Investigation.

⁸⁰Ibid. See also part 27, pp. 108–10, French testimony before the APHB.

⁸¹Ibid., part 34, p. 21, Bratton statement before the Clarke Inquiry.

⁸²Ibid., p. 33. French statement before the Clarke Inquiry.

⁸³Ibid., part 9, p. 4519, Bratton testimony before the Joint Committee. See also part 34, p. 21.

⁸⁴Ibid., part 33, p. 1282.

⁸⁵Ibid., p. 823. Marshall testimony before the NCI.

By noon Deane had finished the one-page statement he had been preparing for Marshall to use that afternoon at his meeting with FDR and/or for testifying the next day before Congress. Marshall called him into his office, and he handed Marshall his memorandum. As Marshall read it, he said to Deane, “it looks as though the Japs were going to issue an ultimatum about 1:30.” Deane had not known of the information that administration and top military officials had been learning during recent months from MAGIC, so was not aware of the significance of Marshall’s announcement.⁸⁶

SUNDAY MORNING AT THE STATE DEPARTMENT

Hull went to his office that Sunday morning “as [he] had done almost every Sunday since [he] entered the State Department in 1933.” Because of the Japanese situation, however, this one was a little out of the ordinary. Hull talked first with the department’s Far Eastern experts—Stanley K. Hornbeck, adviser on political Relations; Maxwell M. Hamilton, chief of the division of Far Eastern affairs; and Joseph W. Ballantine, an expert on Japan.⁸⁷

Hull had asked Stimson and Knox to meet with him at the department at 10:00 A.M. to discuss “the situation created by the movement of the huge Japanese armada southward and westward of the southernmost point of Indochina.”⁸⁸ The administration officials “were striving to ascertain the full significance of those military movements, their probable destination, etcetera.”⁸⁹

⁸⁶Deane interview.

⁸⁷Cordell Hull, *The Memoirs of Cordell Hull* (New York: MacMillan, 1948), vol. 2, p. 1095. See also Julius W. Pratt, *Cordell Hull: The American Secretaries of State and Their Diplomacy* (New York: Cooper Square Publishers, 1964), vols. 12 and 13, p. 517.

⁸⁸Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 11, p. 5393, Hull’s reply to Joint Committee interrogatory.

⁸⁹*Ibid.*, p. 5394.

Stimson, Knox, and Hull were all well aware that that day was

the day that the Japanese [were] going to bring their answer to Hull, and everything in MAGIC indicated that they had been keeping the time back until now in order to accomplish something hanging in the air. . . . Hull [was] very certain that the Japs [were] planning some devilry.⁹⁰

The three secretaries were “all wondering where the blow will strike. The messages [they] were receiving now indicated that the Japanese force was continuing on in the Gulf of Siam.”⁹¹

Hull, Stimson, and Knox

discussed whether we would not have to fight if Malaya or the Netherlands were attacked and the British or Dutch fought. We all three thought [recalled Stimson] that we must fight if those nations fought. . . . [I]f Britain were eliminated it might well result in the destruction or capture of the British Fleet. Such a result would give the Nazi allies overwhelming power in the Atlantic Ocean and would make the defense of the American Republics enormously difficult if not impossible. All the reasons why it would be necessary for the United States to fight, in case the Japanese attacked either our British or Dutch neighbors in the Pacific were discussed at length.⁹²

“The main thing,” Stimson wrote in his diary, “is to hold the main people who are interested in the Far East together—the British, ourselves, the Dutch, the Australians, the Chinese.” According to Stimson, both Hull and Knox held that the Japanese military advances in the southwest Pacific represented a threat to the United States that should be countered by us on grounds of

⁹⁰Ibid., p. 5437, excerpt from Stimson diary quoted in Joint Committee hearings.

⁹¹Ibid., p. 5427, Stimson statement to Joint Committee.

⁹²Ibid., pp. 5427–28, Stimson statement to Joint Committee.

self-defense. “Hull expressed his views, giving the broad picture of it. . . . Knox also had his views as to the importance of showing immediately how these different nations must stand together.” Stimson had both men dictate their views to a stenographer.⁹³

Hull stated in his “Proposed Statement” for the president that the Japanese government,

dominated by the military fireeaters, [was] deliberately proceeding . . . to acquire military control over one-half of the world with nearly one-half its population. . . . [D]efense of life and commerce and other invaluable rights and interests in the Pacific area must be commenced with the South Sea area.⁹⁴

According to Knox’s typed-up “Suggestion,” we were

tied up inextricably with the British [and Dutch] in the present world situation. . . . [A]ny serious threat to the British or the Dutch is a serious threat to the United States. . . . We should therefore be ready jointly to act together.⁹⁵

Hull, Knox, and Stimson “stayed together in conference until lunch time, going over the plans for what should be said or done.”⁹⁶

JAPANESE AMBASSADORS REQUEST ONE P.M. APPOINTMENT WITH STATE SECRETARY HULL

Ambassador Nomura telephoned Hull about noon to ask for an appointment for himself and Kurusu at 1:00. Hull agreed.

⁹³Ibid., p. 5437, excerpt from Stimson diary quoted in Joint Committee hearings.

⁹⁴Ibid., pp. 5439–40. Proposed Hull statement.

⁹⁵Ibid., p. 5440. Knox suggestions.

⁹⁶Ibid., p. 5437, excerpt from Stimson diary quoted in Joint Committee hearings.

Nomura phoned again shortly after 1:00 to ask for a postponement until 1:45. Hull agreed to the time change.⁹⁷

SUNDAY MORNING AT THE WHITE HOUSE

The morning of December 7 was a busy one for FDR. He had been up late the night before with Marshall, Stark, Stimson, Knox, and Hopkins, discussing until the early hours of the morning the crescendo toward which the situation in the Far East was building. At about 10:00 A.M., FDR's naval aide, Beardall, delivered to him in his bedroom the final 14th part of the Japanese reply. It is possible that FDR's busy day began even earlier when Stark phoned giving him advance notice of that morning's two crucial Japanese intercepts—part 14 of Japan's final reply and the extremely important "One P.M. Message." In any event, when the MAGIC pouch containing the "One P.M. Message" was delivered to FDR later that morning, he learned firsthand about that as well as the other urgent Japanese intercepts.

FDR's personal physician, Dr. Ross T. McIntire, was one of the president's closest associates. He admired FDR greatly and faithfully kept his secrets, both medical and non-medical. From the day of FDR's first inauguration until the day of FDR's passing in 1945, McIntire saw the president "each morning and again in the evening."⁹⁸ December 7, 1941, was no exception. McIntire was "with him [FDR] on that Sunday morning from ten to twelve o'clock, while Mr. Hull was waiting over in the State Department for the Japanese envoys to bring their government's reply to the American note." According to McIntire, FDR thought that even given "the madness of Japan's military masters [they] would not risk a war with the United States." They "might well . . . take

⁹⁷Hull, *The Memoirs of Cordell Hull*, p. 1095. See also Pratt, *Cordell Hull*, vol. 2, pp. 517–18.

⁹⁸Ross T. McIntire, *White House Physician* (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1946), p. 3.

advantage of Great Britain's extremity and strike at Singapore or some other point in the Far East, but an attack on any American possession did not enter his [FDR's] thought." In McIntire's view, the president clearly "counted only on the usual evasions" from the two ambassadors.⁹⁹

FDR was also in touch that Sunday morning with the British ambassador, Lord Halifax. Halifax had sent to the White House for Roosevelt's comments a copy of the British government's proposed message to Japan. He was waiting at the British embassy for a phone call from Roosevelt.¹⁰⁰

China was also very much in FDR's thoughts. The Chinese government had appreciated his efforts to strangle Japan economically. As a result, Chinese ambassador Hu Shih and FDR had developed a close and confidential relationship. Roosevelt had tried to get in touch with Hu the day before, but he had been in New York. On his return Sunday morning, he returned FDR's call, and the president summoned him to the White House for a confidential chat. Hu arrived about 12:30. FDR showed him the statement he had sent the Japanese emperor, his "very last gesture toward peace," Roosevelt said. "[I]f Hirohito didn't respond—well, it would be war!"

FDR told Hu about the Japanese envoys's insistence on a 1:00 p.m. appointment with Hull. Roosevelt expected "either an answer [from Hirohito] or a nasty move from the Japs before Tuesday morning."¹⁰¹ He fully "expected 'foul play'; he had a feeling that within forty-eight hours something 'nasty' might hap-

⁹⁹Ibid., pp. 136–37.

¹⁰⁰Earl of Birkenhead, *Halifax* (Houghton Mifflin, 1966), p. 530.

¹⁰¹Helen Lombard, *While They Fought: Behind the Scenes in Washington, 1941–1946* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1947), p. 10.

pen in Thailand, Malaya, the Dutch Indies, and ‘possibly’ the Philippines.”¹⁰²

In between these several interruptions, FDR was working on the draft of a speech, which had been prepared in the State Department that he contemplated delivering to Congress the following Tuesday or Wednesday if he received no response to his message to Emperor Hirohito. Phrasing what he wanted to say was a difficult proposition, in view of his pledge to the American people that he would not send our boys to fight on foreign soil “except in case of attack” and in view of the Constitutional provision that only Congress could declare war. Eight months of U.S. negotiations with Japan in the attempt to reach a peaceful solution had ended in failure. FDR had decided he would present the issue as one of national defense. He would compare Japanese aggressions with those of the Nazis in Europe. He would describe Japan’s conquest and exploitation in China and point out that she was now threatening the Philippines and British and Dutch territories in Southeast Asia, as well as trade routes of vital importance to them and to us. Japan’s practice of aggression and conquest

sets up a continuing and growing military threat to the United States. . . . Within the past few days large additional contingents of troops have been moved into Indo-China and preparations have been made for further conquest. . . . We cannot permit, and still less can we support, the fulfilment by Japan of the aims of a militant leadership which has disregarded law, violated treaties, impaired rights, destroyed property and lives of our nationals, inflicted horrible sufferings upon peoples who are our friends.

How to respond to the current crisis in the light of FDR’s pledges to the American people and his assurances of “armed

¹⁰²Herbert Feis, *The Road to Pearl Harbor* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1950), p. 340.

support” to the British and Dutch was difficult. FDR relied on the advice of his three secretaries, Knox, Hull, and Stimson. And that was, as Stimson put it, “what we were at work on our papers about” that morning.¹⁰³ Roosevelt would not ask for a declaration of war, but he would conclude by announcing his intention to embark on a *de facto* war: “As Commander in Chief, I have given appropriate orders to our Forces in the Far East.”¹⁰⁴

In addition to working on his proposed speech, Roosevelt must also have been thinking about the White House meeting of his “War Cabinet” he had called for 3:00 P.M. that afternoon. He apparently wanted to discuss his intended address with his advisers and to talk with them about “the possible showdown that might follow in the Far East.”¹⁰⁵

LUNCH BREAK

At about 12:30, after being reassured that his warning message to his field commanders was on its way, Marshall left for lunch at his quarters.¹⁰⁶ Hull’s meeting with Knox and Stimson wound up in time for lunch. Knox and Stimson left the State Department, Knox for his office and Stimson for lunch at his spacious estate, Woodley.¹⁰⁷ When Knox returned to his office in the Navy Department, he found a message from Admiral Stark who wanted him to phone. Knox immediately called Stark and

¹⁰³Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 11, p. 5438. Excerpt from Stimson’s December 7, 1941 diary reprinted in Joint Committee hearings.

¹⁰⁴National Archives, Civilian Records Branch, Record Group 59, Entry 398, Box 3, Location 250/46/04/01, 30pp. Hornbeck draft. FDR’s intended speech printed in full in Appendix.

¹⁰⁵Pogue, *George C. Marshall: 1939–1942*, p. 221.

¹⁰⁶Deane interview.

¹⁰⁷Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 11, p. 5438, excerpt from Stimson diary quoted in Joint Committee hearings.

the Admiral went over to Knox's office. Captain (later Admiral) Turner came too and the three men met for about an hour.¹⁰⁸

After Dr. Hu's departure at 1:10 P.M., FDR retired for lunch and to prepare for the 3:00 P.M. meeting with his advisers.

* * * *

To the outside observer, peace and normality appeared to reign. Yet beneath the outer calm, official Washington was uneasy. It was obvious that a blow was coming, but they didn't know where. If it fell on British, Dutch, or Thai territory, as seemed likely, what should the United States do? Should it implement the administration's secret and unconstitutional agreement to furnish the British and Dutch with "armed support," as it seemed FDR was planning to do? Would the people of this country be willing to support such a venture? Or would they reject the idea of U.S. involvement in a Japanese conflict with the British, Dutch, or Thai in southeast Asia, thousands of miles from our shores?

¹⁰⁸Ibid., part 8, p. 3828. Testimony of Maj. John H. Dillon, aide to Knox.

15.

Air Raid, Pearl Harbor! This is No Drill!

“INTELLIGENCE” SUPPLIED HAWAIIAN COMMANDERS WAS LIMITED

Unlike the top administration and military officials in Washington, the armed forces in Hawaii did not have a “Purple” machine or access to MAGIC. The Hawaiian commanders did not even know of their existence. They knew Washington had information not available to them and had to rely on Washington to be kept informed. When they asked for information so as to be able to make informed decisions in the field, they were usually assured that they were being sent what they needed to know. As a matter of fact, it was Washington policy *not* to forward diplomatic intercepts to the forces in the field so as to safeguard MAGIC. The large department staffs in Washington were considered better qualified to evaluate the bits and pieces of data in relation to the political situation than were the smaller staffs in the field, and the field commanders were

“assured” that they “would get what [they] needed at the time [they] needed it.”¹

The commanders in Hawaii received some advice by way of telegraphic reports from Washington and the Philippines. But otherwise, the information available to them was what they gleaned from “intercepting all Japanese naval traffic, and of attacking all the Japanese naval systems contained in that traffic with the exception of one system, which was being worked on in Washington, and in Cavite.” They had “a radio intelligence unit whose duties were to obtain all information available from the Japanese naval traffic by means other than cryptanalysis,” and they had a “mid-Pacific direction-finding unit.”² They also received reports from observers, analyzed directional radio beams, and decoded and translated Japanese messages transmitted in PA-K2 and certain lower classified, nondiplomatic codes.³

It was obvious to the Hawaiian commanders from the cables they received from Washington, as well as from accounts appearing in the Hawaiian press concerning the Japanese-U.S. conversations, that relations between the two countries were tense. On November 27, General Short was advised that “Negotiations with Japan appear to be terminated to all practical purposes.” Short was asked “to undertake such reconnaissance and other measures as . . . necessary but . . . not . . . to alarm civil population.”⁴ To minimize the damage that might be done by local Japanese who were antagonistic to the United States, Short alerted for sabotage and so advised Washington.⁵

¹79th Cong., 1st sess. Joint (Congressional) Committee on the Investigation of the Pearl Harbor Attack. *Pearl Harbor Attack*, 39 vols. (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1946), part 10, pp. 4845–46.

²*Ibid.*, part 10, pp. 4673, 4687, testimony of Commander Joseph John Rochefort.

³*Ibid.*, pp. 4674, 4676, 4677.

⁴*Ibid.*, part 14, p. 1328.

⁵*Ibid.*, p. 1330.

HAWAIIAN COMMANDERS WARNED
OF JAPANESE THREAT TO PHILIPPINES,
THAI, KRA PENINSULA, BORNEO

On November 27, fleet Commander-in-Chief Kimmel in Hawaii was sent a “war warning” advising that Japanese troops were apparently preparing “an amphibious expedition against either the Philippines Thai or Kra peninsula or possibly Borneo.” The same cable also went to fleet Commander-in-Chief Hart in Manila. Both commanders were told to implement WPL-46, the U.S. war plan then in effect, which provided for preparing to take offensive action.⁶ Then on November 28, Short was advised that “all precautions be taken immediately against subversive activities . . . to provide for protection of your establishments, property, and equipment against sabotage.” He took this as Washington approval of his earlier sabotage alert.⁷

With all clues pointing to a war with Japan erupting in southeast Asia, Short and Kimmel expected their primary concerns would be to defend the mid-Pacific U.S. outposts—Guam, Wake, and Midway—and to carry out WPL-46 by attacking the Japanese-held Marshall Islands. They continued drilling their men and preparing for war. Kimmel was directed from Washington to reinforce Wake and Midway with men and planes. So on November 28 and December 5, he sent out from Hawaii two task forces, under heavy security and in a state of combat readiness,⁸ with reinforcements for Wake and Midway.⁹

⁶Ibid., p. 1406, Chief of Naval Operations TOP SECRET cable #272337.

⁷Ibid., p. 1330, War Department SECRET cable 482 to Short.

⁸Ibid., part 26, pp. 321–24, Admiral William F. Halsey testimony before the Hart Inquiry.

⁹Ibid., p. 43, Admiral John Henry Newton testimony before the Hart Inquiry.

War in the west Pacific appeared imminent indeed to readers of page one of the Sunday, November 30, *Honolulu Advertiser*. A banner headline read, KURUSU BLUNTLY WARNED NATION READY FOR BATTLE. The story that followed quoted a former State Department adviser warning the Japanese ambassador that the United States was ready to fight if Japan did not mend her aggressive ways in Asia. Another story on the paper's front page suggested that it might be the Japanese encirclement of the Philippines that would spark the war. Still another story, datelined Singapore, reported that a Japanese strike was expected there and that in the interest of preparedness all troops had been called back to barracks.

But then the situation seemed to ease. Nomura and Kurusu in Washington asked the U.S. government to continue their conversations. U.S. officials in Washington who were reading MAGIC knew this was merely a ruse to permit Japan to stall for time; they had read Tokyo's November 29 instructions to the two Japanese ambassadors to "please be careful that this does not lead to anything like a breaking off of negotiations."¹⁰ But the Hawaiian commanders did not know this. The lengthy meeting of Secretary of State Hull with the two Japanese envoys on Monday, December 1, was reported in the Hawaiian press, giving the impression that the crisis was over, at least for the time being. An Associated Press story in *The Honolulu Star-Bulletin* datelined Tokyo, December 5, reinforced this impression:

A Japanese government spokesman expressed the belief today that the United States and Japan will "continue with sincerity to find a common formula for a peaceful solution in the Pacific".¹¹

¹⁰Ibid., part 12, p. 199.

¹¹Walter Karig, *Battle Report: The Atlantic War* (New York: Farrar & Rinehart, 1943), p. 8.

A December 6 story was headlined NEW PEACE EFFORT URGED IN TOKYO—JOINT COMMISSION TO IRON OUT DEADLOCK WITH U.S. PROPOSED. In Hawaii it looked as if the immediate crisis had passed, even though another December 6 story struck a more ominous note: JAP PRESS ASKS FOR WAR.¹²

On the basis of radio intelligence, Commander Joseph John Rochefort, officer in charge of the Combat Intelligence Unit at Pearl Harbor, noted two significant factors. The Japanese, who usually changed their radio call signs no more often than once every six months, introduced new call signs on December 1, just one month after their last previous change.¹³ Rochefort considered it ominous also when he realized he had lost track of the Japanese aircraft carriers.¹⁴ It was considered possible that they “were still located in home waters”¹⁵ communicating with radio waves too weak to be picked up in Hawaii. However, Rochefort thought that they might be “moving eastward.”¹⁶ As a matter of fact, he had located practically the entire Japanese fleet that attacked Pearl Harbor “in a negative sense.” He had lost them; he didn’t know where they were.¹⁷

Rochefort called the loss of contact with the Japanese carriers to the attention of Commander Edwin Thomas Layton, fleet intelligence officer and combat intelligence officer. Layton “showed the location, to the best of [his] knowledge, of the major portion of the Japanese Fleet”¹⁸ on his “Communication

¹²Ibid., p. 11.

¹³Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 10, p. 4680, Rochefort testimony before the Joint Committee. Ibid., pp. 4836–37, Edwin Thomas Layton testimony before the Joint Committee.

¹⁴Ibid., p. 4682, Rochefort testimony before the Joint Committee.

¹⁵Ibid., pp. 4837–38, Layton testimony before the Joint Committee.

¹⁶Ibid., p. 4680, Rochefort testimony before the Joint Committee.

¹⁷Ibid., p. 4681.

¹⁸Ibid., p. 4838, Layton testimony before the Joint Committee.

Intelligence Summary.” He shared this report with Kimmel on December 2, at his usual 8:15 A.M. briefing.¹⁹

Layton: Almost a complete blank of information on the carriers today. . . . We haven’t seen the carriers except Cardiv 3 [Carrier Division 3] and sometimes Cardiv 4. . . . I felt apprehensive. . . . I did not list Carrier Division 1 or Carrier Division 2 because neither one of those commands had appeared in traffic for fully 15 and possibly 25 days.

Kimmel: What, you do not know where the carriers are? . . . Do you mean to say they could be rounding Diamond Head and you wouldn’t know it?

Layton: [If they were,] I hoped they would be sighted before now.²⁰

DAWN ON SUNDAY AT PEARL HARBOR

It was clearly recognized in Hawaii that the way to assure against a surprise air attack was to conduct long-range air-patrol reconnaissance. But Hawaii had nowhere nearly enough planes, trained pilots, fuel, or spare parts. As Admiral Patrick Bellinger, commander, Patrol Wing Two at Pearl Harbor, later testified:

[T]o be reasonably sure that no hostile carrier could reach a spot 250 miles away and launch an attack without prior detection, would have required an effective daily search through 360° to a distance of at least 800 miles. Assuming a 25-mile radius of visibility, this would have required a daily 16½ hour flight of 50 PBV-5 planes. This, in turn, would have necessitated a force

¹⁹*Ibid.*, pp. 4831, 4833. See also Edwin T. Layton, Roger Pineau, and John Costello, *And I Was There: Pearl Harbor and Midway—Breaking the Secrets* (New York: W. Morrow, 1985), pp. 228–30.

²⁰Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 10, pp. 4837–39, Layton testimony before the Joint Committee.

of not less than 150 patrol planes, adequate spare parts and ample well-trained personnel. We had 81 patrol planes in the whole Hawaiian area, including Midway.²¹

Because of the shortage, the Hawaiian patrols were “operating on a shoestring.”²²

“The Fleet operating areas were searched daily,” and as planes were available rotational sweeps were conducted of those sectors thought to be most dangerous. The planes accompanying the task forces sent out from Hawaii to Wake and Midway were also scouting morning and afternoon over 60° sectors to 300 miles on either bow.²³ On the morning of December 7 three patrol planes were in the air over the fleet operating areas at Pearl Harbor and four other planes were aloft, carrying out exercises with submarines. This was in addition to the three task forces at sea that “were conducting a regular wartime search by aircraft and destroyers, as required by fleet orders.”²⁴

During the early morning hours of December 7, the USS *Ward*, captained by Lieutenant William Woodward Outerbridge, was steaming back and forth at low speed patrolling the sea lanes converging on Pearl Harbor.²⁵ Outerbridge’s orders were that “any submarine operating in the restricted area—not operating in the submarine areas and not escorted—should be attacked.”²⁶

²¹Ibid., part 8, p. 3454, Testimony of Admiral Patrick Bellinger, commander, Patrol Wing Two, Pearl Harbor. See also Homer N. Wallin, *Pearl Harbor: Why, How, Fleet Salvage and Final Appraisal* (Washington, D.C.: Naval History Division, 1968), p. 45.

²²Ibid., p. 45, quoting Bellinger letter, January 16, 1941.

²³Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 26, p. 329, Halsey testimony before the Hart Inquiry.

²⁴Wallin, *Pearl Harbor*, p. 46.

²⁵Karig, *Battle Report*, pp. 6–8.

²⁶Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 36, pp. 56–57, Outerbridge testimony at Hewitt Inquiry.

Two minutes before 4:00 A.M. a blinker signal from the minesweeper *Condor* informed the *Ward* that it had sighted “a suspicious object” believed to be a submarine “apparently heading for the entrance” of the harbor. “Outerbridge immediately ordered the ship to general quarters. . . . The ship sprang to life.” For nearly an hour she combed a wide area in the dark, conducting a sonar search. Nothing was located. So the men aboard the *Ward* relaxed.²⁷

But then at 6:37 A.M. Outerbridge was again aroused from his bunk. This time he saw the U.S. target ship *Antares* towing a raft to Pearl Harbor. Between ship and raft the lieutenant saw “a smaller object which had no right to be there . . . a submarine conning tower . . . unlike any submarine’s silhouette with which he was familiar.” In view of his orders to attack any unauthorized submarine in the area, Outerbridge did not hesitate: “Load all guns and stand by to commence firing.” The first shot was a near miss. “Number 3 gun opened up . . . on the pointer fire, like a squirrel rifle, with a point-blank range of 75 yards. . . . [T]he projectile was seen to strike the conning tower.” And the submarine disappeared from view. The *Ward* then reported its next move: “We have dropped depth charges on sub operating in defensive area.” Then a few minutes later a follow-up message: WE HAVE ATTACKED FIRED UPON AND DROPPED DEPTH CHARGES UPON SUBMARINE OPERATING IN DEFENSIVE AREA.²⁸ It was 6:53 A.M. Hawaii time.²⁹

In 1941, the Army was in the process of installing three large fixed radars on high ground in Hawaii, and six mobile radar units. This new radar service was operative daily from 4 A.M. to 4 P.M. only, the hours Short considered “the most dangerous time for

²⁷Karig, *Battle Report*, pp. 13-14.

²⁸*Ibid.*, pp. 14-16.

²⁹Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 36, p. 57, Outerbridge testimony before the Hewitt Inquiry.

an air attack.”³⁰ But on Saturday, December 6, the Signal Corps “obtained permission of the control officer to have all stations operate from 4 A.M. to 7 A.M. only on Sunday, December 7.”³¹ However, on that morning Opana radar station actually happened to stay open a little longer. Private Joseph L. Lockard, out of personal interest and a desire for experience, and Sergeant George E. Elliott, who wanted to learn plotting, had volunteered to experiment overtime.

Shortly after 7 A.M., Lockard detected on the radar screen a large flight of aircraft bearing north at a distance of about 136 miles. He was “confused” by what he saw. A few minutes after 7, when it got down to about 132 miles, he called the information center, but no one was around.

[I]t was the largest group [he] had ever seen on the oscilloscope. . . . Then we continued to follow the flight and to plot it, till it got within about 22 miles—20 to 22 miles of the Island, at which time we lost it in this blacked-out area.³²

At that time radar was still rather primitive, basically experimental; there was no proper identification system to determine friend from foe, so these planes could not be identified.³³

At 7:20 Lockard reached Lieutenant Kermit A. Tyler on duty at Aircraft Warning Center and reported his sightings. Tyler discounted the report for several reasons. The planes sighted could be from our own two task forces at sea; they could be from Army’s

³⁰Wallin, *Pearl Harbor*, p. 49.

³¹Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 7, p. 2951, Short statement prepared for the Joint Committee.

³²*Ibid.*, part 27, pp. 531–33, Lockard testimony before the APHB.

³³*Ibid.*, part 7, pp. 2951–52, Short statement prepared for the Joint Committee. There is a good description of the radar installations and December 7 sightings in George Raynor Thompson, et al., *The Signal Corps: The Test (December 1941 to July 1943)* (Washington, D.C.: Office of the Chief of Military History, Department of the Army, 1957), pp. 3–5.

Hickam Field; or they could be B-17s en route from the west coast to the Philippines and due to arrive about then in Hawaii.³⁴ Reassured that his sighting “was not anything of importance,” Lockard and Elliott closed down the radar installation and left for breakfast.³⁵

AIR RAID PEARL HARBOR STOP THIS IS NO DRILL

At Pearl Harbor, on December 7, 1941, the sun rose at 6:27 A.M.³⁶

At 7:33, Marshall’s last-minute message, announcing the instructions to the Japanese ambassadors to deliver their government’s reply at precisely 1:00 P.M. Washington time (7:30 A.M. Honolulu time), had arrived, *in code*, at Western Union in downtown Honolulu.³⁷ It had to be sent for decoding to the Army’s cryptographic center at Fort Shafter, four miles away, before it could be read.

At 7:55 (1:25 P.M. in Washington, D.C.) the first Japanese planes swooped down simultaneously at Hawaii’s Army air base at Hickam Field and at Hawaii’s Navy air base on Ford Island in the middle of Pearl Harbor. Almost immediately the first Japanese torpedoes struck their targets in the harbor.³⁸

At 7:58 Vice Admiral Patrick Nelson Lynch Bellinger, commander of Patrol Wing Two at the naval air station on Ford Island, broadcast to all ships in the area, “Air raid Pearl Harbor X This is no drill.” With the emergency, the Naval Base Defense Air

³⁴Wallin, *Pearl Harbor*, pp. 48–50.

³⁵Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 27, p. 533, Lockard testimony before the APHB.

³⁶*Ibid.*, part 5, p. 2439, as reported by the Naval Observatory.

³⁷*Ibid.*, part 14, p. 1410; also *ibid.*, part 34, p. 7.

³⁸*Ibid.*, part 6, p. 2675.

Force immediately became functional, and orders to planes in the air were sent and received by 8:05.³⁹

Within minutes of the attack, Kimmel cabled the Navy Department. Official notification of the attack was received in Washington at 1:50 P.M., Washington time, by dispatch as follows:⁴⁰

AIR RAID ON PEARL HARBOR X THIS IS NOT [sic]
DRILL.

THE ATTACK NEWS REACHES THE NAVY DEPARTMENT

At about 1:30 P.M., as Navy Secretary Knox, Chief of Naval Operations Stark, and possibly Admiral Turner were coming out of a meeting at the Navy Department, the first news of the attack on Pearl Harbor arrived. The "Air Raid" message, delivered by Commander Fernald from Navy Communications, was handed to Knox.

Knox's immediate response was, "My God, this can't be true, this must mean the Philippines."⁴¹

"No, sir," Stark said, "this is Pearl."⁴² Stark knew "This is no drill" were agreed-upon code words to indicate an actual outbreak of hostilities.

THE ATTACK NEWS REACHES THE WHITE HOUSE

On hearing the news, Knox "immediately called on the White House phone and spoke to the president." It was 1:40 P.M. Knox

³⁹Ibid., part 8, p. 3452, Bellinger testimony before the Joint Committee.

⁴⁰Ibid., part 11, p. 5351.

⁴¹Ibid., part 8, pp. 3828–29, 3834–37, Testimony of Knox's Marine aide, Major John H. Dillon.

⁴²Ibid., p. 3829, Dillon testimony before the Joint Committee.

“simply stated what was in the message . . . [Knox] had no further details and . . . [FDR] would be kept advised.”⁴³

Roosevelt was finishing a late lunch with Harry Hopkins. The president couldn't believe what he had heard. Nor could Hopkins; he didn't think Japan would dare to attack Honolulu. “There must be some mistake,” he said.⁴⁴ But there was no mistake.

FDR immediately began telephoning. He called Hull. He called Marshall. He called Stimson. And FDR began receiving phone calls too, from persons all around the world. Winston Churchill was among the callers.

It was Sunday evening in England when Churchill heard the news on a small wireless radio in his dining room at Chequers, the Prime Minister's residence just outside London. With him at the time were U.S. Ambassador John Winant and Averell Harriman, then a special representative of the president with ambassadorial rank. Churchill immediately placed a call to Roosevelt:

“Mr. President,” he began, “what's this about Japan?”

“They have attacked us at Pearl Harbour,” FDR replied. “We are all in the same boat now.”

Winant spoke briefly with FDR, and then Churchill got back on the line. “This certainly simplifies things,” he said. “God be with you,” or words to that effect. According to Churchill, Winant and Harriman

took the shock with admirable fortitude. . . . They did not wail or lament that their country was at war. They wasted no words

⁴³Ibid., p. 3837.

⁴⁴Robert Sherwood, *The White House Papers of Harry L. Hopkins*. 2 vols. (London: Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1948), vol. 1, p. 435, and *Roosevelt and Hopkins: An Intimate History* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1948), pp. 430–31; and Henry H. Adams, *Harry Hopkins: A Biography* (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1977), p. 258.

in reproach or sorrow. In fact, one might almost have thought they had been delivered from a long pain.⁴⁵

THE ATTACK NEWS REACHES THE WAR DEPARTMENT

A very few minutes after the news was picked up out of the air on the west coast, the news reached the War Department in Washington via the Navy. At about 1:30 P.M. a Navy enlisted man, all out of breath, rushed into Marshall's office. Colonel Deane was there trying to round up men, so as to have the office open on a skeleton basis by 3:00 P.M. that afternoon as Marshall had directed. The Navy messenger was carrying a penciled note, supposedly a message from the Navy radio operator at Honolulu: PEARL HARBOR ATTACKED. THIS IS NO DRILL. Deane immediately telephoned Marshall at his quarters at Fort Myer where he was having lunch and told him of the message. Marshall directed Deane to contact Hawaii if possible to verify the report. Deane tried to phone, but the operator questioned his authority and refused to put the call through to Pearl Harbor, even though Deane was calling from Marshall's office. By this time a more official report came in confirming the attack.⁴⁶

THE ATTACK NEWS REACHES THE STATE DEPARTMENT

In line with the instructions from his government, Ambassador Nomura phoned the State Department at about noon to ask for a 1:00 P.M. appointment with Secretary of State Hull. Hull had read

⁴⁵Winston Churchill, *The Grand Alliance* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1950), pp. 604–05.

⁴⁶Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 14, p. 1411, Deane's June 8, 1942 memorandum to Brigadier General W.B. Smith.

the decoded Japanese intercepts that morning—the 14-part reply to our note of November 26, and the “One P.M. Message”—so he knew what to expect. However, the two ambassadors didn’t appear at 1:00. Rather they phoned again a few minutes after 1:00 asking to have their appointment postponed until 1:45. Hull agreed.⁴⁷

He was still waiting for the ambassadors when the president telephoned from the White House shortly after 1:30. “There’s a report that the Japanese have attacked Pearl Harbor.” FDR’s voice was steady but clipped. In view of his impending appointment with the ambassadors, Hull was especially interested. “Has the report been confirmed?” Not yet, the president said, but it would be checked.⁴⁸

The ambassadors arrived at the State Department and were in the diplomatic waiting room even as Hull and the president spoke. Hull kept them waiting while he consulted his advisers—Green H. Hackworth, legal adviser, and Joseph W. Ballantine, a foreign service officer, who had participated with Hull in most of his conversations with the Japanese. “The president has an unconfirmed report,” Hull told them, “that the Japanese have attacked Pearl Harbor. The Japanese Ambassadors are waiting to see me. . . . They are going to turn us down on our note of November 26,” he said. “Perhaps they want to tell us that war has been declared. I am rather inclined not to see them.”⁴⁹

Hull thought over the situation and finally decided that “since the president’s report had not been confirmed and there was one chance out of a hundred that it was not true, [he] would receive the envoys.” Hull summoned the ambassadors to his office.⁵⁰

⁴⁷Cordell Hull, *The Memoirs of Cordell Hull* (New York: MacMillan, 1948), vol. 2, p. 1095.

⁴⁸*Ibid.*

⁴⁹*Ibid.*, p. 1096.

⁵⁰*Ibid.*

When Nomura and Kurusu entered, Hull received them “coldly and did not ask them to sit down.” Nomura handed Hull his government’s note. Hull “naturally could give no indication” that he already knew its contents, so he “made a pretense” of glancing through it. When he had finished skimming the pages, he eyed Nomura. “I must say,” Hull said,

that in all my conversations with you during the last nine months I have never uttered one word of untruth. This is borne out absolutely by the record. In all my fifty years of public service I have never seen a document that was more crowded with infamous falsehoods and distortions—infamous falsehoods and distortions on a scale so huge that I never imagined until today that any Government on this planet was capable of uttering them.⁵¹

Nomura’s face was “impassive.” He seemed to be “under great emotional strain.” Hull thought Nomura was about to speak, but Hull stopped him with a motion of his hand and nodded toward the door. “The Ambassadors turned without a word and walked out, their heads down.”⁵²

THE ATTACK NEWS REACHES SECRETARY OF WAR STIMSON

The president telephoned Stimson at his home at just about 2:00 P.M. Stimson was still at lunch. “[I]n a rather excited voice,” the President asked, “Have you heard the news?”

⁵¹Ibid. Also Department of State, *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States: Japan, 1931–1941* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1943), vol. 2, pp. 786–87, and Department of State, *Peace and War: United States Foreign Policy, 1931–1941* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1943), pp. 831–32.

⁵²Hull, *Memoirs*, pp. 1096–97.

“Well,” Stimson replied, “I have heard the telegrams which have been coming in about the Japanese advances in the Gulf of Siam.”

“Oh, no,” the president responded. “I don’t mean that. They have attacked Hawaii. They are now bombing Hawaii.”

“Well,” Stimson thought, “that was an excitement indeed!”

His reference to “the Japanese advances in the Gulf of Siam” was to the British patrol’s sightings of large Japanese forces south of Indochina and moving up into the Gulf. It had appeared that

these forces were going to land probably either on the eastern side of the Gulf of Siam, where it would be still in Indochina, or on the western side, where it would be the Kra Peninsula, or probably Malay. The British were very much excited about it and our efforts this morning in drawing our papers was to see whether or not we should all act together. The British will have to fight if they attack the Kra Peninsula. We three [Stimson, Hull, Knox] all thought that we must fight if the British fought.

That was the reason for their Sunday morning meeting at the State Department and for the position papers they had drafted—“to see whether or not we should all act together. . . . *But now,*” Stimson confided to his diary, “*the Japs have solved the whole thing by attacking us directly in Hawaii.*”⁵³ (Italics added)

THE AFTERNOON IN MARSHALL’S OFFICE

Deane had phoned Marshall immediately after receiving the news of the attack. It was about a ten-minute drive from Marshall’s quarters at Fort Myer to his office in the War Department. Although it had taken Marshall a couple of hours to respond to Bratton’s frantic phone call that morning, this time

⁵³Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 11, p. 5438, Stimson diary excerpt, as reprinted in Joint Committee hearings.

Marshall reached his office within ten⁵⁴ or fifteen⁵⁵ minutes of receiving Deane's telephone call.

Marshall had many phones in his office, all hung on the side of his desk. He had no sooner arrived than they all began to ring at once. A regular stream of phone calls started coming in. Deane gave Marshall one instrument and then another phone would ring. Roosevelt called on the direct line from the White House, asked Marshall what he knew, but Marshall had to admit that he didn't know much. At that point another phone on the side of Marshall's desk rang. Deane answered and when he finished talking, he inadvertently hung the phone on the Roosevelt connection on the side of Marshall's desk, temporarily closing off the Roosevelt-Marshall conversation. Deane quickly shifted it, but he later recalled that his first act of the war had been to cut off a telephone conversation between the Commander-in-Chief and the Army Chief of Staff.⁵⁶

Marshall sent word of the attack out to all the corps area commanders and all our people throughout the world, particularly in the Philippines.⁵⁷

Roosevelt asked Marshall to come over to the White House right away and Marshall immediately dashed over.

The first call that came in after Marshall left was from a drunk in St. Louis, who had just heard what those "bastards" had done and offered to come to Washington to help Marshall out. Deane thanked the caller and said he would relay his offer to Marshall. To Deane, this incident illustrated how ill-prepared the Chief of Staff's office was for the emergency; a call from a plain citizen

⁵⁴Ibid., part 14, p. 1411, Deane June 8, 1942, memorandum for General W.B. Smith.

⁵⁵Author's interview of Deane, January 2, 1964.

⁵⁶Ibid.

⁵⁷Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 11, p. 5439, Stimson diary except.

had gotten through to Marshall's office without any trouble. Yet Deane had had difficulty trying to call Pearl Harbor on behalf of the Chief of Staff. According to Deane, the War Department personnel that next week were all "at sixes and sevens . . . totally unprepared for what had happened."⁵⁸

STIMSON'S AFTERNOON

After hearing the news and finishing his lunch, Stimson returned to his office. He "started matters going in all directions to warn against sabotage and to get punch into the defense move." Armed guards were stationed at the War Department building and also at Stimson's estate. He offered to provide guards for the White House, but it was decided the FBI should stand guard there.⁵⁹

Stimson attended FDR's meeting at the White House. Then at 4:00, he joined McCoy and the chiefs of the armed services, giving them "a little pep-up talk about getting right to work in the emergency." He spent most of the afternoon in conference with Marshall, Grenville Clark, Miles, Patterson, McCoy, and their assistants, Lovett and General Gullion, the provost marshal general. The main topic of their conversation was the form the declaration of war should take. "Grenville Clark had drawn up a copy based largely on the Woodrow Wilson one." They "all thought that it was possible we should declare war on Germany at the same time with Japan." But that was "an open question." However, Stimson thought there was now "no doubt about declaring war on Japan."⁶⁰

When Stimson had first heard the news of Japan's attack, his "first feeling was of relief that the indecision was over and that a

⁵⁸Deane interview.

⁵⁹Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 11, p. 5439, Stimson diary excerpt.

⁶⁰*Ibid.*, p. 5438.

crisis had come in a way which would unite all our people.” Yet the news that came in from Hawaii during the afternoon was “very bad.” The Japanese seemed

to have sprung a complete surprise upon our fleet and [to] have caught the battleships inside the harbor and bombed them severely with losses . . . hit our airfields there and . . . destroyed a great many of our planes, evidently before they got off the ground.

It was “staggering,” Stimson wrote, “to see our people there, who [had] been warned long ago and were standing on the alert . . . so caught by surprise.” Nevertheless, his “dominant feeling” continued to be one of relief “in spite of the news of catastrophes which quickly developed.” He felt that “this country united has practically nothing to fear; while the apathy and divisions stirred up by unpatriotic men have been hitherto very discouraging.”⁶¹

SUNDAY AFTERNOON AT THE WHITE HOUSE

Soon after receiving the news of the attack, the White House became a beehive of activity. At 2:28 P.M. FDR had a phone call from Stark telling of the heavy losses suffered by the fleet during the first phase of the attack and reporting “some loss of life.” Stark discussed the next step with FDR, and the president “wanted him to execute the agreed orders to the Army and Navy in event of an outbreak of hostilities in the Pacific.”⁶² At 2:30 Knox ordered all ships and stations to “Execute WPL-46 against Japan.”⁶³

Knox reached the White House almost immediately after Stark finished talking with the president. As Knox later confided,

⁶¹Ibid.

⁶²Sherwood, *The White House Papers of Harry L. Hopkins*, pp. 435–36, and *Roosevelt and Hopkins*, p. 431.

⁶³Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 11, p. 5351, John Ford Baecher April 8, 1946, memorandum to Joint Committee Counsel Seth Richardson.

he found the president in the Oval Office, seated, and “as white as a sheet . . . visibly shaken.” The extent of the disaster, news of which was beginning to trickle in, really shook FDR. Knox thought Roosevelt “expected to get hit” by the Japanese, but that “he did not expect to get hurt.” It was not the attack itself, but the amount of the damage that shocked him.⁶⁴

FDR called in his secretary, Steve Early, and dictated a news release that Early was to give to the press immediately. A half hour later FDR dictated to Early a second press release.⁶⁵

Roosevelt’s oldest son, James, a captain in the Marine Corps Reserve, was on assignment in Washington at the time, as liaison between Marine Headquarters and the Office of the Coordinator of Information. He was off duty that Sunday afternoon when the White House phoned him at his home in the suburbs; his father wanted him at the White House right away. He “got there as fast as [he] could.” As he entered his father’s office, the first thing FDR said was “Hello, Jimmy. It’s happened.”⁶⁶ As Elliott Roosevelt, James’ next younger brother wrote later, “it was the target, not the attack, that amazed him.”⁶⁷

Mrs. Roosevelt heard of the attack from an usher as her 30 luncheon guests of the day were leaving. FDR was occupied all that afternoon and evening with meetings, and Eleanor didn’t have a chance to talk with him until later. When she and the president did speak together briefly, it was her opinion that “in spite of his anxiety Franklin was in a way more serene than he had appeared in a long time.” She thought

⁶⁴Admiral Ben Moreell letter to Harry Elmer Barnes, December 17, 1961.

⁶⁵Sherwood, *The White House Papers of Harry L. Hopkins*, p. 437, and *Roosevelt and Hopkins*, p. 431.

⁶⁶James Roosevelt, *Affectionately, FDR: A Son’s Story of a Lonely Man* (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1959), pp. 327–28. Also James Roosevelt with Bill Libby, *My Parents: A Differing View* (Chicago: Playboy Press, 1976), p. 266.

⁶⁷Elliott Roosevelt and James Brough, *A Rendezvous with Destiny: The Roosevelts of the White House* (London: W.H. Allen, 1977), p. 304.

it was steadying to know finally that the die was cast. One could no longer do anything but face the fact that this country was in a war; from here on, difficult and dangerous as the future looked, it presented a clearer challenge than the long uncertainty of the past.⁶⁸

FDR had a previously scheduled meeting of his principal advisers for 3:00 P.M., and they soon began arriving: Hull, Stimson, Knox, Marshall, and Stark. In anticipation of this meeting, Marshall and Stimson had prepared papers on the status of U.S. military preparedness.

The atmosphere at the conference was “not too tense.” The participants all looked on Hitler as the real enemy. They thought “that he could never be defeated without force of arms; that sooner or later we were bound to be in the war and that Japan had given us an opportunity.” FDR

discussed at length with Marshall the disposition of the troops and particularly the air force. . . . [Marshall] said he had ordered General MacArthur to execute “all the necessary movement required in event of an outbreak of hostilities with Japan.”

Many matters were dealt with at the meeting. Those present agreed that “some type of censorship had to be set up at once.” And the president “ordered the Japanese Embassy and all the consulates in the United States to be protected and ordered all Japanese citizens to be picked up and placed under careful surveillance.” When a move required the president to sign an executive order, he “instructed the person to whom he talked to go ahead and execute the order and he would sign it later.”⁶⁹

⁶⁸Eleanor Roosevelt, *This I Remember* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1949), pp. 233–34.

⁶⁹Sherwood, *The White House Papers of Harry L. Hopkins*, pp. 436–37, and *Roosevelt and Hopkins*, pp. 431–32.

In view of the crisis, the president, at Hopkins's suggestion, decided to call a special meeting of his entire cabinet for 8:30 that evening. He then asked also to have the congressional leaders come to the White House to confer with the president after the cabinet meeting was over.

CNO STARK REPLIES TO ADMIRAL HART IN MANILA

For weeks, especially during the last few days, Washington's attention had been riveted on the western Pacific and the likelihood of a Japanese landing in Thailand, the Kra peninsula, Singapore, Malaya, or the Dutch East Indies. If the Japanese struck any of those areas, the British and Dutch were expected to fight. And if the British and Dutch fought, the United States was committed to helping them militarily. In view of the fact that our commitment was not only secret but also unconstitutional, the administration had been faced with a dilemma. The question had been, as Stimson stated on November 25, "how we should maneuver them [the Japanese] into the position of firing the first shot without allowing too much danger to ourselves."⁷⁰ But if the Japanese attacked *us*, we would be justified in responding. Thus, the attack at Pearl Harbor had let us off the hook.

The Hart-Phillips cable, asking how Hart should respond to Creighton's news from Singapore, was a reminder of the U.S. commitment to the British.⁷¹ The cable had reached Washington during the night of December 6–7, but because of the rash of Japanese intercepts it had not been decoded promptly. It became available only on the morning of December 7, and it was not until after the attack that Stark had a chance to reply. His answer referred to the incoming cable paragraph by paragraph. It was

⁷⁰Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 11, p. 5433, Stimson's diary report on the White House meeting of November 25.

⁷¹*Ibid.*, part 4, pp. 1933–35, Hart-Phillips December 7, 1941, report from Manila.

encoded and transmitted December 7, at 11:00 P.M. Washington time.⁷²

Stark agreed with Hart that the Japanese would be able to take the initiative in a war starting at that time, and he agreed also that the most important thing was “to prevent any Japanese movement through the Malay barrier.” Stark approved of the defensive strategy suggested by Hart and Phillips, but reminded them of the “possibility that the major Japanese attack against Philippines may come from the eastward,” that the Japanese might strike from the bases they had been constructing on their mid-Pacific mandated islands, the Marianas and the Carolines. As a matter of fact, Stark said,

a Japanese concentration may be established in Halmahera [an island of the Dutch East Indies between the Philippines and New Guinea] or Mindanao [the southernmost island of the Philippines itself] approximately in accord with ideas expressed in WPL44.

Stark approved of the Hart-Phillips proposals for coordinating U.S. army and navy operations and for U.S.-British cooperation. He said Marshall approved as well. Washington also okayed the idea of permitting the British Battle Fleet to use the naval base in Manila and asked “what additional personnel material and minor forces” were required “for the projected fleet base in Manila or alternatively in Mindanao.”

This reply was sent for action to Hart, for information to the secretary of navy, and to Kimmel. Copies went also to the British Admiralty Delegation and to the U.S. Army’s War Plans Division. Hart was to inform the British and Dutch. The U.S.-British plans for cooperation, conceived months before in London, Washington, and Singapore, when the United States was still officially neutral, were now being put into operation.

⁷²*Ibid.*, pp. 1935–36.

A message from the U.S. naval attaché in Australia, Merle-Smith, the transmission of which had been held up 17 hours at the request of the Australian authorities, was also received in Washington on December 7. It reported on the threatening movement of the Japanese in the southeast Pacific. A strike from the Japanese island of Pelau, aimed at Menado, on the northern coast of Celebes, Dutch East Indies, and/or at Ambon, appeared imminent. The Dutch had ordered execution of plan A-2, calling for joint operations by the Australians and the Dutch. And the Dutch Indies forces were mobilizing.⁷³

FDR'S EVENING MEETINGS WITH CABINET AND CONGRESSIONAL LEADERS

As the cabinet officers entered the Oval Office for the 8:30 P.M. meeting, the president was seated at his desk. He nodded to everyone as they came in, but there was

none of the usual cordial, personal greeting. This was one of the few occasions he couldn't muster a smile. However, he was calm, not agitated. He was concentrated; all of his mind and all of his faculties were on the one task of trying to find out what had really happened.⁷⁴

The members of the cabinet faced him in a semi-circle. FDR's secretary, Steve Early, sat at his side.

Knox's face was drawn and white. Before the meeting started he confided to Stimson that "we had lost seven of the eight battle-ships in Hawaii." (As Stimson wrote in his diary, "This, however, proved later to be exaggerated.")⁷⁵

⁷³Ibid., part 9, p. 4566.

⁷⁴Perkins, *The Roosevelt I Knew* (New York: Viking Press, 1946), p. 379.

⁷⁵Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 11, p. 5349, excerpt from Stimson diary entry, December 7, 1941.

FDR opened by saying that “this was the most serious meeting of the Cabinet that had taken place since 1861.”⁷⁶ He began in a low voice, looking down at the dispatches before him as he talked. “You all know what’s happened. The attack began at 1:00 [actually 1:25 P.M. Washington time]. We don’t know very much yet.”⁷⁷

Someone, probably Attorney General Francis Biddle, spoke up. “Mr. President, several of us have just arrived by plane. We don’t know anything except a scare headline, ‘Japs Attack Pearl Harbor.’ Could you tell us?” The president asked Knox to tell the story, which he did, with interpolations by Stimson, Hull, and Roosevelt.⁷⁸

Dispatches were being brought in every few minutes during the meeting, and FDR enumerated the blows that had befallen us at Hawaii. He “had hastily drawn a draft of a message” he was planning to present to Congress, and “he then read [it] to us slowly.” It was very brief.⁷⁹

The Cabinet meeting lasted for at least three-quarters of an hour. Then the congressional leaders, who had been waiting below, were called in. Among those who appeared were: Vice President Henry A. Wallace, Senate Foreign Relations Committee Chairman Tom Connally, Senator Warren R. Austin, Senator Hiram W. Johnson, Senator Alben Barkley, and Senator Charles L. McNary. And Representatives: Speaker Sam Rayburn, Foreign Affairs Chairman Sol Bloom, Charles A. Eaton of New

⁷⁶Ibid.

⁷⁷Perkins, *The Roosevelt I Knew*, p. 379.

⁷⁸Ibid.

⁷⁹Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 11, p. 5439, excerpt from Stimson diary entry, December 7, 1941.

Jersey, Majority Floor Leader John W. McCormack, Minority Floor Leader Joseph W. Martin, Jr.⁸⁰

The president began by giving them

a very frank story of what had happened, including our losses. The effect on the Congressmen was tremendous. They sat in dead silence and even after the recital was over they had very few words [to say]. The president asked if they would invite him to appear before the Joint Houses tomorrow and they said they would. He said he could not tell them exactly what he was going to say to them because events were changing so rapidly.⁸¹

The White House meeting didn't wind up until after 11:00. As the cabinet officers and congressional leaders were filing out, Postmaster General Frank Walker said to Secretary of Labor Frances Perkins, "I think the Boss really feels more relief than he has had for weeks."⁸² She agreed.

Mrs. Perkins wrote later,

A great change had come over the president since we had seen him on Friday. Then, he had been tense, worried, trying to be optimistic as usual, but it was evident that he was carrying an awful burden of decision. The Navy on Friday had thought it likely it would be Singapore and the English ports if the Japanese fleet meant business. What should the United States do in that case? I don't know whether he had decided in his own mind; he never told us; he didn't need to. But one was conscious that night of December 7, 1941, that in spite of the terrible blow to his pride, to his faith in the Navy and its ships,

⁸⁰Sherwood, *The White House Papers of Harry L. Hopkins*, p. 437, and *Roosevelt and Hopkins*, p. 433. See also excerpt from Stimson diary entry, December 7 (Joint Committee, part 11, p. 5439).

⁸¹Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 11, p. 5439, excerpt from Stimson diary entry, December 7, 1941.

⁸²Perkins, *The Roosevelt I Knew*, p. 380.

and to his confidence in the American Intelligence Service, and in spite of the horror that war had actually been brought to us, he had, nevertheless, a much calmer air. His terrible moral problem had been resolved by the event.⁸³

LOOKING BACK

A few weeks after the attack on Pearl Harbor, FDR and his confidential adviser Hopkins dined alone together. On that occasion, the president told Hopkins

about several talks with Hull relative to the loopholes in our foreign policy in the Far East in so far as that concerned the circumstances on which the United States would go to war with Japan in event of certain eventualities. All of Hull's negotiations, while in general terms indicating that we wished to protect our rights in the Far East, would never envisage the tough answer to the problem that would have to be faced if Japan attacked, for instance, either Singapore or the Netherlands East Indies. The president felt it was a weakness in our policy that we could not be specific on that point. The president told [Hopkins] that he felt that an attack on the Netherlands East Indies should result in war with Japan and he told [Hopkins] that Hull always ducked that question.⁸⁴

Hopkins had talked with the president many times over the previous year, and

it always disturbed him [FDR] because he really thought that the tactics of the Japanese would be to avoid a conflict with us; that they would not attack either the Philippines or Hawaii but would move on Thailand, French Indo-China, make further

⁸³Ibid., pp. 380–81.

⁸⁴Sherwood, *The White House Papers of Harry L. Hopkins*, p. 432, and *Roosevelt and Hopkins*, p. 428.

inroads on China itself and possibly attack the Malay Straits. He also thought they would attack Russia at an opportune moment. This would have left the president with the very difficult problem of protecting our interests [in the Far East].

He always realized that Japan would jump on us at an opportune moment and they would merely use the "one by one" technique of Germany. Hence, his great relief at the method that Japan used. In spite of the disaster at Pearl Harbor and the blitz-warfare with the Japanese during the first few weeks, it completely solidified the American people and made the war upon Japan inevitable.⁸⁵

* * * * *

Judging from reports of a number of the president's intimate associates who saw him on December 7, after he had learned of the Japanese attack, he was unquestionably more soothed than surprised by the news. He was truly flabbergasted at the actual site of the attack, and he was shaken by the large unexpected losses to *his* beloved Navy. However, it came as a relief to him that Japan had not bypassed American territory to attack the British or Dutch.

FDR had faced a domestic dilemma. The New Deal had failed to end the depression. Unemployment in 1939 was as high as when he took office in 1933. Only Selective Service and the war orders of France and England had succeeded in eliminating unemployment. Increased employment in the United States had been financed first by French and British gold and then, under lend-lease, by inflation and increased public debt. Without such continued war production, the New Deal, on which FDR's great popularity rested, would have been revealed as an illusion and the

⁸⁵Sherwood, *The White House Papers of Harry L. Hopkins*, pp. 432–33, and *Roosevelt and Hopkins*, p. 428.

economic catastrophe it really was. Roosevelt continued to improvise new policies and new programs to prevent such a revelation.

To put off the day of reckoning and divert public attention from his domestic failures, he had become more and more involved in foreign affairs. As Japan struggled to protect her Asian markets and sources of supply from ever-increasing communist disruptions, FDR had taken step-by-step actions to support China and to strangle the Japanese economy. He had also joined in “parallel actions” with the British and Dutch to blockade Japan and to prevent her attempts to extend her trade and influence on the Asian mainland.

Because of her straitened economic circumstances, Japan was under pressure to obtain from southeast Asia, by fair means or foul, the oil and other products she needed but which we refused to let her buy. Time and time again, Joseph Grew, our ambassador in Japan, had warned FDR that our embargo was starving Japan economically and that he feared it would eventually lead to war. Yet his warnings went unheeded. Moreover, FDR had given secret assent to naval and military agreements to provide American “armed support” to the British and Dutch if Japan should strike their southeast Asian territories, which seemed likely as Japan drove south for the resources she needed.

Several clues were available in Washington from the reading of MAGIC, which indicated that the Japanese were planning aggressive action against the United States itself. Yet these indications were largely ignored, or at least not recognized by the authorities as serious enough to warrant taking decisive measures, except to plead for more time to prepare for war. As a result, the military commanders in the field remained inadequately alerted to the impending threat.

As the extent of the Pearl Harbor catastrophe trickled in, the enormity of Washington’s negligence began to become apparent. The authorities then tried to conceal their responsibility and to

cover their tracks. The tale of the subsequent investigations and the attempted Washington cover-up is dealt with in Part II of this book, “The Fruits of Infamy.”



President Franklin D. Roosevelt signing Declaration of War, December 8, 1941



Harry Hopkins, advisor to President Roosevelt



Front row (from left): Winston Churchill, Franklin D. Roosevelt, and Josef Stalin at the Yalta Conference, December 1945



Secretary of War Henry L. Stimson



Secretary of State Cordell Hull with British Foreign Minister Anthony Eden



(Above) General George C. Marshall, Army Chief of Staff; (Above right) General Walter C. Short, Army Commander in Hawaii; (Right) General Leonard T. Gerow, Assistant Army Chief of Staff, War Plans Division (courtesy of Virginia Military Institute Archives).

U.S. Army Generals, 1945, including General Walter Bedell Smith (back row, center); and General Leonard T. Gerow (front row, far right).





Admiral Husband E. Kimmel,
Commander in Chief, Pacific Fleet



Admiral Harold R. Stark and
Secretary of the Navy Frank Knox, 1943

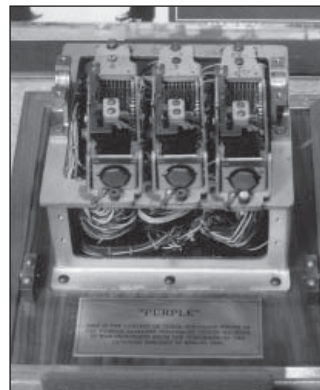


Captain Laurance F. Safford, Security
Section, Naval Communications



Kichisaburo Nomura, Japanese Ambassador
to the United States (standing, at left)

Japanese Purple Cipher from the
Japanese embassy in Berlin, Germany,
now in the National Cryptologic
Museum in Laurel, Maryland.





December 1943, standing outside the Russian Embassy, left to right: unidentified British officer, General George C. Marshall, U.S. Army Chief of Staff, shaking hands with Sir Archibald Clark Keer, British Ambassador to the USSR, Harry Hopkins, Marshal Stalin's interpreter, Marshal Josef Stalin, Foreign minister Molotov, and General Voroshilov. Photograph was taken during the Teheran conference.



From left: Senator Homer Ferguson, Percy L. Greaves, Jr., and Rear Admiral T.B. Inglis, at the Pearl Harbor hearings, November 17, 1945. (Associated Press photo)

From left: Percy L. Greaves, Jr., Senators Ferguson (R-MI), Lucas (D-IL), and George (D-GA), December 11, 1945, during the Pearl Harbor hearings. Photo from the Washington, D.C. *Times-Herald*, December 12, 1945.



Part 2

The Fruits of Infamy

16.

The First Response

THE REACTION TO THE ATTACK IN WASHINGTON

As news of the attack on Pearl Harbor spread around the world, reports soon followed of other Japanese actions—all over the Pacific. They struck Singapore in southeast Asia, where the British had a big naval base. They struck Khota Baru on the British Malayan peninsula and the British base in Hong Kong. They attacked U.S.-operated Clark Field in the Philippines. And they struck the U.S. islands of Guam and Wake. All this within seven hours and three minutes of the attack on Pearl Harbor. And then a few hours later, they hit U.S. air and naval bases in Manila and the mid-Pacific U.S. island of Midway.¹

Before the attack, one of Roosevelt's major concerns had been that the American people would not support a war to defend the British or Dutch in southeast Asia if the Japanese attacked them there. However, the attack on the U.S. fleet at Pearl Harbor had radically altered the situation. Now there was no doubt that the people would support a declaration of war.

¹79th Cong., 1st sess. Joint (Congressional) Committee on the Investigation of the Pearl Harbor Attack. *Pearl Harbor Attack*, 39 vols. (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1946), part 6, p. 2675.

As FDR's meeting with congressional leaders on the evening of the attack broke up, Democrat House Speaker Sam Rayburn was asked, "Will the president ask for a declaration of war?" FDR hadn't committed himself. But Rayburn volunteered that if he did, "that is one thing on which there would be unity."

Minority House Leader Joseph W. Martin agreed: "There is only one party when it comes to the integrity and honor of the country."²

Senator David I. Walsh, chairman of the Naval Affairs Committee, a frequent critic of FDR's foreign policy:

The unexpected and unprovoked attacks upon United States territory and ships and the formal declaration of war by Japan leave Congress no choice but to take speedy and decisive measures to defend our country. We must promptly meet the challenge with all our resources and all our courage.³

Within hours of the attack, many Japanese nationals in this country were picked up and detained.

Congressional leaders made plans to question top military officials.

THE MORNING AFTER THE ATTACK

At noon the president was driven up to Capitol Hill to address a joint session of Congress. The members of the House and Senate, and their guests, were assembled in the House chamber when the president entered. It was a somber occasion. The president was an eloquent speaker, and everyone was anxious to hear what he had to say.

Roosevelt began clearly and firmly: "Yesterday, December 7, 1941—a date which will live in infamy—the United States of

²*New York Times*, December 8, 1941, p. 1.

³*Ibid.*, p. 2.

America was suddenly and deliberately attacked by naval and air forces of the Empire of Japan.” The United States had been “at peace with that Nation,” he said, and its envoys had still been in conversation with this government. “The Japanese government has deliberately sought to deceive the United States by false statements and expressions of hope for continued peace.” FDR went on to state that the United States was not Japan’s only target.

Yesterday the Japanese Government also launched an attack against Malaya.

Last night Japanese forces attacked Hong Kong.

Last night Japanese forces attacked Guam.

Last night Japanese forces attacked the Philippine Islands.

Last night the Japanese attacked Wake Island.

This morning the Japanese attacked Midway Island.

The president called on the American people to come to the defense of the country.

No matter how long it may take us to overcome this premeditated invasion, the American people in their righteous might will win through to absolute victory.

I believe I interpret the will of the Congress and of the people when I assert that we will not only defend ourselves to the uttermost but will make very certain that this form of treachery shall never endanger us again.

Hostilities exist. There is no blinking at the fact that our people, our territory, and our interests are in grave danger.

The president’s short talk was a ringing call for the support of the American people.

With confidence in our armed forces—with the unbounded determination of our people—we will gain the inevitable triumph—so help us God.

The president then asked the Congress to declare that “since the unprovoked and dastardly attack by Japan on Sunday, December 7, a state of war has existed between the United States and the Japanese Empire.”⁴ With Congress’s December 8 resolution, the United States was at war with Japan. Not with Germany which, throughout most of 1941, FDR had considered the prime target.

WAR!

Japan’s Emperor Hirohito promptly declared war on the United States and Great Britain. England, Australia, Canada, the Netherlands East Indies, and Costa Rica all responded by announcing that a state of war existed between them and Japan.⁵ On the morning of December 11 Germany and Italy both declared war on the United States. FDR notified Congress, which promptly issued two joint resolutions resolving “that the state of war between the United States and the Government of Germany [and the government of Italy] which has thus been thrust upon the United States is hereby formally declared.”⁶

⁴Department of State Bulletin, vol. 5, p. 474; Department of State, *Peace and War: United States Foreign Policy, 1931–1941* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1943), pp. 839–40.

⁵*New York Times*, December 8, 1941, p. 1.

⁶Department of State, *Peace and War*, pp. 849–50.

17.

The Public Had Questions

HOW MUCH DAMAGE HAD THE JAPANESE INFLICTED ON PEARL HARBOR?

The people in this country were panic-stricken. *Why* had Japan attacked the U.S. Fleet while negotiations with the U.S. were still ongoing? How much damage had been inflicted? Would the Japanese land in Hawaii? Would they attack the west coast of the United States? Would they attack Panama?

Secretary of Navy Knox determined to investigate the situation in Hawaii himself. He called on President Roosevelt Monday morning to ask permission to fly to Pearl Harbor to inspect the carnage firsthand, to find out for himself how much damage had been done, and to determine the responsibility for our forces' apparent lack of preparedness. Roosevelt agreed to his trip. Knox spent the day gathering background material to study on the flight. Hawaii was still a territory, not yet a state. Secretary of Navy would be traveling outside the country, so Under Secretary of Navy James W. Forrestal would take over as Acting Secretary. Forrestal had not previously been on the list of those few top military and political officials privy to the closely guarded MAGIC intercepts. However, as Acting Secretary he

was entitled to see them, and he asked to be briefed. Navy courier Lieutenant Commander Kramer assembled for Forrestal a sizeable folder of the intercepts bearing on Pearl Harbor, took them to Forrestal's office on December 10, and spent some time "going through [the folder] . . . giving [Forrestal] the general tenor of the way the things shaped up from this traffic."¹

It was a long trip to Hawaii in 1941, more than two days each way. The flight began on December 9. Accompanying Knox were his aide, Captain Frank E. Beatty, Lieutenant Commander Edward A. Hayes, USNR, Joseph W. Powell, vice president of Bethlehem Shipbuilding Company and two Knox assistants, one a specialist in shipbuilding matters. The Knox party flew first to Memphis where the plane was gassed up, and then to El Paso where they overnighted because of bad weather. The next day was rough; the plane iced up heavily going over the mountains, but arrived safely at San Diego where a four-engined flying boat, heavily loaded with medical supplies badly needed in Hawaii, was waiting to take them on the 2,000+ mile overseas flight. They had trouble taking off but finally made it. They encountered such turbulence and icing conditions at 7,000 feet that everyone donned full cold-weather flying gear and wrapped themselves in blankets. The pilot brought the plane down to 1,000–1,200 feet where it was smooth but still intensely cold.

Not knowing what to expect in Hawaii, Knox and his party prepared for the worst. As they approached the islands, the plane's machine guns were manned. Everyone donned life preservers and parachutes. To avoid being mistaken by some trigger-happy lookout for an enemy plane, the pilot followed his landing

¹79th Cong., 1st sess. Joint (Congressional) Committee on the Investigation of the Pearl Harbor Attack. *Pearl Harbor Attack*, 39 vols. (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1946), part 36, pp. 83–84. Kramer testimony at Hewitt Inquiry.

instructions precisely. They landed on Oahu on the morning of December 11.

Once on the ground, Knox and his companions saw wreckage everywhere. The air station at Kaneohe seemed to have been “completely devastated.” So far as they could see, “no planes remained in flying condition. The wreckage of Navy PBY seaplanes which had been shot to pieces or burned were visible on the ramps and in the water. The large hangars were burnt out.” Pearl Harbor presented a

tragic picture. . . . [A]ll of our modern battleships, save the *Colorado*, were there, damaged in various degrees. The *Arizona*, a shattered mass of wreckage with smoke still pouring from her debris. The *Oklahoma* capsized. The *Maryland*, *Tennessee*, and *Pennsylvania* bombed or torpedoed. The *Nevada* grounded near the hospital, bombed in her valiant effort to clear the harbor.²

Admiral Kimmel met Knox and his companions at the Royal Hawaiian Hotel, “grim and unlike the gay tourist hotel of peacetime days.”³ They met some of Kimmel’s staff at his quarters. Later General Short joined them.

Neither Kimmel nor Short attempted to justify their lack of readiness to oppose the attack. They readily acknowledged that

The Japanese air attack on the Island of Oahu on December 7th was a complete surprise to both the Army and the Navy. Its initial success . . . was due to a lack of a state of readiness against such an air attack. . . . While the likelihood of an attack without warning by Japan was in the minds of both General Short and Admiral Kimmel, both felt certain that such an attack would

²Harry Elmer Barnes 1953 interview of Vice Admiral Frank E. Beatty, on file at Naval Academy Library, Annapolis, p. 8.

³Ibid., p. 7.

take place nearer Japan's base of operations, that is, in the Far East.⁴

An air attack had appeared

extremely unlikely because of the great distance which the Japs would have to travel to make the attack and the consequent exposure of such a task force to the superior gun power of the American fleet.⁵

Moreover, they had not expected an attack by the Japanese while negotiations were still going on in Washington, as the Hawaiian press had reported.

Kimmel had received a "general warning" from the Navy Department on November 27. His chief fear had been of a submarine attack, and he had made "all necessary provisions to cope with such an attack."⁶ As a matter of fact, the air attack was accompanied by a submarine attack. Two Japanese submarines were sunk, one ran ashore, and one small two-man submarine penetrated the harbor. According to Knox at the time of the attack

Neither Short nor Kimmel had any knowledge of the plain intimations of some surprise move, made clear in Washington through the interception of Japanese instructions to Nomura, in which a surprise move of some kind was clearly indicated by the insistence upon the precise time of Nomura's reply to Hull, at 1:00 on Sunday.⁷

In contrast to Kimmel, Short had considered sabotage "the most imminent danger to the Army . . . because of the known

⁴Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 5, p. 2338. From Knox's report on his trip.

⁵*Ibid.*

⁶*Ibid.*, part 5, p. 2338. From Knox's report.

⁷*Ibid.*, part 5, p. 2342. From Knox's report.

presence of large numbers of alien Japanese in Honolulu.” The Army’s sabotage alert “unfortunately” called for

bunching the planes on the various fields on the Island, close together, so that they might be carefully guarded against possible subversive action by Japanese agents. . . . This bunching of planes, of course, made the Japanese air attack more effective.⁸

Short’s fear of a Japanese “fifth column” was by no means unjustified. Japanese agents had “provided the Japanese Navy with exact knowledge of all necessary details to plan the attack,” including

exact charts showing customary position of ships when in Pearl Harbor, exact location of all defenses, gun power and numerous other details. Papers captured from the Japanese submarine that ran ashore indicated that the exact position of nearly every ship in the harbor was known and charted.⁹

It is acknowledged that “the best means of defense against air attack consists of fighter planes.” However, the number of such planes available to the Army for the defense of the Island was far from adequate. This, Knox remarked in his report, was “due to the diversion of this type [of plane] before the outbreak of the war, to the British, the Chinese, the Dutch and the Russians.”¹⁰ “The next best weapon against air attack is adequate and well-disposed anti-aircraft artillery.” The “dangerous shortage” of this type of gun, Knox reported, is “through no fault of the Army Commander who has pressed consistently for these guns.”¹¹

The Army carried out no morning patrol on December 7. The Navy sent out at dawn a ten-bomber air patrol, which searched

⁸Ibid.

⁹Ibid., pp. 2342–43.

¹⁰Ibid., p. 2342.

¹¹Ibid.

the southern approach to the islands, considered the most likely direction from which an attack might be expected; they made no contacts with enemy craft. The Navy's condition of readiness was

described as "Condition Three," which meant that about one-half of the broadside and anti-aircraft guns were manned, and all of the anti-aircraft guns were supplied with ammunition and were in readiness.¹²

The Japanese air force planes had swept over Pearl Harbor in three waves. "The torpedo planes, flying low, appeared first over the hills surrounding the harbor, and in probably not more than sixty seconds were in a position to discharge their torpedoes." The first wave was "substantially," but not completely, unopposed. "The first return fire from the guns of the fleet began, it is estimated, about four minutes after the first torpedo was fired, and this fire grew rapidly in intensity." The second wave over the harbor "was resisted with far greater fire power and a number of enemy planes were shot down. The third attack over the harbor," about an hour and 20 minutes after the first, "was met by so intensive a barrage from the ships that it was driven off without getting the attack home, no effective hits being made in the harbor by this last assault."¹³

Knox and his companions visited the Naval Hospital, where they saw hundreds of wounded, many suffering horribly from burns and shock. He was distressed by the huge numbers of dead and wounded: "The sight of those men made me as angry as I have ever been in my life. It made me realize what a big job lay ahead of us."¹⁴ He was tremendously impressed also by the courage, daring, and heroism demonstrated by many servicemen and

¹²Ibid., p. 2339.

¹³Ibid., p. 2340.

¹⁴Barnes interview with Beatty, cited above, p. 9.

civilians in fighting back at the attackers and in rescuing men from burning ships and the harbor's oil-covered flaming waters.

Friday, December 12, was taken up with interviews with Hawaii's leading industrialists and senior Army officers. Knox, a veteran newspaperman, assembled the raw materials he would need for his report—information about damage to ships, possible sabotage, casualty lists, copies of Japanese charts, damage repairs, ship repair yards and many photographs.

KNOX WRITES HIS REPORT AND DELIVERS IT TO FDR

Knox and his party took off Friday evening. Knox spent most of that night on the flight back to the mainland drafting his report. By morning it was pretty well finished in rough, handwritten form. The plane landed in San Diego at 10:30 A.M., and when it took off on the next leg of the journey, Knox had a borrowed portable typewriter, paper and carbon. By the time they landed in El Paso at 4:00 P.M., Lieutenant Commander Hayes, a former court stenographer, had it finished in typed form. They gassed up, but the weather closed in and they had to spend another night in Midland, Texas.

On Sunday evening they arrived in Washington, and Knox went directly to the White House to deliver his report to Roosevelt. The original copy bears a notation in FDR's handwriting: "1941—given me by F.K. 10:00 P.M., Dec. 14, when he landed here from Hawaii. FDR."¹⁵

The next morning Knox returned to the White House. FDR had gone over Knox's report and "written out in pencil a series of points concerning the Pearl Harbor attack which he told Secretary Knox to use at his press conference on the subject." FDR's notes, after deleting matters that an enemy should not be allowed to

¹⁵Beatty 1953 interview cited above, p. 13.

learn, contained “all the information that could then, with the security of the nation at stake, be released to the public.”¹⁶ The Army and Navy “were to assume equal responsibility and blame for the damage caused by the Japanese attack—and for the failure to be prepared for such an attack.”¹⁷

KNOX’S PRESS CONFERENCE

That afternoon 200 newspaper reporters filed into Knox’s office. With FDR’s “pencilled notes” as a guide, Knox issued a formal release and fielded the reporters’ questions.¹⁸ Except for his praise of the performances of U.S. servicemen during the attack, his release bore little resemblance to the report he had made to the president. It began:

My inspection trip to the island enables me to present the general facts covering the attack which hitherto have been unavailable:

1. The essential fact is that the Japanese purpose was to knock out the United States before the war began. This was made apparent by the deception practiced, by the preparations which had gone on for many weeks before the attack, and the attacks themselves, which were made simultaneously throughout the Pacific. In this purpose the Japanese failed.
2. The United States services were not on the alert against the surprise air attack on Hawaii. This fact calls for a formal investigation, which will be initiated immediately by the president. . . . We are all entitled to know it if (a) there was any error of judgment which contributed to the surprise, (b) if there was any dereliction of duty prior to the attack.¹⁹

¹⁶Ibid.

¹⁷Ibid., p.14.

¹⁸*The New York Times*, December 16, 1941, pp. 1, 7.

¹⁹Knox’s formal statement, as published in *ibid.*

Knox went on to name some of the ships that were damaged. He admitted that Army losses were “severe,” and he cited the latest figures on Navy killed and wounded: “officers 91 dead and 20 wounded; enlisted men, 2,638 dead and 636 wounded.” He then described in detail some of the acts of heroism and valor on the part of Navy men in fighting the Japanese and told of remarkably heroic rescues of men from the water after their ships had gone down.

* * * * *

The following important points in the report Knox turned in to the president were specifically omitted in his formal press release:

1. *In spite of the information available in Washington, Kimmel and Short had received no warning from Washington since November 27.* The army had then considered the most imminent threat to be from sabotage. And the navy, warned that southeast Asia was Japan’s likely target, was concerned with the possibility of a submarine attack on the fleet at Pearl Harbor. Most importantly, neither Kimmel nor Short had any “intimation of some surprise move, made clear in Washington, through the interception of Japanese instructions to Nomura . . . by the insistence upon the precise time of Nomura’s reply to Hull, at 1:00 on Sunday,” i.e., 7:30 A.M. in Hawaii.²⁰ For security reasons, of course, the press couldn’t be told that the Japanese instructions had been intercepted and decoded in Washington. But Knox could have admitted, without revealing anything of significance to the Japanese, that it was not astonishing that the Hawaiian commanders had been caught by surprise.

²⁰Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 5, p. 2338. From Knox’s report.

2. *The Army in Hawaii didn't have enough fighter planes for the necessary reconnaissance because of "the diversion of this type [of plane] . . . to the British, the Chinese, the Dutch and the Russians."*²¹

3. *U.S. soldiers and sailors responded to the Japanese attack—within four minutes of the launching of the first Japanese torpedo—and the intensity of their firing increased to such an extent that the third and last wave of Japanese planes "was driven off without getting the attack home."* Although Knox praised the valor of U.S. personnel in fighting back when attacked, he didn't mention the promptness with which they got into action, nor the fact that the intensity of their firing increased to such an extent that the third and last wave of Japanese planes, only an hour and 20 minutes after the first one,²² "was driven off without getting the attack home, no effective hits being made in the harbor."

4. The unsuitability of Pearl Harbor as a site for a large concentration of naval vessels. In his report, Knox raised the question.

In view of the attack and the serious damage inflicted by it, the usefulness and availability of this Naval station must be studied. . . . Pending these studies and the addition of satisfactory safeguards, no large concentration of Naval vessels can be permitted at Pearl Harbor.

Knox recognized that Admiral Richardson had had reasonable grounds for the doubts he had raised with FDR concerning the advisability of holding the fleet at Pearl Harbor.²³

While for security reasons some of these points could not be revealed, it would have been possible to admit (1) surprise, (2) inadequate equipment, (3) prompt retaliation, and (4) previous

²¹Ibid., part 5, p. 2342, from Knox's report on his trip to Hawaii.

²²Ibid., p. 2340. See also Homer N. Wallin, *Pearl Harbor: Why, How, Fleet Salvage and Final Appraisal* (Washington, D.C.: Naval History Division, 1968) pp. 88, 150, 166.

²³Ibid., part 5, p. 2345, from Knox's report on his trip to Hawaii.

errors in judgment, without giving aid or comfort to the enemy. However, such admissions might have led our own people to ask embarrassing questions. For instance, who was responsible for providing the commanders in the field with intelligence? Who had the responsibility for seeing that they were properly warned and adequately equipped and supplied? And why was the fleet headquartered at Pearl Harbor anyway?

Knox said the president would launch a formal investigation into the attack. In response, the two houses of Congress agreed to drop their proposals to conduct their own investigations.²⁴

²⁴*The New York Times*, December 16, 1941, p. 7.

18.

The Cover-up Begins

THE FIRST WEEK AFTER THE ATTACK IN WASHINGTON

After the attack, the efforts of U.S. citizens immediately turned in three directions: (1) to avenge the “dastardly act;” (2) to investigate the damage done by the Japanese; and (3) to understand the reasons for the attack. Among top Washington officials, civil and military, there was a fourth concern, namely to prevent public knowledge of any acts of commission or omission on their part that might have contributed to the tragedy and to conceal any implication of their possible complicity or responsibility for having provoked the attack.

The members of Congress were anxious to learn as much as possible about the Pearl Harbor disaster, and they promptly set the wheels in motion to conduct various investigations. Senator David L. Walsh of Massachusetts and Representative Carl Vinson of Georgia, chairmen respectively of the Senate and House naval affairs committees, met with Admiral Stark on December 8. They asked him just how much damage had actually been done to the

ships at Pearl Harbor.¹ Stark answered by giving exact details: Four ships sunk—the *Arizona*, *California*, *West Virginia*, and *Olgala*—two ships capsized—the *Oklahoma* and the *Utah*—and 12 other ships damaged, some heavily.²

Walsh immediately called a meeting of the Senate Naval Affairs Committee. Senator Harry Flood Byrd of Virginia and several others advised Walsh to go directly to the president. “[A]sk him to tell the truth to the American people.” Walsh “agreed that the truth should be told, but,” as a former member of the America First Committee who had opposed Roosevelt’s foreign policy, he “was hesitant at first to be the one to go to the president with such a request. After further urging, however, he agreed to do so.”³ When Walsh asked FDR to tell the American people the truth about Pearl Harbor, the president “flew into a rage.” He demanded Walsh divulge the source of his information. Walsh acknowledged that “it came directly from the Navy and Admiral Stark.” Roosevelt responded, “Stark should never have given out the facts about Pearl Harbor,” not even to the chairman of the Senate Committee on Naval Affairs. Then referring to the battleships sunk, Roosevelt said, “Why in hell should we admit that they’re sunk? They’re resting in only a couple of feet of water; we’ll raise ‘em!”⁴

On December 10, Walsh publicly acknowledged that President Roosevelt must be the judge of information about war operations to be given to the American public. “For that reason, the committee will make no effort to question naval officials on the extent of ship losses at Pearl Harbor.” He was satisfied, he said, that the

¹*The New York Times*, December 10, 1941, p. 7.

²79th Cong., 1st sess. Joint (Congressional) Committee on the Investigation of the Pearl Harbor Attack. *Pearl Harbor Attack*, 39 vols. (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1946), part 5, p. 2210; part 6, p. 2674.

³Charles A. Lindbergh, *The Wartime Journals of Charles A. Lindbergh* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1970), p. 595.

⁴*Ibid.*, pp. 595–96.

president had told all he could. "The president, as Commander in Chief," Walsh continued, "is in the position of having to determine the line of demarcation between giving as much information as possible to the American public and of refraining from giving information that will be comforting to the enemy."⁵

On December 10, Harry S. Truman, then chairman of the Senate Defense Investigating Committee, announced that his committee "believes that it should not investigate military and naval strategy or tactics" and that therefore "no attempt will be made to inquire into the circumstances of the Japanese surprise attack at Pearl Harbor Sunday."⁶

SQUELCHING RUMORS AND KEEPING WARTIME SECRETS

MAGIC had always been a closely guarded secret, of course, and now it was most imperative, for the sake of the war effort, to keep the Japanese from knowing that their "Purple" code had been broken. As the enormity of the Pearl Harbor catastrophe became apparent, the top Washington officials realized more strongly than ever that they would have to keep the public from learning how much had been known about Japanese affairs in Washington before the attack. Otherwise, they would be asked to explain why, when they had had so much information, the Army and Navy in Hawaii had had so little, and why our military forces in Hawaii had been so poorly prepared. To preserve their own reputations, therefore, Washington officials who had been privy to MAGIC had to maintain its secrecy.

A meeting to discuss Pearl Harbor was held shortly after the attack in the office of the director of Naval Communications, presided over either by Admiral Noyes, director of ONI, or Captain

⁵*The New York Times*, December 11, 1941, p. 15.

⁶*Ibid.*

Redman, assistant director of Naval Communications. A “whispering campaign” against Admiral Kimmel and Admiral Bloch, commandant of the 14th Naval District, Hawaii, “was then getting in full swing.”⁷ Noyes told his subordinates

there were altogether too many rumors running around the Navy Department and people running to the newspapers . . . getting in the newspapers and on the radio . . . saying all manner of things against Admiral Kimmel and Admiral Bloch which were not true, that we had to put a stop to . . . these rumors ourselves, if we knew anything let it die with us . . . and not originate any rumors ourselves.⁸

The section heads were given “standing orders not to talk, not to spread the gossip against Kimmel and Bloch, to keep anything we had to ourselves until we were called to a witness stand to testify officially.” They were told to “pass that word on to [their] subordinates.”⁹ They should

tell all [their] people not to talk, there was too much loose talk going around, that there would undoubtedly be an investigation later and that anybody who had anything to say would be called before that investigation and permitted to say all they had to say, if they had anything to say, and if we had written out anything to destroy it immediately.¹⁰

Anyone who had kept “any notes or anything in writing” should destroy them immediately. If these papers weren’t destroyed, there was a chance “somebody might see them and start something” the note-taker hadn’t intended.¹¹

⁷Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 8, p. 3565.

⁸Ibid., p. 3571.

⁹Ibid., p. 3566.

¹⁰Ibid., p. 3565.

¹¹Ibid., p. 3571.

“We were in an emergency situation and there was panic running through the Navy Department at that particular time.”¹² The order to destroy the papers came down from the office of Chief of Naval Operations Stark. According to Captain Safford, in charge of the Security Section of Naval Communications, it “seemed a perfectly logical and reasonable order”¹³ and he carried it out, passing “that word on to [his] immediate subordinates.”¹⁴ The order applied only to unofficial notes or personal records; the section heads “were not given any instructions to destroy files or any official records.”¹⁵

Concerning security in the Army, General Marshall warned his staff officers shortly after the attack that it was mandatory that knowledge of the MAGIC intercepts never be made public. Marshall told them that they would have to go to their graves with this secret.¹⁶

With respect to Navy security, Stark testified that “anybody who was let in on that [MAGIC] had to sign a paper never to disclose it, practically so long as he lived.” He said, for instance, that his aide during the Pearl Harbor investigations, “Lieutenant Commander Richmond . . . pretty near signed his death warrant, . . . if he were to give anything out about it.”¹⁷

¹²Ibid., part 8, p. 3570. Safford testimony.

¹³Ibid., p. 3570.

¹⁴Ibid., p. 3566.

¹⁵Ibid., p. 3571.

¹⁶An Army officer, who was in a position to know, told this author on two occasions—once in the presence of General Bonner Fellers and a second time in the presence of General Albert C. Wedemeyer—about the vow of secrecy exacted by Marshall from his officers. The Army officer refused to let his name be used lest it jeopardize his son’s Army career.

¹⁷Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 5, p. 2468, Stark testimony before the Joint Committee.

SHORT AND KIMMEL RELIEVED OF THEIR COMMANDS

Action on the relief of Admiral Kimmel and General Short was prompt. Upon Knox's return from Hawaii, he conferred with Stimson. Stimson talked with Marshall. "[A]s a result a decision was reached for the relief of both Kimmel and Short."¹⁸

There was no hint in Knox's report of any misconduct on Kimmel's part, no charges were made; no trial was held. Stark was not consulted beforehand. "[A]fter coming from the White House," Knox directed that Kimmel be relieved. Knox had no discussion with Stark as to the reasons. But Stark said,

A commander in chief would not be removed without the president's permission. . . . I imagine that had been discussed with the president because the future of those two officers [Kimmel and Short] at that time was on a high level.¹⁹

Kimmel's dismissal letter, dated December 16, was from the Secretary of the Navy and bore the initials of Stark and Admiral Nimitz, then Chief of Personnel.²⁰

Secretary of War Stimson discussed Short's situation with Marshall. Short was then promptly relieved of his command "on the direction of the Secretary of War." His dismissal letter, also dated December 16, was signed by General Marshall.²¹

Although relieved of their duties in mid-December, both Kimmel and Short were still in the service awaiting further assignments. They remained in Hawaii.

Kimmel and Short had devoted their lives to preparing themselves to defend the United States. Their efforts and their

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, part 3, p. 1530. Marshall testimony before the Joint Committee.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, part 5, pp. 2430, 2432. Stark testimony before the Joint Committee.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, dispatch to Kimmel, #162105. Admiral Pye was to be Kimmel's temporary relief.

²¹ *Ibid.*, part 3, p. 1529.

accomplishments over the years had earned them respect and advancement to positions in the military hierarchy. Kimmel and Short had been given no indication that their actions had not been completely honest and honorable. Yet at the very moment when trained and experienced men were in greatest demand they were abruptly relieved of their commands—without any charges having been made, without a hearing, without having had a chance to face their accusers, and without an opportunity to defend themselves.

PRESSURE FOR AN INVESTIGATION

Senator Tom Connally of Texas, chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, called for a thorough investigation of the leadership at Hawaii. He said,

the statement of the Secretary of the Navy that neither the Army nor the Navy were on the alert at Hawaii . . . is astounding. It is almost unbelievable. . . . The naval commander and Army general should be vigorously investigated.

Theirs is a responsibility and it ought to be determined whether either or both are inefficient or criminally negligent. They must be one or the other. I have always been a big Navy man. . . . I am pained and grieved at its seeming failure of its high duty.²²

At his press conference following his own investigation, Knox had avoided potentially damaging statements. Still questions would undoubtedly be asked as to why the military forces at Pearl Harbor had not been better provided with planes and anti-aircraft artillery. Why had they not been more adequately supplied with intelligence? And why had the Navy been based in such a vulnerable position far from our shores? It was becoming obvious that if

²²*The New York Times*, December 16, 1941, p. 7.

the administration was to retain its good name, an official investigation would have to be arranged to answer such questions.

Less than 24 hours before the Japanese attack, the Navy Department had announced that the U.S. fleet was second to none. Yet now many of its ships had been sunk or set ablaze and were resting in the mud at the bottom of Pearl Harbor. More than 2,500 officers and enlisted men were dead and 650 more were wounded.²³ Why had seasoned Army and Navy officers, who had spent lifetimes preparing to defend the nation, been taken so completely by surprise? Why had they been caught with their defenses down? Why had they been so ill-prepared? The people were entitled to answers.

Any tragedy, especially one of this magnitude, leads to recriminations and doubts. Many of the individuals involved, directly or indirectly, with the Pearl Harbor disaster must have had second thoughts about whether things might have turned out differently if only they had followed another path. Certainly the Pearl Harbor commanders themselves must have wished they could turn back the clock and have a second chance. Admiral Kimmel, for one, confessed after the attack that he wished he “had taken the other course” when offered the promotion to commander-in-chief.²⁴

Undoubtedly some Washington officials must have also had doubts about whether they had followed the correct path. Suppose they had tried to ameliorate Japanese-U.S. relations instead of aggravating them? Also, given what they knew in Washington about the likelihood of Japanese aggression, could they have done a better job of alerting and provisioning the field commands for defending themselves?

At President Roosevelt’s direction, “with the security of the nation at stake,” most of Secretary Knox’s findings on his trip to Hawaii had been withheld from the public. Of course, we

²³Ibid., p. 1.

²⁴Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 22, p.359, Kimmel testimony.

cannot know whom Knox really considered responsible, but one admiral, William H. Standley, commented that he thought Knox was “very sensitive of the failure of the Navy Department and of himself properly to alert the Commander-in-Chief in Pearl Harbor.” Knox appeared “conscious of his share in the blame for the surprise at Pearl Harbor.”²⁵

The Japanese “One P.M. Message,” which had sparked Marshall’s last minute December 7 dispatch, had been intercepted early in the morning of December 7. But apparently it wasn’t decoded and ready for delivery until about 9:00 A.M. Army courier Colonel Bratton said he had it “about 9:00 or shortly before.” He had then tried desperately to reach Army Chief of Staff Marshall. Captain McCollum testified that Navy courier Kramer had brought it to him just before 9:30 A.M. and that he, McCollum, had then handed it to Chief of Naval Operations Stark. Stark had apparently phoned FDR, but taken no further action. According to some reports, Marshall was with Stark in his office sometime that morning. Still nothing was done. Apparently no special action was taken on the “One P.M. Message” until after 11:25 A.M., when Marshall arrived in his office and Bratton was finally able to deliver it to him personally. Marshall did not read it until after reading the other Japanese messages that awaited him. Only then did Marshall draft his message advising the field commanders of the 1:00 P.M. delivery time for the Japanese reply to the U.S. note of November 26. By the time these warning messages had been encoded and sent to Manila, Pearl Harbor, etc., it was 11:58 A.M.

After the attack Marshall must have felt uneasy. He began that very afternoon to check on the disposition of his last-minute message to his field commanders; he asked for an “immediate report on the delivery of that message.” Lieutenant Colonel Edward F. French of the U.S. Army’s Signal Corps wired a

²⁵William H. Standley and Arthur A. Ageton, *Admiral Ambassador to Russia* (Chicago: Henry Regnery, 1955), pp.82, 83.

follow-up “service message” trying to track down when that message to Pearl Harbor had been delivered and to whom. It had gone to San Francisco by Western Union, which had “a tube running across the street to the R.C.A.” From there it had gone via RCA’s powerful transmitter to Hawaii. According to French, that was “the quickest means” at his disposal at the time. French told Western Union that he wanted “to know whose hands that message got into.” This inquiry “went on late until the night, and 2:00 in the morning we hadn’t as yet received the reply.” French also “talked to the signal officer over there [in Hawaii] . . . on the wire and told him it was imperative that [French] inform General Marshall as to who received that message.”²⁶

To track Marshall’s message, Washington wired officials in Hawaii on December 9 asking them to

advise immediately exact time of receipt of our number five two nine [Marshall’s message]. . . . December seven at Honolulu exact time deciphered message transmitted by Signal Corps to staff and by what staff officer received.

Hawaii’s reply on December 9, signed by General Short, stated that the message was delivered to Honolulu, downtown, via RCA at 7:33 A.M. of the 7th, received, still in code, at the Signal Office, Fort Shafter, at about 11:45 A.M. It had then still to be deciphered, and it didn’t reach the adjutant general until 2:58 P.M. in the afternoon.²⁷

Many other principals concerned with the nation’s defenses may also have had doubts and questions concerning the responsibility for the disaster. Some of them undoubtedly looked on the prospects of a formal investigation with mixed emotions.

²⁶Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 23, p. 1104, French testimony.

²⁷*Ibid.*, part 24, p. 1828.

19.

The Administration Initiates an Investigation

ROBERTS COMMISSION APPOINTED

On December 16 the president named a five-man board, with Supreme Court Justice Owen J. Roberts as chairman, to investigate the attack. In addition to Roberts, it included two retired Navy officers, one retired and one active Army officer.¹ According to Admiral William H. Standley, former chief of naval operations and a member of the Commission, FDR “hand-picked” the other four members in consultation with Stimson, Marshall, and possibly Knox, so that a majority could be trusted to conclude “that Short and Kimmel were primarily responsible for the Pearl Harbor disaster.”²

The Commission’s assignment was to decide “whether any derelictions of duty or errors of judgment on the part of United States Army or Navy personnel contributed to such successes as were achieved by the enemy.” If any such derelictions or errors

¹*The New York Times*, December 17, 1941, p. 9.

²William H. Standley, Admiral (USN, Ret.) June 1, 1962, interview by Harry Elmer Barnes, p. 7; notes in author’s possession.

were found, it was to determine “who were responsible therefor.”³ The Commission’s authority was *limited to investigating Army and Navy personnel only*; no civilian personnel.

THE COMMISSION BEGINS HEARINGS

The Commission convened in Washington December 17, with only four of its five members present. When Admiral Standley arrived the next day, he found the Commission to be a “mixed”—and a very mixed up—Presidential commission “with civilian, naval and military members, for which there was no precedent in law, custom or jurisprudence.” He was “shocked at the irregularity of the procedure of the Commission and of the reliance placed upon unsworn testimony.”⁴ It was “empowered to prescribe its own procedure” but as originally set up, “it did not have the legal power to do anything which would be usual and essential to carry out the purposes for which it had been formed”⁵—to summon witnesses, enforce their attendance, administer oaths, or take testimony. Standley protested at this lack of formal authority.⁶

WASHINGTON TESTIMONY—UNSWORN

The Commission members knew nothing of pre-attack events except what they had read in the newspapers. They began by questioning top military officials on the Washington situation. None

³79th Cong., 1st sess. Joint (Congressional) Committee on the Investigation of the Pearl Harbor Attack. *Pearl Harbor Attack*, 39 vols. (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1946), part 5, p. 2210; part 23, p. 1247; part 24, p. 1306.

⁴William H. Standley and Arthur A. Ageton, *Admiral Ambassador to Russia* (Chicago: Henry Regnery, 1955), pp. 81–82. See also Standley interview in *U.S. News & World Report*, April 16, 1954, pp. 40–46.

⁵Standley, Barnes June 1, 1962 interview, p. 8.

⁶Standley, *U.S. News & World Report*, April 16, 1954.

of the officers was sworn. Nor were they cross-examined. No transcripts, only brief summaries, of their remarks were published.⁷

Secretary of State Hull had agreed to advise the Commission by letter as to warnings of probable Japanese attack he had received from Stimson and Knox.⁸ The secretaries of war and navy, interviewed jointly by the Commission members, offered “the fullest cooperation of their Departments.” General Marshall and Admiral Stark

appeared together . . . and furnished information . . . showing that [Kimmel and Short] . . . had been specifically warned of the likelihood of a probable outbreak of war . . . on October 16, November 24, and November 27, 1941.⁹

General Marshall related “informative or warning messages sent to the Commanding General of the Hawaiian Department,” including his December 7 message to General Short which had been dispatched “on the morning of December 7” but which had not reached Short in Hawaii until after the attack.¹⁰

The tenor of this unsworn testimony was that Washington had been fully alert to the possibility of a surprise Japanese attack and of “sudden raids” on Pearl Harbor. Stark was obliged to admit, however, that all the warnings sent out from Washington to the fleet commanders in the months before the attack concerning the possibility of “attacks and expeditions against positions in the Far East” conveyed the idea that both he and Marshall believed “the Far East would be the locality where the major sustained

⁷Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 24, pp. 1355–61. “Precis of Testimony.”

⁸*Ibid.*, part 23, p. 1245.

⁹*Ibid.*, p. 1246.

¹⁰*Ibid.*, pp. 1, 2. See also *ibid.*, part 14, pp. 1409–10 (Exhibit No. 39), memorandum prepared for the record by L.T. Gerow and W.B. Smith regarding Marshall’s December 7, 1941 warning.

Japanese effort would be initiated.” Hawaii was “not specifically mentioned as a point of attack.”¹¹

The director of Naval Intelligence Division acknowledged that “secret information” had been received in Washington leading the Navy to conclude in November “that the Japanese were contemplating an early attack.” According to him, “[c]are was taken . . . to see that these two officers [Kimmel in Hawaii and Admiral Hart in the Philippines] were kept fully advised as to developments.”¹² So he assumed that they had been sent this information.

PEARL HARBOR TESTIMONY UNDER OATH

On completion of the Washington testimony, the members of the Commission flew to Pearl Harbor. By then, Congress had approved a joint resolution granting the Commission power to conduct a proper investigation and authorizing it to “administer oaths and affirmations, examine witnesses, and receive evidence.”¹³ Thus, the military officers in Hawaii testified *under oath*. Both Short and Kimmel were still in the service, although they had been relieved of their respective commands on December 16, shortly after the attack. Short’s staff was available to help him; Kimmel’s staff had put to sea with the fleet, so he had little help in preparing his testimony.¹⁴

HAWAII SWORN TESTIMONY: RESPONSIBILITY

According to the plan then in effect, Army and Navy coordinated their operations for the defense of Pearl Harbor. The three principals—Kimmel, Bloch, and Short—had been “very frank with each other,” “talked things over,” and Short believed they

¹¹Ibid., part 23, p. 1357. Brief of Admiral Stark’s Testimony.

¹²Ibid., part 23, p. 1361. Statement by Captain T. S. Wilkinson.

¹³Ibid., part 24, pp. 1307–08.

¹⁴Standley and Agerton, *Admiral Ambassador*, pp. 83–84.

had enjoyed “closer cooperation in the last eight or ten months than . . . ever . . . before.”¹⁵

Testimony revealed clearly that responsibility for the protection of Pearl Harbor’s shore-based establishments rested on the Army and Navy jointly.¹⁶ The Army’s role was basically to defend onshore establishments, the naval base, and the fleet when it was in harbor. The Navy’s responsibility was offensive, to support the Army by operations at sea. The Navy was not responsible for the defense of the base in case of an air raid, but, it was “responsible for the naval elements that could be made available [to the Army and the Army Air Force] for the defense of Pearl Harbor.”¹⁷ Kimmel was not included in the joint Army-Navy plan for defending the base’s onshore establishments; he fully “expected when the fight came on that he wouldn’t be down here in the harbor; that he would be on the high seas fighting.”¹⁸ According to him, the fleet was to have freedom of action, to “go and come without being concerned about the safety . . . [except for] the broader strategy of operations.”¹⁹ As Kimmel put it, “a Fleet base is a haven for refit, supply, and for rest and recreation of personnel after arduous duties and strenuous operations at sea.”²⁰ Pearl Harbor’s defense was in the hands of the Army.

The Navy’s aircraft carriers were of special concern. Planes could not take off from a docked carrier, so when in port, both carrier and any planes “would be vulnerable . . . to attack and . . . destruction.”²¹ For safety’s sake, when in harbor, carrier aircraft

¹⁵Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 22, p.55.

¹⁶*Ibid.*, part 22, p. 11, testimony of Major William S. Lawton, general staff corps liaison officer with the Navy, in charge of joint Army-Navy activities.

¹⁷*Ibid.*, part 23, p. 1149. Kimmel testimony; part 22, pp. 10–11. Kimmel memorandum of December 21, 1941; part 23, 1211 Kimmel testimony.

¹⁸*Ibid.*, part 22, p. 55. Short testimony.

¹⁹*Ibid.*, part 23, pp. 1129–34.

²⁰*Ibid.*, part 23, p. 1129.

²¹*Ibid.*, part 23, pp. 1217–18.

were flown off their mother ships. Thus, the Navy “require[d] shore air bases for the use of carrier aircraft in order to maintain them in a proper state of training for war readiness”²² and so that “in event of being caught in port those planes could be useful.” Those shore air bases, also needed to outfit the carrier planes with bombs and ammunition, were an Army responsibility. When the planes assigned to carriers or to the Marines were “shore based,” they came under the commander Fleet Air Detachment.²³ Air combat, Army pursuit airplanes, antiaircraft artillery, and the Aircraft Warning Service (radar) were under the command of the Army’s interceptor commander.²⁴ Radar, still in its infancy in 1941, was not fully operational on the morning of December 7; it was then “operating for drill purposes only.”²⁵

HAWAII SWORN TESTIMONY: THE SURPRISE ELEMENT

Knox, recalling eleven-month old correspondence between him and Stimson, considered an air bombing attack or an air torpedo plane attack the greatest potential dangers and urged Stimson to have the Army improve Pearl Harbor’s readiness to meet such attacks.²⁶ Stimson assured Knox that the Hawaiian Department “is the best equipped of all our overseas departments,” and he was working to further improve its defensive capabilities: new pursuit planes had been promised; Aircraft Warning Service equipment and barrage balloons were on order.²⁷

²²Ibid., part 23, p. 1218; part 24, p. 1564. From Report of Army-Navy Board, October 31, 1941.

²³Ibid., part 23, pp. 554–55. Bellinger testimony.

²⁴Ibid., part 22, p. 40. Short testimony.

²⁵Ibid., part 23, p.1209.

²⁶Ibid., 1092–94. Correspondence of January 24, 1941.

²⁷Stimson memorandum, February 7, 1941. Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 23, pp. 1094–95.

Bloch, who had once held Kimmel's position as commander-in-chief of the fleet, said that the possibility of a Japanese air raid on Pearl Harbor had always been "a consideration, but in all estimates of the situation that [he was] familiar with . . . it was considered remote."²⁸ Nevertheless, in March Major General F. L. Martin, commander of the Army's Hawaiian Air Force, and Rear Admiral P. N. L. Bellinger, commander of the Navy's Naval Base Defense Air Force, had examined the prospects of an attack on the fleet in Hawaii:²⁹

[T]he most likely and dangerous form of attack on Oahu would be an air attack . . . launched from one or more carriers. . . . In a dawn air attack there is a high probability that it could be delivered as a complete surprise in spite of any patrols we might be using and that it might find us in a condition of readiness under which pursuit would be slow to start.

The two commanders recommended "daily patrols as far as possible to seaward through 360 degrees to reduce the probabilities of surface or air surprise." However, they realized that this

can only be effectively maintained with present personnel and material for a very short period and as a practicable measure cannot, therefore, be undertaken *unless other intelligence indicates that a surface raid is probable within rather narrow time limits*.³⁰

"Distant reconnaissance," a Navy responsibility, was generally acknowledged to be the best assurance against an approaching surprise attack. However, Bloch reported that reconnaissance planes were in serious short supply on the islands. It was estimated

²⁸Ibid., part 22, pp. 460–61, Bloch testimony.

²⁹Ibid., part 23, pp. 1144–48. Martin-Bellinger memo, March 31, 1941.

³⁰Ibid., p. 1145 (emphasis added).

that to patrol 360 degrees continually would have required 200-300 planes.³¹ “On paper,” Bloch testified,

[he] had been given 108 patrol planes for that specific purpose [distant reconnaissance], none of which had ever arrived; not one of them.³² . . . We had a plane-building program, and on that plane-building program the assignment of the 14th Naval District was nine squadrons of patrol planes and two squadrons of observation planes, and they were the District forces that were supposed to do this reconnaissance, but there were none of them ever delivered here because they hadn't been built.³³

Twenty-four of Oahu's 72 patrol bombers were then out with the task forces Kimmel had sent to reinforce the bases on Wake and Midway. Only 36 planes were still at Oahu, 12 of which were under overhaul. There were nowhere nearly enough planes in Hawaii to carry out any distant reconnaissance.³⁴ Bloch related his experience in 1938, when he had been commander-in-chief of the U.S. Fleet. “They endeavored to make the 360-degree search with the planes they had, and we had a tremendous number of casualties.” In a few days they “lost something like four or five planes, and two of them lost all the crews.” They lost the other planes that went down, but recovered the personnel. The lesson from this maneuver was that

to conduct a search efficiently and to maintain it required a large number of planes, and they had to be operated more or less day on and day off, so that one day they [the crews] would go out; the next day they could rest. In other words the strain on the personnel was greater than it was on the matériel.³⁵

³¹Ibid., part 23, pp. 1134, 1183. Kimmel testimony.

³²Ibid., part 22, p. 460. Bloch testimony.

³³Ibid., pp. 469–70. Bloch testimony.

³⁴Ibid., p. 487. Kimmel testimony.

³⁵Ibid., p. 466. Bloch testimony.

The Navy under Kimmel had been diligent in conducting reconnaissance, mainly anti-submarine patrols, covering the 25 to 50 mile belt around the island that the available planes could cover.³⁶ However, Kimmel admitted that he had considered an air attack “highly improbable” and patrols to the northward not justified. Had he had warning that an air attack was anywhere near probable, he said, “I would have used everything we had, everything.”³⁷ But given the state of the planes, it seemed more prudent to conserve them for action in the war that was anticipated.

In addition to considering the likelihood of submarine and air attacks, the Navy had also considered the possibility of a torpedo attack. However, this threat had generally been discounted because of the shallowness of the approach to Pearl Harbor.³⁸ So “the use of [anti-torpedo] baffles for Pearl Harbor or other harbors in the Fourteenth Naval District” was not recommended.³⁹ In June, the Navy Department again concluded that a torpedo plane attack in Pearl Harbor’s relatively shallow water was unlikely. In any event, no anti-torpedo baffles were installed.

There had been “gossip in the newspapers in the States” to the effect that there had been “a lot of drinking and that some in the high command were not fit for duty” on Sunday morning, December 7.⁴⁰ Both Kimmel and his aide, Admiral Theobald, denied that drunkenness was a contributing factor; “no liquor is allowed on board ship.”⁴¹ According to Kimmel, there had been “very little drunkenness among the officers and men of this fleet. We have dealt very seriously with the incidents which were

³⁶Ibid., p. 462. Bloch testimony.

³⁷Ibid., part 23, p. 1183. Kimmel testimony.

³⁸Ibid., p. 1137.

³⁹Ibid., p. 1139.

⁴⁰Ibid., p. 1236.

⁴¹Ibid., p. 1235.

reported by the patrol, and they have been isolated instances.”⁴² Nor was Kimmel “conscious . . . of the special dangers of a Sunday,”⁴³ when more passes and leaves were issued on Saturdays and fewer men and officers were apt to be aboard ship, alert, and ready for action. There were not “appreciably more” absences of officers and men on Sunday than on any other day. True, some commanding officers were ashore, but that depended on whether or not their families were in Hawaii. There were “a great many officers here who had no families, and they slept on board,” so if there were fewer officers aboard it was “not entirely” due to its being a weekend.⁴⁴

HAWAII SWORN TESTIMONY: PREPAREDNESS

As Admiral Richardson prepared to relinquish command of the U.S. Pacific Fleet in January 1941, he and Kimmel, who was preparing to take over command, collaborated in a letter to Chief of Naval Operations Stark, concerning the security measures required “for the protection of Fleet units, at sea and in port.” “Surprise raids on Pearl Harbor, or attempts to block the channel,” they wrote, were “possible.” The fleet was “severely handicapped” in preparing for such contingencies by “certain marked deficiencies in the existing local defense forces and equipment both Army and Navy.” Moreover, many of the fleet’s facilities were obsolescent. Richardson and Kimmel urged that correcting these “critical deficiencies” be given “priority over the needs of continental districts, the training program, and material aid to Great Britain.”⁴⁵

Short, who was responsible for the protection of the fleet when in Pearl Harbor, said it was “practically impossible to protect the

⁴²Ibid., part 23, p. 1236.

⁴³Ibid., p. 1184.

⁴⁴Ibid., p. 1185. Kimmel testimony.

⁴⁵Ibid., part 22, pp. 329–31.

ships in such a restricted area against a serious attack, no matter how much you tried.” With so many ships docked so close together, he could not have guaranteed that no enemy plane could get in and make a hit; some “would be bound to suffer losses.”⁴⁶

Throughout 1941, the Hawaiian commanders—Kimmel, Short, and Bloch—had pressed repeatedly for additional men and equipment. They received *some* reinforcements but these failed to build up the Hawaiian forces as hoped, as other factors were steadily eroding them. Regular and experienced officers were being “detached at an alarming rate,” and many trained enlisted men were not planning to reenlist when their duty was up.⁴⁷ In May 1941, about a quarter of the Pacific Fleet’s ships had been transferred to the Atlantic on orders from Washington. Moreover, relatively few of the new planes, men, and guns that reached Hawaii remained there; most continued on to the west. The Army was “engaged in ferrying . . . planes to the Asiatics.”⁴⁸ Long-range patrol bombers were being flown to the Philippines via Hawaii, Midway, Wake, and Australia.

Over and above the Army’s defensive role at Pearl Harbor, the Army air corps “had a very specific mission . . . of preparing . . . combat teams to ferry planes [B-17s] to the Philippines.” No one can just step into the cockpit of a B-17, a Flying Fortress, from his training ship and immediately fly it across the Pacific. A pilot must first train on B-18s and A-20s, and then serve as a B-17 copilot, before taking over as a full-fledged B-17 pilot. It would have been risky to send a plane across the Pacific with a half-trained crew, and Short had only six bombers at his disposal to do all this training. Short couldn’t (1) use these six bombers for training pilots for ferrying missions, and at the same time (2) turn them over to the Navy for long-range reconnaissance,

⁴⁶Ibid., part 22, p. 104. Short testimony.

⁴⁷Ibid., part 23, p. 1155. Kimmel memo to CNO, May 26, 1941.

⁴⁸Ibid., p. 1151. Kimmel testimony.

and also (3) keep them scattered about, warmed up 24 hours a day, and ready to take to the air. He didn't have enough planes to accomplish both (1) and (2), and he hadn't considered the threat serious enough to justify (3).⁴⁹

On October 17 Stark had wired Kimmel:

Because of the great importance of continuing to reenforce the Philippines with long range Army bombers you are requested to take all practical precautions for the safety of the airfields at Wake and Midway.⁵⁰

The plan was to ferry some 60 long-range bombers out to the Philippines via Hawaii and Wake. As Kimmel was "responsible for the defense of Wake and for the defense of Midway and for putting Marines and guns and all other defensive weapons out there,"⁵¹ he proceeded to strengthen their defenses as best he could.

The "war warning" message of November 27 had instructed Kimmel to carry out "the tasks assigned in WPL 46," that is, to get ready to attack the Japanese bases in the Marshall Island.⁵² Two other dispatches on that same day ordered him to prepare troops for our advance bases and to transport 25 Army pursuit planes with ground crews to Wake and Midway. "Stationing these planes [on Wake and Midway] must not be allowed to interfere with planned movements of Army bombers to Philippines."⁵³ Kimmel realized the Army was short of planes. Shortly before reinforcing Wake and Midway he had wanted the Army to participate in Navy maneuvers, but the Army "could not do it because they were engaged in ferrying these planes to the Asiatics, and in

⁴⁹Ibid., part 22, p. 76. Short testimony.

⁵⁰Ibid., part 14, p. 1403. From CNO to CINCPAC, #171458.

⁵¹Ibid., part 23, p. 1240. Kimmel testimony.

⁵²Ibid., part 6, p. 2518.

⁵³Ibid.

getting their planes in a ferrying condition here. . . . They had their problems too,” Kimmel said.⁵⁴ Short and Kimmel met with staff members on November 27 to discuss the transfer from Oahu of 25 pursuit planes each to Wake and Midway, as Washington had ordered.⁵⁵ Kimmel questioned his war plans officer: “[W]hat is your idea of the chances of a surprise raid on Oahu?” McMorris: “I should say none, Admiral.” At the time, Short said,

[T]here was no exception taken to that statement by either Admiral Kimmel or Admiral Bloch, and apparently the Navy felt that they had definite information of the location of carriers and major ships of the Japanese and that there was no question in their minds of the possibility or probability of a surprise attack upon Oahu.⁵⁶

The construction of the airfields on Wake and Midway had to be carried out “under the most adverse conditions. We were faced with the necessity of building bases and of protecting them at the same time.” The dispatch of reinforcements there would seriously weaken Hawaii’s defensive forces. It was finally decided to send only half the number of planes Washington had suggested. “Rightly or wrongly,” Kimmel testified, “we eventually had there about 350 marines and 6 5-inch guns and 12 3-inch guns and a number of machine guns, and we had 12 fighting planes there.”⁵⁷

On November 28 Kimmel dispatched a convoy, under Admiral William F. Halsey, with men and planes to Wake. Because “there had been a warning from the Chief of Naval Operations that the conversations with the Japanese representatives were about to break down, and to be prepared for eventualities,” all the ships

⁵⁴Ibid., part 23, p. 1151.

⁵⁵Ibid., part 22, p. 43.

⁵⁶Ibid., part 22, p. 43. Short testimony.

⁵⁷Ibid., part 23, p. 1190. Kimmel testimony.

in Halsey's convoy were "to assume a condition of readiness for instant combat" and to maintain "strict radio silence."⁵⁸

On December 5 Kimmel sent out a second convoy under Admiral J.H. Newton, with a squadron of planes bound for Midway.⁵⁹

Bloch, who had taken over the responsibility for the security of the base, had written the Navy Department about "the weakness in the pursuit planes, bombing planes, and anti-aircraft guns." The Army had dispatched to Hawaii a large number of pursuit planes and some heavy bombers, but "no anti-aircraft guns [were] forthcoming."⁶⁰ When Bloch pressed his need for planes and vessels, he was told they were "doing everything within their power to get them" and would send them as soon as they could.⁶¹ As a result of Bloch's efforts, Pearl Harbor finally obtained "one division of destroyers, four destroyers, only one of which has any listening gear, and one division of four mine sweepers." In accordance with Kimmel's order, the destroyers were stationed at the harbor entrance; the mine sweepers swept the channel; the nets were operating; and boom and harbor patrols were executed. However, "anti-aircraft protection of Pearl Harbor was weak." Bloch was also charged "on paper" with the responsibility for distant reconnaissance; 108 patrol planes had been promised for that purpose, "none of which had ever arrived; not one of them."⁶²

Before December 7 Short received three serious warning messages from Washington—October 16, November 27, and November 28.⁶³ All three messages

⁵⁸Ibid., part 23, p. 608. Halsey testimony.

⁵⁹Ibid., p. 1166. Kimmel.

⁶⁰Ibid., part 22, p. 471. Bloch testimony.

⁶¹Ibid., pp. 461, 469. Bloch testimony.

⁶²Ibid., p. 469. Bloch testimony.

⁶³Ibid., p. 39. Short testimony.

emphasized right straight through that we must not disclose our stand and that we must not alarm the population and that we must take measures to protect against sabotage, against espionage, and against subversive action. Nowhere did they indicate in any way the necessity for protecting against attack. They also did indicate definitely that we must avoid publicity and avoid alarming the public.⁶⁴

Short instituted what was known as Alert #1, for sabotage. If the Army had gone to the next higher alert, Alert #2, all anti-aircraft guns would have been set out with live ammunition right alongside; people would then have noticed. And that, Short maintained, would have violated “the War Department’s intentions to not alarm the population.”⁶⁵ On November 29 he detailed the “precautions” being taken against “subversive activities.”⁶⁶ Washington “made no objection whatever” to Short’s report that he “was alerted for sabotage.” Short told the Commission,

If they had any idea that that was not a correct order, they had all the opportunity from November 27 to December 7 to come back and say, “We do not consider the action taken by you as sufficient and that you should instead take action to defend yourself against air attack”.

He took Washington’s failure to object to his action as “tacit agreement with the course [he] had taken.” He did not “see how [he] could draw any other conclusion.”⁶⁷

Short believed that if Washington really wanted him to know something urgently, it would have contacted him by its speech-scrambler telephone. Short had a “secret phone . . . with connections to the secret phone right in the Chief of Staff’s office.”

⁶⁴Ibid., p. 39, p. 58. Short testimony.

⁶⁵Ibid., part 24, pp. 1774–76.

⁶⁶Ibid., part 22, p. 39.

⁶⁷Ibid., pp. 45–48.

Short had talked with Marshall “repeatedly” on this telephone, which was “the fastest thing that could possibly come through,” taking only about 15 minutes to establish contact. While “not considered as safe as code, they [scrambler phones] are reasonably safe.”⁶⁸ Washington didn’t phone Short with a special warning between November 27 and December 7.

The Office of Navy Intelligence’s (ONI) December 5 summary of the Japanese naval situation reported that “extensive preparations are under way for hostilities.” Troop transports and freighters were “pouring continually down from Japan and northern China coast ports headed south, apparently for French Indo-China and Formosan ports.”⁶⁹ And the intelligence Kimmel and Short received from Washington during this period indicated that the Japanese forces were heading for southeast Asia and were expected to strike in the very far west at the Philippines, Thailand, the Kra peninsula, or possibly Borneo,⁷⁰ about 3,000 miles from Hawaii.

Both Kimmel and Short had prepared contingency plans, detailing what to do in case they were attacked. Kimmel “was by no means convinced that we were going to get into the war at this time and that we would become involved immediately. That was, of course,” he said, “[his] mistake.”⁷¹ Nevertheless, he had made plans for going to war. From November 30 on, he had prepared daily memoranda “to show what the initial steps would be when war would come.” On the morning of December 6 Kimmel had gone over his December 5 memorandum, which had set forth the “steps to be taken in case of American-Japanese war.” He said

⁶⁸Ibid., p. 48.

⁶⁹Ibid., part 23, pp. 1152–53. ONI December 1, 1941 report of Japanese Naval Situation.

⁷⁰Ibid.

⁷¹Ibid., p. 1167.

they “were alive to the possibility of war.”⁷² “[I]n accordance with the security measures we had in effect,” he pointed out, Patrol Wing 2 did not have to wait for specific instructions; it set out immediately after the attack began to search for the enemy.⁷³

HAWAII SWORN TESTIMONY: INTELLIGENCE

The members of the Roberts Commission learned from witness after witness about the intelligence available to the Hawaiian commanders. It came principally from four sources: (1) observation, (2) deciphering of some minor Japanese codes, “PA-K2,” (3) direction-finding (D.F.) stations that analyzed radio beams broadcast from Japanese ships, and (4) advice forwarded from the ONI and chief of naval operations (CNO) in Washington.

Responsibility for intelligence in Hawaii was divided between two authorities: the Combat Intelligence Unit, concerned primarily with “the functions of the enemy . . . and . . . enemy movements,” and the District Intelligence Officer, who “has more to do with defense. . . . Subversive activities, aliens, sabotage, and that sort of thing.”⁷⁴ Commander Joseph John Rochefort of Combat Intelligence tried “to cover every possible transmission . . . by the Germans, Italians, Japanese” through his D.F. stations and his interceptor watch, which “intercepts enemy transmissions in the form of radio messages and copies the radio messages intact.” His operators were able to pick up transmissions from Tokyo and the Japanese fleet. Then there was also the “search watch,” which searched “from the bottom of the [radio] band to the top.”⁷⁵ To discover what the Japanese fleet was doing, the intelligence officers in Hawaii did their best to piece together what they could learn from the intercepted radio transmissions, radio beams, and

⁷²Ibid., p. 1167.

⁷³Ibid., p. 1129.

⁷⁴Ibid., part 22, pp. 673, 676–77. Rochefort testimony.

⁷⁵Ibid., pp. 677–78.

their search watch. Otherwise, all they knew of the impending crisis, except for the Washington dispatches reporting Japanese ship movements in the vicinity of the South China Sea, was gleaned from the Honolulu newspapers. And according to press reports, the threat appeared to have abated temporarily; Japanese-U.S. conversations in Washington were continuing.

From about November 1 on, Hawaiian Intelligence personnel realized something was afoot. They couldn't put their fingers on it exactly, but it was apparent that something was building up, just as it had been several years earlier, when the Japanese were preparing to move against the Chinese island of Hainan, and again in the spring of 1941, when they were getting ready to go into Indochina.

About November 25 or 26, it became apparent that Japanese submarines and aircraft carriers, and probably a battleship division, were concentrated in the Marshall Island area, south of Wake. By the end of the month it looked as if everything, except for some ships still in the Marshalls, was west of that, down around Palao, not far from the Philippines. This formation just didn't seem logical, but Hawaiian Intelligence was positive, from their study of the traffic, that the carriers were in the Marshalls. So they sent a dispatch to this effect to the Navy Department in Washington.

About a day after that the carriers just completely dropped from sight; never heard another word from them. . . . [T]hey just completely dropped out of the picture approximately the first of December; battleships likewise.⁷⁶

Fleet Intelligence Officer Lieutenant Commander Edwin Thomas Layton estimated they were in port, having completed

⁷⁶Ibid., pp. 677–78.

two weeks' operations, and they are having an overhaul for new operations.⁷⁷

In addition to the traffic buildup, Hawaiian Intelligence had another hint of impending Japanese action—the fleet's frequent code changes in late 1941. The Japanese normally changed their sea and shore calls twice a year, on the first of November and the first of March or April. But in 1941 they didn't wait for November. They changed their codes a month early, on October 1. Then they changed them again on November 1, and still again on December 1.⁷⁸ The Japanese were apparently planning something. But what? Where? When? The Army's Hawaiian department relied on information supplied by the Fourteenth Naval District, the War Department's G-2 in Washington, which got its information through ONI.⁷⁹

Members of the Roberts Commission asked again and again why the Hawaiian forces were surprised so completely. The intelligence that reached Hawaii from Washington in the weeks and months preceding December 7, 1941, warned repeatedly that a strike was expected in southeast Asia, thousands of miles from Pearl Harbor. Kimmel summarized: "And the Department by their dispatches evidenced considerable concern about the security of their outlying bases." Even Commission chairman Roberts admitted that "anyone who reads those telegrams will see that the Naval Intelligence indicated aggressive movements many thousand miles from Pearl Harbor."⁸⁰ The buildup of Hawaii's defenses had been neglected at the expense of other theaters of

⁷⁷Ibid., part 23, p. 679. Rochefort testimony. See also part 22, p. 664. Layton testimony. And Edwin T. Layton, Roger Pineau, and John Costello, *And I Was There: Pearl Harbor and Midway—Breaking the Secrets* (New York: W. Morrow, 1985), pp. 228–30.

⁷⁸Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 23, p. 679. Rochefort testimony.

⁷⁹Ibid., part 23, p. 1238.

⁸⁰Ibid., p. 1238. Chairman Roberts.

war, as Kimmel had noted. Repeated requests by the Hawaiian commanders for more men and materiel had been ignored.

POST-ATTACK REVELATIONS IN HAWAII

Immediately after the attack, officials of the F.B.I. entered the Japanese consulate in Honolulu. They interrupted the burning of papers, arrested the consul, and seized Japanese codes and papers. Short said, "They got almost a complete file."⁸¹ With the help of these codes, the Navy was soon able to decipher communications which had passed between Tokyo and the Japanese consul in the weeks preceding the attack. These captured communications undoubtedly included the "ships in harbor" messages that had been intercepted in Hawaii before the attack, forwarded still in code by airmail on Washington's orders, then decoded, translated, and made available before December 7 to Washington officials, —though not to the Hawaiian commanders.

On December 9, Kimmel saw translations of these messages. They made it very clear that Tokyo had attached special importance to information concerning the location of ships in Pearl Harbor. Apparently, "Japan had no intention of attacking Pearl Harbor in the absence of a large number of our battleships and aircraft carriers."⁸² One message, sent to Tokyo by the Japanese consul on December 3⁸³ itemized

Elaborate arrangements . . . to report to Japanese submarines and Japanese vessels at sea the departure of aircraft carriers and battleships from Pearl Harbor by: (1) Broadcast advertisements over KGMB at 0945 daily; (2) A system of lights from a house on Lanakai and Kalama during the night and visual day signals at Lanakai from a star-boat during daylight; (3) Further visual

⁸¹Ibid., part 22, p. 89. Short testimony.

⁸²Ibid., part 23, p. 1153. Kimmel testimony.

⁸³Ibid.

warning of the absence of aircraft carriers and battleships was a bonfire to be shown on the Island of Mauri [sic] near the Kula Sanatarium.⁸⁴

Had Kimmel known on December 3, when the Japanese consul sent this message to Tokyo, that a series of signals was being set up to indicate which ships were in the harbor and which were out, he would have “immediately reported it to Washington and [would have] considered it almost equivalent to a declaration of war.”⁸⁵ If he had had this information on December 6, he “would have ordered all units to sea, because the best dispositions against surprise air attack can be effected with the fleet at sea.”⁸⁶ But he and Short knew nothing of any such messages. They undoubtedly had suspected that Japanese spies on Oahu had been watching the ships in the harbor, although they *certainly* didn’t know that messages about ship locations had been decoded, translated, and read by many top U.S. officials, days, even weeks, before the attack. Likewise, the Roberts commissioners probably did not know that some of these messages had been available in Washington prior to the attack—at least none of the Washington officials they questioned had mentioned them.

BACK IN WASHINGTON: SOME ADMISSIONS BY MARSHALL

The Commission completed its Hawaiian hearings and departed on January 10, 1942. On January 15 the members arrived back in Washington and resumed questioning Washington officials for one day.⁸⁷ They again questioned Marshall, Stark, Turner,

⁸⁴Ibid.

⁸⁵Ibid., p. 1050. Kimmel testimony.

⁸⁶Ibid., p. 1153. Kimmel. testimony.

⁸⁷Ibid., pp. 1075ff.

and Gerow. The most significant testimony was that given by Marshall, this time under oath.⁸⁸

Marshall admitted that even with the superior intelligence available to him, he had been surprised by the attack. “Japanese movements were going on around” the Philippines, Marshall recalled. “And if anything happened they were going to get it. . . . So, in point of priority, if we had turned to the telephone” to send a warning, he “certainly would have turned to the Philippines first.” Washington had had evidence also of

gathering strength in the Mandate Islands, air and naval vessels. . . . [W]e assumed that Guam would be wiped out of the picture right at the start. That they [the Japanese] would carry the matter right up to Hawaii I didn’t anticipate.⁸⁹

Marshall admitted also that he had “fully anticipated a terrific effort to cripple everything out there by sabotage.”⁹⁰ He had considered the local Japanese population to be the greatest threat to Hawaii. On top of that, he admitted his failure to realize that Short’s “alert for sabotage” called for bunching the planes.⁹¹ Yet the specific purpose of Alert #1, as stated in the Hawaiian Department’s Standard Operating Procedure, was to defend the airfields and vital installations “against acts of sabotage and uprisings.”⁹² It was for this reason that Short ordered the planes

⁸⁸Ibid., part 23, pp. 1075–82.

⁸⁹Ibid., p. 1081.

⁹⁰Ibid., p. 1081. Marshall testimony.

⁹¹Ibid., p. 1079.

⁹²Ibid., part 24, pp. 1771–76. Short’s “Standing Operation Procedure, Headquarters Hawaiian Department, 5 November 1941.” The steps to be taken under Alerts #1, 2, and 3 are itemized: the phrase “against acts of sabotage and uprisings” appear on page 1771 in SECTION II-ALERTS, paragraph 14, *ALERT NO. 1*.

“kept in the vicinity of the landing mat or the apron in groups, so they could be guarded very closely.”⁹³

As for naval reconnaissance, Marshall had assumed that, as a result of the November 27 “war warning,” the Navy would have dispatched over-water patrols to search for enemy ships.⁹⁴ He appeared unaware of the shortage of planes in Hawaii.

When Stark and Turner were questioned again, this time under oath, they appeared to have a more realistic view of the Hawaiian supply situation than Marshall.⁹⁵ Turner had “assumed that they had a long-range reconnaissance,” although he “knew that there were an insufficient number of planes there to conduct a long-range reconnaissance search 360 degrees extending over a considerable period of time.”⁹⁶

At the time of the November 27 “war warning,” when Stark had ordered Kimmel to undertake “defensive deployment . . . in accordance with his [war] plan,” he had expected Kimmel to “take dispositions to avoid surprise, *so far as he could with what he had*” (italics added). However, Stark had thought that Kimmel would have been able to include air patrols.⁹⁷ Stark had also expected Kimmel “to get more planes and personnel, and so on, out to Wake and Midway, if possible, and to send his task forces—some task forces to sea in readiness to catch any raiders.” And this, Stark admitted, Kimmel *had* done.⁹⁸

According to Gerow, the November 27 “war warning” had called for carrying out “reconnaissance and other means of guarding against a surprise attack.”⁹⁹ Short’s failure to do so, Gerow

⁹³Ibid., part 22, p. 36. Short testimony.

⁹⁴Ibid., part 23, p. 1077.

⁹⁵Ibid., pp. 1082–92.

⁹⁶Ibid., pp. 1085–86.

⁹⁷Ibid., p. 1086.

⁹⁸Ibid., p. 1087.

⁹⁹Ibid., p. 1108.

said, did not constitute “a direct disobedience of that directive,” although he considered it a “failure to obey orders.”¹⁰⁰ Gerow was quite critical of Short for not having conducted more extensive reconnaissance.¹⁰¹

The Commission finished questioning Washington witnesses within the day and then began preparing its report.

COMMISSION FINDINGS

In the month the Commission existed, it took testimony from 127 witnesses in Washington and Hawaii. Its findings came to 2,173 pages of evidence and exhibits.¹⁰² It spent January 20-23 drafting its report. The report was finished on January 23 and delivered to the president on the morning of January 24. The Commission then adjourned. The report was published in full in the *New York Times* on January 25, 1942.

To Commissioner Standley, it appeared that the majority of the members were prejudiced against Kimmel from the start. This prejudice even carried over to the way Kimmel’s remarks were recorded. They were carelessly transcribed, contained errors, and when he suggested certain revisions,¹⁰³ the Commission inserted his corrections “by interleaving the text of each suggested revision on a page immediately following each page referred to,”¹⁰⁴ making his testimony difficult to read. To mollify him, the corrected transcript was printed in full at the end of the Commission’s published hearings, just preceding the exhibits.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰⁰Ibid., part 23, p. 1109.

¹⁰¹Ibid., p. 1112.

¹⁰²Ibid., part 39, p. 1.

¹⁰³Ibid., part 22, p. 315.

¹⁰⁴Ibid., pp. 317ff. For corrected testimony, see part 23, pp.123ff; part 22, pp. 317–411 (corrected pages interleaved), 415–59, 931–1051.

¹⁰⁵Ibid., part 23, pp. 1123–44.

What had the members of the Commission learned in their month of hearings? They had learned that the intelligence available in Hawaii was meager indeed, and even misleading. All available clues had pointed to a Japanese strike in southeast Asia, thousands of miles west of Pearl Harbor. The Commission members had learned that Pearl Harbor was lacking in planes, anti-aircraft guns, and other material needed for the defense of the base, due to the demands of other theaters of war. They had discovered what they had known before they started their investigation, that the Hawaiian commanders had been surprised by the Japanese air attack. But they had also discovered that Chief of Staff Marshall had been just as surprised. Nevertheless, the Commission placed the responsibility for the extent of Japan's success in surprising the fleet on the two Hawaiian commanders.

The Commission appeared to place considerable credence on the January 24, 1941, letter from Secretary of Navy Knox to Secretary of War Stimson, written eleven months before the attack, suggesting that, "If war eventuates 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" by air bombing attack, air torpedo plane attack, sabotage, submarine attack, mining, or bombardment by gun fire.¹⁰⁶ Disregarding later letters, intelligence, and communications to the commanders in the field about the movements of the Japanese in the South China Sea, the Commission implied that this should have sufficed to alert the Hawaiian commanders against a surprise attack.

The Commission found that the commanders operated under some disadvantage: "The personnel, matériel, and equipment were insufficient to place the forces on a war footing and maintain them on that footing for an extended period." Yet the report continued: "These deficiencies did not preclude measures which would have to a great extent frustrated the attack or mitigated

¹⁰⁶Ibid., pp. 1092–95.

its severity.”¹⁰⁷ Moreover, in spite of the recognized shortage of reconnaissance planes, the Commission held that “Means were available for distant reconnaissance which would have afforded a measure of security against a surprise attack.”¹⁰⁸

The Commission admitted that the Hawaiian commanders “were handicapped by lack of information as to Japanese dispositions and intent,” which would have been vital to the defense of Pearl Harbor. Nevertheless, in the Commission’s view, “The lack of such knowledge rendered more urgent the initiation of a state of readiness for defense.”¹⁰⁹ According to the Commission report’s conclusions, the “responsible commanders in the Hawaiian area [had] prepared plans which, if adapted and used for the existing emergency would have been adequate.”¹¹⁰

The Commission members had heard testimony to the effect that the Army and Navy officials in Hawaii had cooperated with one another and had enjoyed fairly good working relations. Yet they charged that the Hawaiian commanders had “failed to confer . . . and to adapt and use the existing plans to meet the emergency.”¹¹¹ The Commission maintained that *if* the Hawaiian commanders had “complied with . . . orders issued by the Chief of Staff and the Chief of Naval Operations November 27, 1941,” the Army’s aircraft warning system and inshore air patrols, and the Navy’s distant reconnaissance “should have been operating;” the Army and Navy anti-aircraft artillery

should have been manned and supplied with ammunition; and a high state of readiness of aircraft should have been in effect. None of these conditions was in fact inaugurated or maintained

¹⁰⁷Ibid., part 39, pp. 18–19.

¹⁰⁸Ibid., p. 12.

¹⁰⁹Ibid., p. 18.

¹¹⁰Ibid., p. 19.

¹¹¹Ibid., p. 20.

for the reason that the responsible commanders failed to consult and cooperate.¹¹²

The members of the Commission had heard testimony to the effect that the only sure way to be forewarned of an approaching air attack was through continual 360-degree long-range reconnaissance. But they had also learned that the planes and personnel available in Hawaii were completely inadequate for carrying out such reconnaissance. Moreover, they had learned that antiaircraft artillery is ineffective against low-flying planes. Even with round-the-clock, far-ranging reconnaissance and an all-out alert, some of the early torpedo planes that made the first strike on December 7 would undoubtedly have been able to penetrate the defenses and surprise the defenders. They recognized that, "There were deficiencies in personnel, weapons, equipment, and facilities to maintain all the defenses on a war footing for extended periods of time, but," they held, "these deficiencies should not have affected the decision of the responsible commanders as to the state of readiness to be prescribed."¹¹³

The members of the Commission were much interested in Marshall's last minute (December 7) message to the field commanders, sparked by the "One P.M. Message." They questioned him about it, but made no criticism of his dilatory tactics in sending it out. Nor did they comment on his failure to use his scrambler phone. And they did not criticize Stark's failure to act when he first saw the "One P.M. Message" at about 9:30 that Sunday morning. They knew that Marshall's last minute warning did not reach Short and Kimmel until well after the Japanese planes had departed Hawaii, but they discounted the difference its timely arrival prior to the attack would have made because of the general lack of preparedness.

¹¹²Ibid., p. 20.

¹¹³Ibid.

In the light of the warnings and directions to take appropriate action, transmitted to both commanders . . . it was a *dereliction of duty* on the part of each of them not to consult and confer with the other respecting the meaning and intent of the warnings, and the appropriate measures of defense required by the imminence of hostilities.¹¹⁴

The Commission found Kimmel and Short at fault for having “failed properly to evaluate the seriousness of the situation. These *errors of judgment* were the effective cause for the success of the attack.”¹¹⁵

The Roberts Commission’s purpose, as stated in the executive order setting it up, was to investigate the contributory negligence of the military only. However, the Commission went beyond its official authorization. It gratuitously absolved the top Washington officials, civilian and military, of any blame in a way that was not supported in the Commission’s published record. It stated specifically in its report that the secretaries of state, war, and navy had all fulfilled their respective obligations satisfactorily. It also stated that the top Army and Navy officers in Washington, that is Marshall and Stark, had both fulfilled their command responsibilities properly and had issued suitable and timely warnings to the Hawaiian commanders.¹¹⁶

On the other hand, the commanders in Hawaii, Short and Kimmel, were pronounced guilty of “dereliction of duty.” They had

demonstrated . . . a lack of appreciation of the responsibilities vested in them and inherent in their positions as commanders

¹¹⁴Ibid., part 39, p. 21.

¹¹⁵Ibid.

¹¹⁶Ibid., p. 19.

in chief, Pacific Fleet, and commanding general, Hawaiian Department.¹¹⁷

RETIREMENT OF GENERAL SHORT
“WITHOUT CONDONATION . . . TO FUTURE
DISCIPLINARY ACTION.”

When the Roberts report came out, Short was in Oklahoma City awaiting further assignment. He was “completely dumbfounded. To be accused of dereliction of duty after almost forty years of loyal and competent service was beyond [his] comprehension.” On January 26 he telephoned Marshall, “an old and trusted friend of thirty-nine years standing.” Short asked Marshall if he should retire. “Stand pat,” Marshall said. “[B]ut if it becomes necessary I will use this conversation as authority.”¹¹⁸

Short had “faith in [Marshall’s] judgment and loyalty.” He told Marshall that he “would place [himself] entirely in his hand.” However, Short was a gentleman. As he hung up the phone, he “decided it wasn’t quite fair to [Marshall] to have to use the conversation as authority.” He felt Marshall should not have to assume the responsibility of deciding Short’s fate on the basis of oral instructions alone, so he wrote out a formal application for retirement and sent it along with a personal covering letter to Marshall. “[U]nder existing conditions,” he wrote, he would “very much prefer to remain on the active list.” However, he enclosed his application for retirement “so that you may use it should you consider it desirable.”¹¹⁹

In hope of softening any judgment against him, Short then reminded Marshall that “12 B-17s arrived from the mainland in the midst of the attack without ammunition, with guns cosmolined

¹¹⁷*Ibid.*, part 39, p. 21.

¹¹⁸*Ibid.*, part 7, pp. 3133–34.

¹¹⁹*Ibid.*, pp. 3134–35. Short’s January 25, 1942 letter to Marshall.

and with skeleton crews, resulting in the destruction of four of these planes.” The War Department, which had dispatched these planes from the mainland during the night of December 6–7, apparently had not anticipated the attack on Pearl Harbor. Short considered that “a strong argument” that the War Department had “agreed with [Short] that sabotage was the most dangerous thing to the Hawaiian Department.”¹²⁰

By the afternoon of Short’s call, Marshall was of “the opinion that we should accept General Short’s application for retirement today and to do this quietly without any publicity at the moment.” The Judge Advocate General saw no objection to this procedure and stated “[q]uite informally” that he considered a Court of Inquiry “unnecessary . . . and that a court-martial would not be in the public interest at this time.”¹²¹ When Marshall received Short’s written application a couple of days later, he forwarded it to the adjutant general to hold pending instructions from Stimson.¹²²

The president asked for assurance that accepting Short’s retirement would not preclude his later court martial and suggested including a phrase in the letter reading roughly as follows: “Provided it is agreed by you that this is no bar to be used legally or otherwise to subsequent court martial proceedings.”¹²³ Judge Advocate Major General Myron C. Cramer questioned the advisability of bringing a retired officer to court martial. Cramer was doubtful that a conviction could be obtained in Short’s case: “[T]he offenses charged against General Short are offenses of omission or nonfeasance which require a much stronger showing

¹²⁰*Ibid.*, part 7, pp. 3134–35. Short letter to Marshall, January 25, 1942.

¹²¹*Ibid.*, p. 3139.

¹²²*Ibid.*

¹²³*Ibid.*, pp. 3140–41. Assistant Chief of Staff Brigadier General J.H. Hilding’s letter of February 14, 1942, to the Attorney General.

to justify a trial than those involving misfeasance or malfeasance.”
Moreover,

For the president to discharge General Short summarily under the provisions of Article of War¹²⁴ would tend even more strongly than a dismissal by a sentence of a general court-martial to enable him afterward to claim persecution.¹²⁵

To avoid the possibility that “the president’s exercise of discretion in terminating the officer’s active service on his own application” might constitute a “bargain” that Short would “not further be prosecuted for known offenses occurring prior to retirement,” Cramer suggested that Short’s request for retirement be accepted with the understanding that it

will not constitute a condonation of his offenses, if any, on the part of the War Department, or be considered a bar to any future trial by general court-martial in case such trial should be deemed advisable.¹²⁶

Acting on Cramer’s advice, Stimson on February 14, 1942, instructed that a “saving clause” be included in the letter accepting Short’s retirement “without condonation of any offense or prejudice to any action on behalf of the government.”¹²⁷ The War Department’s February 17, 1942, letter to Short accepting his application for retirement read as follows:

By direction of the president, Major General Walter C. Short . . . upon his own application, is retired from active service to

¹²⁴*Ibid.*, pp. 3145–46. Judge Advocate General Myro C. Cramer memorandum of January 27, 1942.

¹²⁵*Ibid.*

¹²⁶*Ibid.*

¹²⁷*Ibid.*

take effect February 28, 1942 . . . without condonation of any offense or prejudice to future disciplinary action.¹²⁸

General Short was out of the Army by March 1, 1942.

RETIREMENT OF ADMIRAL KIMMEL “WITHOUT CONDONATION TO FUTURE DISCIPLINARY ACTION.”

On January 25, Stark talked about Kimmel with Knox. Kimmel was then notified, on orders from Washington—from Knox himself, Kimmel learned later—that Short had submitted a request for his retirement.¹²⁹ Until then, Kimmel had not thought of retiring. However, he “took that as a suggestion that I submit a similar request.”¹³⁰ Therefore, on January 26, he too submitted his request for retirement. Two days later Kimmel was informed by phone that his notification of Short’s request for retirement “was not meant to influence” him. However, Kimmel wrote back that same day that he wished his “request for retirement to stand, subject only to determination by the Department as to what course of action will best serve the interests of the country and the good of the service.”¹³¹

Kimmel gathered that Stark did not really expect Kimmel would be retired at that time. Nevertheless, the question of Kimmel’s retirement moved ahead. The wording to be used in the Navy Department’s letter of acceptance was raised with the Navy’s assistant judge advocate general.¹³² At FDR’s request,

¹²⁸Ibid., part 7, p. 3142.

¹²⁹Ibid., part 33, p. 691. Kimmel statement to NCI September 27, 1944.

¹³⁰Ibid.

¹³¹Ibid.

¹³²Ibid., part 19, p. 3965, Letter to Captain Gatch, February 14, 1942, signed by Edwin Dickinson, Special Assistant to the Attorney General; part 19, pp. 3966–67, part 7, pp. 3141–42, Assistant Chief of Staff Brigadier General J.H. Hildring’s February 14, 1942 memorandum for Attorney General Francis Biddle.

Attorney General Francis Biddle and Acting Assistant Solicitor General Edward Dickinson were consulted. Several suggestions with respect to the wording were made by FDR and others. FDR was anxious to have the matter settled. Finally, a phrase very similar to that suggested for the War Department's letter to Short was agreed on.

On February 19 Kimmel received formal notification from Knox that he would be placed on the retired list on March 1. Knox's letter read in part: "This approval of your request for retirement is without condonation of any offense or prejudice to future disciplinary action."¹³³

Ever since the attack, blame and opprobrium had been heaped on both Kimmel and Short. They had received abusive letters and even threats on their lives.

When Kimmel read the second paragraph of Knox's letter, with its conditional approval of his request for retirement, he promptly wrote Stark: Was the letter "to be published to the country as a promise that I will be disciplined at some future time"? Kimmel stood "ready at any time to accept the consequences of [his] acts." He did "not wish to embarrass the government in the conduct of the war;" but he felt that his "crucifixion before the public has about reached the limit." He felt that publication of the secretary's letter with its conditional approval of Kimmel's retirement would "further inflame the public and do [him] a great injustice."¹³⁴ Kimmel "regret[ted] the losses at Pearl Harbor just as keenly, or perhaps more keenly than any other American citizen." He wished he had been smarter than he was and able to foresee the events of December 7. He had devoted all

¹³³Ibid., part 19, p. 3963; part 33, p. 692, Kimmel's statement to Naval Court of Inquiry. And Husband E. Kimmel, *Admiral Kimmel's Story* (Chicago: Henry Regnery Co., 1955), p. 182.

¹³⁴Kimmel, *Admiral Kimmel's Story*, pp. 181–82. See also Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 6, p. 2562.

his energy to his job and had “made the dispositions” he considered called for. He could not “reproach [himself] for any lack of effort.” He had been “willing to accept [all this] for the good of the country out of [his] loyalty to the Nation.” But he did “think that in all justice the department should do nothing further to inflame the public against” him. He thought he was “entitled to some consideration even though” some may have believed he had “erred grievously.”¹³⁵

Kimmel was retired effective March 1 after more than 40 years of service in the Navy.¹³⁶ On or about that date Kimmel was notified

through the public press . . . that the Secretary of the Navy had directed that charges and specifications be prepared to bring [him] to trial by General Court Martial at some future time.¹³⁷

KIMMEL AND SHORT FIND POST-ATTACK POSITIONS CONTRIBUTING TO THE WAR EFFORT

Both men soon found civilian positions in which they could contribute to the war effort. Short became head of the traffic department at the Ford Motor Company plant in Dallas, Texas, which was devoted entirely to making war equipment.¹³⁸ Kimmel took a position with a New York firm of consulting marine engineers, Frederick R. Harris, Inc., where he helped design the first

¹³⁵Ibid.

¹³⁶Ibid., part 33, pp. 691–92. Kimmel’s statement to the NCI.

¹³⁷*The New York Times*, August 11, 1942, p. 4.

¹³⁸Ibid., September 4, 1949, p. 49. Short’s obituary.

large sectional floating drydock capable of holding a battleship.¹³⁹ These drydocks “saw much service in the war in the Pacific.”¹⁴⁰

Resentment of the Hawaiian commanders did not cease. In August 1942, “public curiosity” was aroused by the news that Kimmel was holding a civilian job in New York. Was he receiving retirement pay in addition to his pay as a civilian employee? Yes, he was, the Navy Department replied; as a retired Navy officer, he was

clearly entitled to three-quarters retired pay, or \$6,000 a year, and it is “absolutely legal” for him or any other retired naval officer to take a civilian job and draw his retirement from the Navy at the same time.

Kimmel was “expected to get the routine retired salary from the Navy until the prospective court-martial is established to try him.”¹⁴¹

¹³⁹Ibid., May 15, 1968, pp. 1, 24. Kimmel’s obituary.

¹⁴⁰Ibid.

¹⁴¹Ibid., August 11, 1942, p. 4.

20.

1942–1944

TOP SECRECY ON THE WASHINGTON HOME FRONT

Once we had declared war, a wave of patriotism swept over the country. All open criticism of the government's foreign policy ceased. Yet a desire to know the truth simmered under the surface. Many people believed that Admiral Kimmel and General Short, who had been pilloried in the eyes of the public, should have a chance to present their side of the story in open court, but attempts were being made to forestall their courts martial.

There were, of course, legitimate reasons why their case should not be investigated while the war was going on. Information would undoubtedly be revealed in a courts martial trial that would be damaging to the war effort. It would undoubtedly be brought out (1) that the Japanese were still using their diplomatic code, "Purple," for secret messages. As our armed forces were gaining information from reading "Purple" intercepts, which was valuable for fighting the war, this was a legitimate argument for postponing a trial. A trial would probably reveal also (2) that U.S. intelligence personnel had deciphered "Purple" before the attack on Pearl Harbor and had been reading Japanese intercepts ever since.

Also (3) that Washington had, therefore, had considerable pre-attack intelligence about Japanese intentions. And (4) that little of this pre-attack intelligence had been sent to Pearl Harbor.

The administration and top military officials were determined that there be no security leaks about “Purple” and MAGIC, the intelligence derived from it. Some of them may also have harbored guilt about the information they had sent, or had failed to send, our military commanders before the attack. If that was the case, they would not have wanted it known that our decryption of Japanese intercepts had started *before* the attack. Thus those who were anxious to delay or postpone indefinitely a hearing for Kimmel and Short because they did not want it to be revealed that we were decoding *post*-attack Japanese messages had the support of those who wanted to conceal the fact that we had been reading *pre*-attack Japanese messages.

To safeguard this major source of intelligence, Army and Navy personnel familiar with “Purple” had been sworn to secrecy. General Marshall himself, in his office a week after the attack, had warned his staff officers to go to their graves with the secret of MAGIC. Then in 1944, witnesses to appear before the Army Pearl Harbor Board were again sworn “not to reveal the facts,” i.e., the “Purple” code decrypts.¹

Similar precautions had also been taken in the Navy. Admiral Stark testified, “Anybody who was let in on that [MAGIC] had

¹An admission by a retired Army general as to the Army’s rule of secrecy was made to the author twice, once in the presence of General Bonner Fellers and then again in the presence of General Albert C. Wedemeyer. See also report of Harry Elmer Barnes’ interview of Major Henry C. Clausen, January 3, 1964, pp. 2–3 (typescript in author’s possession): “[O]aths had been taken not to reveal the facts [the “Purple” code decrypts]. . . . The witnesses Miles, Marshall, MacArthur, et al., all revealed to Clausen that they were sworn not to reveal Purple when they were before APHB.” N.B., by March 1945, Clausen had been promoted to lieutenant colonel.

to sign a paper never to disclose it, practically so long as he lived, or ever to talk about it”—not ever!²

Navy intelligence officers too were warned to maintain security. “Sometime within the week following Pearl Harbor,” then Commander Safford and other officers were “called into conference in the office of the Director of Naval Communications [Admiral Noyes]. . . . [A]ll section heads were asked to tell all [their] people not to talk.” Any written memoranda, personal notes—not official files—were to be destroyed immediately and the officers were to “pass that word on to [their] subordinates.”³

But questions about Pearl Harbor did not let up.

POST-ATTACK PERSONNEL SHAKEUP

As we have seen, both Admiral Kimmel and General Short were peremptorily removed from their commands after the attack on Pearl Harbor. Replacement officers were named, then promptly retired from the military.⁴ Some suspicion rested on Chief of Naval Operations Stark for not having kept Kimmel and Admiral Hart in the Philippines better informed. On March 26, Admiral E.J. King took over Stark’s position as CNO.⁵ Stark was in effect “kicked upstairs,” transferred out of Washington,

²79th Cong., 1st sess. Joint (Congressional) Committee on the Investigation of the Pearl Harbor Attack. *Pearl Harbor Attack*, 39 vols. (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1946), part 5, p. 2468, Stark testimony before the Joint Committee.

³Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 8, pp. 3565–66, Safford testimony before the Joint Committee.

⁴Short’s command was turned over to Lieutenant General Delos C. Emmons. Kimmel was replaced temporarily as Chief of the Pacific Fleet by Admiral William S. Pye and then, once the arrangements for the transfer could be worked out, by Admiral Chester W. Nimitz.

⁵U.S. Department of Navy, Naval History Division, Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, *United States Naval Chronology, World War II* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1955), p. 22.

sent to London and on April 30, 1942, given command of the recently established (March 17, 1942) United States Naval Forces Europe.⁶

Chief of Staff Marshall appeared to be above reproach. In spite of questions about his whereabouts on the morning of December 6, he remained in his position and went on later to still more important and prestigious positions—special representative of the president to China with ambassadorial rank (1945–1946), secretary of state (1947–1949), and secretary of defense⁷ (1950–1951). He even received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1953 for his proposal, which became known as the Marshall Plan, for U.S. government grants to help post-war Europe's economic recovery.

Naval intelligence and naval communications were especially hard hit by personnel changes. The Navy's traditional pride in service at sea meant that the path to promotion clearly lay in sea duty; those who served in intelligence were much less likely to advance. As a result, few naval officers were willing to make a career in cryptography. One notable exception was Commander L.F. Safford, who had been in charge of the security section of naval communications and had made brilliant contributions to deciphering and interpreting Japanese intercepts. Shortly after the United States entered the war, he was promoted to captain (January 1, 1942), but at the same time his duties and responsibilities were sharply curtailed.⁸

Commander A.H. McCollum, head of the Far Eastern Section of Naval Intelligence in December 1941, was another victim of the post-attack reorganization of naval operations. He

⁶Ibid, p. 24.

⁷On September 18, 1947, the Departments of War and Navy were incorporated into a new Department of Defense.

⁸Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 8, p. 3556, Safford testimony before the Joint Committee. See also L.F. Safford, "Victims of the Kita Message," April 8, 1968, p. 46, unpublished manuscript (typescript in author's files).

had recognized the seriousness of the Japanese threat prior to the attack and had drafted messages to the Pacific commanders warning of impending Japanese action. His superiors had watered down his messages so much, however, that they failed to deliver the sense of urgency McCollum had intended to convey.⁹ McCollum got disgusted with naval intelligence and applied for sea duty. En route to his new post in the southwest Pacific he passed through Hawaii. There he was guest of honor at a party given by several officers who had served on Kimmel's staff. McCollum told them some of the things he had known through his work with intelligence in Washington.¹⁰

CRACKS IN THE ADMINISTRATION'S WALL OF SECRECY

One of the officers in Hawaii who heard McCollum speak was Commander Joseph John Rochefort, chief intelligence officer, district staff of the commandant in Hawaii. Rochefort spoke Japanese; his work in radio intelligence, cryptography, and cryptanalysis had made him one of the mainstays of the intelligence unit at Pearl Harbor. It had been his responsibility to prepare daily intelligence summaries for Kimmel's fleet intelligence officer, Lieutenant Commander Edwin Thomas Layton.¹¹ In spite of

⁹Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 8, pp. 3388–90, McCollum testimony before the Joint Committee; part 26, p. 392, Safford testimony before the Hart Inquiry; part 29, p. 2396, Safford testimony at APHB. See also McCollum letter, May 21, 1944, to Kimmel and Kimmel interview, May 18, 1945, of McCollum (typescripts of both papers in author's files).

¹⁰Safford, "Victims of the Kita Message," pp. 49–50. See also Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 8, p. 3382. McCollum was reassigned from Washington to the Southwest Pacific Force in October 1942. See Kimmel's interview of McCollum.

¹¹Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 10, pp. 4673, 4679–80, Rochefort testimony before the Joint Committee. Rochefort was awarded the Distinguished Service Medal posthumously, in 1985, for his success in cracking the Japanese codes revealing the time, date, and place of Japan's plan to invade

his knowledge and expertise, Rochefort became a victim of the post-attack personnel changes in intelligence; he was transferred out of cryptography in October 1942,¹² ordered to Washington, and assigned to command a floating drydock in San Francisco.¹³ In preparation for his new assignment, he was sent to New York to consult with the marine engineering firm of Frederick R. Harris, Inc.

In New York, Rochefort encountered his old “boss,” Kimmel, who was then himself working on floating drydocks for the Harris firm. Rochefort told him what McCollum had reported about pre-attack knowledge in Washington.¹⁴ Thus by a series of coincidences, Kimmel learned in late 1942 that crucial information about Japanese intentions had been available in Washington prior to the attack, which had not been relayed to him in Pearl Harbor.

Another responsible Navy officer who left intelligence was Lieutenant Commander Alwin Dalton Kramer, a Japanese-language scholar. In late 1941, he had been in charge of the translation group of the communications security group in Washington. As Navy courier he had delivered many confidential intercepts, including MAGIC, to top Navy officers during the crucial weeks preceding the attack. In June 1943 Kramer was transferred to Pearl Harbor. And in January 1944, he was ordered to sea duty in the South Pacific.¹⁵

Midway (*New York Times*, November 17, 1985; BBG). See Edwin T. Layton, Roger Pineau, and John Costello, *And I Was There: Pearl Harbor and Midway—Breaking the Secrets* (New York: W. Morrow, 1985), p. 464.

¹²Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 10, pp. 4673, 4679, Rochefort testimony before the Joint Committee. Rochefort left Pearl Harbor in October 1942.

¹³Layton, *And I Was There*, p. 468 (BBG).

¹⁴Safford, “Victims of the Kita Message,” pp. 50, 54.

¹⁵Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 8, pp. 3894–95. According to Kramer’s testimony, he was on duty with Safford’s office from June 1940 to June 1943.

KIMMEL AND SHORT WAIVE STATUTE OF LIMITATIONS

Over and over again Kimmel reviewed in his mind the orders he had received as fleet commander and his responses to them. He kept asking himself what sins of commission or omission he could have committed. He even began to think that perhaps he *had* been somewhat responsible for the disaster. Yet he could never figure out just how. Until he spoke with Rochefort in late 1942, he had assumed, as Stark had assured him, that he was being supplied with all available intelligence necessary for him to fulfill his responsibilities as commander-in-chief of the Pacific Fleet. Not until he learned from Rochefort of McCollum's revelations did Kimmel have any hint that Washington officials had been privy to crucial information that had been denied him in Hawaii.

The only hope Kimmel and Short had for vindication was to obtain a hearing at which they could reveal the orders under which they had been operating prior to the attack and to explain why they had taken the actions they had. They were both anxious for a speedy and open court-martial.¹⁶ According to the regulations then in effect, the opportunity for the government to court-martial Kimmel and Short "for any alleged offenses" they might have committed and with which they might be charged would expire in two years, on December 7, 1943. The Navy, in no hurry to see the two commanders court-martialed, was willing to extend the deadline. Or even to let the statute of limitations expire. Kimmel, for his part, was anxious not to let that happen, lest the chance for a hearing be lost forever. He reminded Knox (September 17, 1943) of his desire for a speedy trial in open court. However, Kimmel wrote, he did not wish to put his own interests

¹⁶"Kimmel Seeks 'Open Trial' at 'Earliest Date,'" *Washington Star*, March 29, 1944, pp. A-1, 4. See also Kimmel letter of March 16, 1944 (typed copy in author's possession).

above those of the national welfare, which he recognized “appears to require that my trial be delayed.”¹⁷ Knox sympathized with Kimmel and commended him for his “patriotic spirit,” which was, he said, “in keeping with the best naval traditions.”¹⁸

Kimmel was eager to do battle and undertook an active campaign to learn the truth. He would not let the matter rest. He began to prepare for the hearing he hoped to have. In November 1943, he asked Knox for copies of Navy Department dispatches, letters, intelligence reports, etc., sent between January 1 and December 17, 1941, plus copies of the war plans and operating plans that were in effect on December 7, 1941.¹⁹

In January 1944, “on the advice of [his] trusted long-time friend, Captain Robert A. Lavender, U.S. Navy,” Kimmel hired Charles B. Rugg of the Boston law firm of Ropes, Gray, Best, Coolidge and Rugg, to help in his crusade.²⁰ On January 27, Kimmel, Rugg, and Lavender met to discuss the situation.

Kimmel asked Rugg to go to Washington and try to arrange to have the deadline for his court-martial extended. Rugg warned him:

Admiral, this is the crossroads. If I go down there and have this Statute [the extension of the court martial statute of limitations] passed, we're going to be in for a tempestuous time.

¹⁷Kimmel's September 17, 1943 letter to Knox quoted in *Washington Star*, March 29, 1944.

¹⁸Knox memo to Kimmel, September 10, 1943.

¹⁹Kimmel memo to Knox, November 26, 1943.

²⁰Husband E. Kimmel, *Admiral Kimmel's Story* (Chicago: Henry Regnery, 1955), p. ix. Rugg was hired January 19, 1944, according to John Toland's interview of Edward B. Hanify, August 29, 1979, on file with Toland's papers in FDR Library, Hyde Park, N.Y. Captain Robert A. Lavender (Annapolis, class of 1912, #03895) was Kimmel's "counsel" (Kimmel January 24, 1944 memorandum).

It could mean embarrassment and unfavorable publicity. “If we don’t pursue this matter,” Rugg went on, they may “drop this business and you will be free from any more public discussion.” Kimmel was “determined that the American people . . . know this story” and he “authorized [Rugg] to go all out to see that it is done.” [He was] “prepared to face the consequences, embarrassment, misunderstanding, time, anything.” He told Rugg, “Go to it!”²¹

Thus it was largely as a result of Kimmel’s efforts that the statute of limitations on court-martialing Kimmel and Short was extended—six months from December 7, 1943, to June 7, 1944. And extended yet again to December 7, 1944.²²

Short also wanted a chance to present his case, but he was a very different personality and less aggressive than Kimmel in his pursuit of a hearing.²³

²¹John Toland interview of Hanify.

²²In March 1944 some members of Congress urged a still further extension of the statute of limitations. They argued that the courts martial of Kimmel and Short should not continue to be postponed indefinitely. The House Rules Committee approved a measure extending to June 7, 1945, the possible starting date for their courts martial. Moreover, rather than merely lengthening the time during that Kimmel and Short might be court martialed, the House committee’s measure proposed that the Army and Navy be ordered to schedule their courts martial. The Senate Committee then voted to consider the House committee’s resolution in closed session (*Washington Star*, March 29, 1944). Thus the chances that Kimmel and Short would get their open hearing were improving. However, the House committee’s proposal was not accepted as worded. Rather the court-martial deadline was extended again for another six months only, i.e., until December 7, 1944. On that date it was extended once more, into 1945. (Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 3, pp. 1517–18).

²³*Washington Star*, March 29, 1944, p. 24.

CAPTAIN SAFFORD TALKS WITH KIMMEL

Captain Safford played a key role in the whole Pearl Harbor picture, both before the attack and also afterwards during the investigations. He served with the Navy Department communications intelligence unit from May 1936 until after the attack. He had worked in radio intelligence and cryptology, the deciphering of codes. As chief of the communications security section of naval communications during the months preceding the Pearl Harbor attack, he was responsible for the security of the secret Japanese intercepts and for keeping them from reaching unauthorized hands.

In the fall of 1943 Safford, “by the direction and instruction of the Director of Naval Intelligence,” was under orders to work on “a history of radio intelligence from 1924 to 1941.”²⁴ Like most people in the country, Safford had believed that Kimmel had failed to fulfill adequately his responsibilities as fleet commander, that he had been remiss in interpreting the intelligence and orders sent him and thus was partially culpable for the severe damage done to the fleet during the Japanese attack.

Because of his pre-Pearl Harbor responsibilities, Safford expected that he would be called to testify in any Kimmel court-martial proceedings that might be held. So, as he looked through the files for the historical research to which he was assigned, he started to review the pre-Pearl Harbor situation also and to assemble material he would need as a witness.²⁵ To his amazement he discovered that the intelligence derived from the Japanese intercepts, which Safford’s section had decoded in the months before the attack, had *not* been forwarded to the Pearl Harbor commanders as he had assumed. When he realized this, he was

²⁴Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 8, p. 3601, Safford testimony before the Joint Committee.

²⁵*Ibid.*, part 36, p. 69, Safford testimony before Hewitt Inquiry; reprinted in *ibid.*, part 8, p. 3602.

aroused by the injustice of the situation. In effect, Kimmel had been dismissed from his position and pilloried because he had not been sent the pre-attack information available in Washington.

In February 1944 Safford called on Kimmel in New York. He told Kimmel that many Japanese messages had been intercepted and deciphered prior to the attack on Pearl Harbor. He gave Kimmel “a verbal summary of their contents.”²⁶ From the few notes he had made and from his memory, Safford related much of the information that had been known in Washington from reading those intercepts, information which would have been invaluable to the Pearl Harbor commanders.

When he returned to Washington he sought to document his statements. But he searched in vain. The crucial intercepts were missing from the files!

On March 23, 1944, Kimmel asked Edward B. Hanify, a lawyer in the same legal firm as Rugg to come on board also to assist in his case.²⁷ Hanify promptly started work on the Kimmel case.²⁸ Kimmel would not let it die.

* * * * *

1944 became a year of inquiries and investigations. Lest some individuals in the military who might have knowledge concerning the attack became casualties of the war, the Hart Inquiry was set up. Both the Army and Navy held separate, but concurrent, hearings. These hearings were supplemented by the follow-up Clarke, Clausen, and Hewitt inquiries that extended into 1945. On the grounds of military security, all these inquiries were conducted in greatest secrecy behind closed doors, and their reports were not released to the public.

²⁶Kimmel, *Admiral Kimmel's Story*, p. 129.

²⁷*Ibid.*, p. ix.

²⁸Toland interview.

Many facts that exonerated Kimmel and Short were revealed in these closed-door hearings. Yet these facts were not made public. At the end of 1944 Kimmel and Short were still the principal culprits in the eyes of the public, their negligence considered responsible for the extensive loss of ships, planes and men at Pearl Harbor.

1944 was also a presidential election year. FDR was running for an unprecedented fourth term. Thus political considerations, as well as military, played a role in these investigations. How should these secret reports be handled? What would the public think if it knew the truth was being concealed? How would the voters respond if they knew the facts that had been uncovered by these investigations? What would they think of the top civilian and military authorities, who were still directing the war effort, if they learned from these reports about their pre-war decisions? How much information could, or should, be made public? The “top brass” in Washington faced a dilemma.

21.

1944: A Year of Investigations

The public was no closer in 1944 to unraveling the mystery surrounding the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor than it had been in January 1942. Even though “a speedy and public trial,” at which Kimmel would have an opportunity to present his side of the story, was “impossible” because of the need for wartime security, Kimmel began to prepare.¹ Any such hearing or trial would have to depend on the testimony of witnesses with knowledge of the pre-December 7 situation, many of whom, stationed in combat positions from the northern Atlantic to the southwest Pacific, could become war casualties. On Kimmel’s recommendation, therefore, or as a result of his prodding, Secretary Knox issued a “Precept,” or order, instructing retired Admiral Thomas C. Hart, commander-in-chief of the U.S. Asiatic Fleet in the Philippines before the attack, to conduct an inquiry “for the purpose of recording and preserving testimony pertinent to the

¹Knox memorandum to Kimmel, March 4, 1944. Typed copy of original in author’s files.

Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, T.H., on 7 December 1941.”² Thus Hart was to examine “such members of the naval forces” as were “thought to have knowledge of facts pertinent to the said surprise attack.” It was to be “a sort of one-man board to take testimony.” Hart would soon be contacting Kimmel officially.³

Kimmel had reservations about Hart’s inquiry. Not only could it not be “free and open,” but it was too narrowly focused. It was to be limited to examining “members of the naval forces” concerning events “pertinent to the said surprise attack.” Kimmel pointed out that many non-Navy personnel, Army personnel and civilians, should also be examined. And they should be questioned not only about events “pertinent to the said surprise attack,” but also about “events that took place some time prior to said attack and of events at places not in the Hawaiian Islands that have an important bearing on the actual attack.” The testimony of such persons should also be taken and preserved.⁴ Moreover, Kimmel maintained that he had a right “to be informed of the nature and cause of any accusation” against him.⁵

Although Knox assured Kimmel that this examination would be “in no sense a trial,” and Kimmel would be “permitted to introduce matter pertinent to the examination, to cross-examine witnesses, etc.,” Kimmel still had qualms.⁶ The legal character of the inquiry was unclear. It would have some characteristics

²79th Cong., 1st sess. Joint (Congressional) Committee on the Investigation of the Pearl Harbor Attack. *Pearl Harbor Attack*, 39 vols. (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1946), part 26, pp. 3–4.

³Hart letter to Kimmel, February 15, 1944. Typed copy of original in author’s files.

⁴Kimmel memorandum to Knox, March 16, 1944. Typed copy of original in author’s files.

⁵Kimmel memorandum to Knox, February 29, 1944. Thermofax copy of original in author’s files.

⁶Knox memorandum to Kimmel, March 4, 1944. Typed copy of original in author’s files.

of “depositions,” others of “courts of inquiry,” and still others which were “neither those of depositions or courts of inquiry.” Kimmel’s counsel, Robert A. Lavender, pointed out that it was important that any testimony taken should be “sealed and delivered to the Judge Advocate of the court as custodian and presented to the accused in a reasonable time for examination and to make objections as to the introduction of evidence.” As there was no assurance that the Hart Inquiry testimony taken would be “sealed and . . . held inviolate” until a court martial, or that a witness’s testimony would not be used in a court martial unless he was dead, insane, or could not appear for some other reason,⁷ Kimmel “decline[d] to attend or participate in the proceedings before Admiral Hart.”⁸

THE HART INQUIRY (MARCH 7, 1944–JUNE 15, 1944)

In the course of interviewing naval officers, Hart traveled from Washington, D.C., to New York, San Francisco, Pearl Harbor, the USS *Iowa*, and the island of Guadalcanal in the southwest Pacific.⁹ Most of the men he questioned had served with Kimmel in Pearl Harbor prior to December 7, 1941, but several had held positions in Washington at the time of the attack and testified from a Washington viewpoint.

By December 1941 there seemed little doubt among those who were following events closely that war with Japan was inevitable. As a matter of fact, in Hawaii on Sunday, November 30, 1941, precisely one week before the attack, banner headlines on

⁷Kimmel/Rugg/Lavender memorandum, undated, copy forwarded to Kimmel by Lavender under date of March 18, 1944. Typed copy of original in author’s files.

⁸Kimmel memorandum to Knox, March 16, 1944. Typed copy of original in author’s files.

⁹Hart’s itinerary, Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 26, pp. 9, 217, 241, 291, 299, 349, 367, 397, 403, 453, 465.

page 1 of the *Honolulu Advertiser* read KURUSU BLUNTLY WARNED NATION READY FOR BATTLE. British-held Singapore was reported on the alert; all troops there had been called to active duty. The Philippines were threatened by Japanese encirclement.¹⁰ War seemed likely. But all signs pointed to its breaking out thousands of miles from Hawaii, possibly in Singapore or the Philippines.

Hart questioned naval officers who had been at Pearl Harbor during the attack. Witness after witness confessed that he had been no less surprised than Kimmel by the sudden air attack. Practically all the information available to them had directed their attention elsewhere. Generally speaking, they were supportive of Kimmel's pre-attack decisions and actions.

Rear Admiral W.W. Smith, Kimmel's chief of staff in December 1941, testified that when he saw the December 3 dispatch concerning the burning of documents by the Japanese at Hong Kong, Singapore, Batavia, Manila, Washington, and London, he had little doubt that they were about to make a "hostile move."¹¹ We had been told that "heavy Japanese movements were on the way to the southard [sic]. It did not occur to us," Smith testified, "that the attack was coming in our direction."¹² "We did expect a submarine attack . . . [but not] an air raid on Pearl Harbor, although plans were made to meet one, as I have said, by the stationing of ships and conditions of readiness."¹³

Rear Admiral Arthur C. Davis, who at the time of the attack was serving as fleet aviation officer of the Pacific Fleet, had thought a surprise air attack was "possible." But he had considered it preventable only "by the most extensive searches and efforts" for which neither the planes nor the men necessary were

¹⁰*Honolulu Advertiser*, November 30, 1941, p. 1.

¹¹Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 26, p. 489, Dispatch #031850.

¹²*Ibid.*, p. 62.

¹³*Ibid.*, p. 73.

available in Hawaii. Even under the best of circumstances, Davis said testifying in 1944, when an attack might be expected, it isn't easy to sight an incoming enemy force.

We have, ourselves, quite often made an attack wherein Japanese search planes failed to sight our forces, even though in many of these cases we know that they were making intensive search flights. In the Guadalcanal landing, as an example, a Japanese search plane, under scattered cloud conditions, came close enough to our force actually to be sighted by long-range telescope from the *ENTERPRISE*, but failed to see and report the force.¹⁴

Due to their dependence on Washington, the men in intelligence in Hawaii had no more reason to expect a surprise air attack on Pearl Harbor than had the men on the Navy's ships and planes. There were serious gaps in their intelligence.

Captain Edwin T. Layton, fleet intelligence officer at the time of the attack, said intelligence was "evaluated information and a commodity of which you can never have quite enough. . . . [I]t is like a jig-saw puzzle with parts missing; the whole picture is rarely available as important pieces are missing." He was convinced the State Department must have had information during the pre-attack period "that would have been of value to the Commander-in-Chief."¹⁵ On the morning of December 6, when Layton delivered to Kimmel a report on the sightings of Japanese ships in the Gulf of Siam and Camranh Bay, "the thought of attack on Pearl Harbor at that time was very far from most people's minds."¹⁶

Naval officers questioned by Hart rejected the Roberts Commission's charge that Kimmel and Short had failed "to confer

¹⁴Ibid., pp. 105, 109.

¹⁵Ibid., p. 226.

¹⁶Ibid., p. 237.

and cooperate.” Admiral W.W. Smith,¹⁷ Rear Admiral Walter S. Anderson, commander, Battleships Battle Force, Pacific Fleet,¹⁸ and Admiral William F. Halsey, commander Aircraft Battle Force and Task Force Two at the time of the attack, all said that their relations were excellent. “Admiral Kimmel . . . personally, spent a great deal of time socially with General Short. In golf, and other forms of exercise. . . . This enabled them to discuss things in an informal way.” But Army-Navy cooperation was common in Hawaii. “At this time, there were many Army officers that went to sea with the task forces to obtain a first-hand knowledge of what the Navy was doing. At the same time, many naval officers went on maneuvers with the Army.”¹⁹

Witness after witness supported Kimmel’s claim that he had been handicapped in opposing the Japanese air attack because of too few planes and antiaircraft guns and insufficient personnel. According to Admiral Smith, Kimmel had asked for men “so many times that some members of the Staff advised him that he was only boring the Department. . . . He would ask for 20,000 men; 10,000 to fill vacancies in the Fleet, and 10,000 more for training . . . and the answer he invariably got was that, ‘The men are not available. They are needed in the Atlantic.’”²⁰

Vice Admiral William Satterlee Pye, commander at the time of the attack of Battle Force, United States Pacific Fleet, and commander of Task Force One, testified about the June 1941 detachment of ships from the Pacific to the Atlantic: three battleships, four light cruisers, one squadron of destroyers, and other ships had been transferred earlier, so that “the power of the

¹⁷Ibid., p. 44.

¹⁸Ibid., pp. 434–35.

¹⁹Ibid., p. 331.

²⁰Ibid., p. 47.

Pacific Fleet had been materially reduced in order to strengthen the forces in the Atlantic.”²¹

Witness after witness pointed out that the planes and flight crews available in Hawaii were clearly insufficient for long-range surveillance. Commander Patrick C. Bellinger of Patrol Wing Two estimated “an overall force of approximately 200 planes” (84 planes flying daily) and 252 crews would be required “to conduct a search through 360 degrees, to a distance of at least 800 miles, assuming a 15 mile radius of visibility.”²² Given 25-mile visibility, 150 planes and 225 flight crews, flying 16½ hours per day, would be needed to search a radius of 800 miles. The total of 24,750 plane-hours would consume 1,980,000 gallons of gasoline per month and require an average of 82½ engine changes plus 182 spare engines per month. And still the effectiveness of the search would be only about 50 per cent.²³ The Hawaiian Command then had only 81 planes; nine were undergoing repair, 58 were in commission, and 14 were in the air. However, because of physical fatigue, about two crews are needed for every plane in operation, and the number of flight crews in Hawaii on December 7 fell far short of the number required.²⁴

Rear Admiral (commander at the time of the attack) Willard A. Kitts, fleet gunnery and training officer, U.S. Pacific Fleet, did not think Kimmel was “unduly occupied with training matters to the extent that he lost sight of the other aspects of readiness and security.” He believed the success of the training in gunnery had been

borne out by the splendid performance that the anti-aircraft batteries of the Fleet put forth on the 7th of December. . . .
[A]t least twenty-eight planes were shot down by vessels of the

²¹Ibid., p. 158.

²²Ibid., p. 124.

²³Ibid., p. 125.

²⁴Ibid., p. 123.

Fleet. Not a bad performance for men who had never fired a shot in action and considering the number of guns engaged.²⁵

Bellinger, who had been commander of the Naval Base Defense Air Force, thought it was “foolish to think that such a skeletonized organization,” as the Pacific Fleet was then,

functioning on the basis of cooperation by the Navy and Army Air Forces and set up to be put in motion by special orders or by an emergency occurring, remaining practically non-existent except during periodic drills, could go into action and function effectively at the occurrence of an actual emergency. An organization of this nature to be effective must function twenty-four hours every day, and prior to an air raid not subsequent thereto.

Bellinger testified that he knew of “no man who, under the circumstances, could have done more” than Kimmel did.²⁶

Admiral Halsey pointed out that the problem was one of

balancing security against training and how far he could afford to let his trained men go and still have his Fleet ready for instant action. He was constantly going over in his mind how far this should go. . . . [Kimmel] was very much against the transfer of so many trained men and the influx of so many recruits under the conditions that faced us.²⁷

Kimmel’s task as commander-in-chief was a juggling act. In the light of his orders and available intelligence, he had to weigh the relative importance of training against that of preparations for war; he did not dare overemphasize one to the neglect of the other.

²⁵Ibid., pp. 193, 201. See also *ibid.*, pp. 47, 65.

²⁶Ibid., p. 140.

²⁷Ibid., pp. 318–19.

Rear Admiral Wilson Brown, commander of the fleet's Scouting Force, Task Force 3, spoke well of the fleet's pre-war training:

[T]he high state of efficiency maintained while doubling the size of our Fleet in two years, the seamanship, gunnery, and fighting ability of our Navy during two years of war reflects [sic] the quality of our naval leadership and of our training processes during the pre-war period as well as during the war period.

The success of the Japanese, Brown held, was not due to laxity on the part of U.S. personnel, but rather to the detailed information the Japanese had about our Fleet.²⁸

Admiral Hart examined nine witnesses who had not been in Pearl Harbor during the weeks before the attack, including several who had then held important positions in Washington and had been privy to especially important pre-attack intelligence—Rear Admiral Ingersoll, assistant chief of naval operations; Rear Admiral Turner, chief of the Navy's war plans division; Rear Admiral Wilkinson, director of naval intelligence. They were all just as surprised as the Hawaiian officers had been that the Japanese had targeted Pearl Harbor.

Hart caught up with Wilkinson on Guadalcanal in the south Pacific. Wilkinson had taken over as director of naval intelligence in the midst of the October 1941 radical personnel shifts. From Wilkinson's testimony, Japan's immediate objective appeared to be "the occupation of [the] southwestern coast of Indo-China, Kampot, and possibly Bangkok, or lower Siam on the Malay Peninsula." Japanese troop transports and freighters were "pouring continually down from Japan and Northern China coast ports headed South, apparently for French Indo-China and Formosan ports." Much activity was going on in the Mandates,

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 153.

the mid-Pacific islands under Japanese control consisting of large re-enforcements of personnel, aircraft, munitions, and also construction material with yard workmen and engineers. However, naval intelligence assumed that “the major capital ship strength remains in home waters, as well as the greatest portion of the carriers.”²⁹

The United States was keeping a close eye on the Japanese ship movements, according to Wilkinson, because of the tentative American-British agreement that “any movement beyond certain geographical limits [100 degrees longitude, 10 degrees north latitude] in Southeast Asia” would be considered as “a casus belli for England and as a matter of grave concern for the United States.”³⁰ Wilkinson said Turner believed, without specific evidence, “that the Japanese would launch an attack on the Philippines,”³¹ where the U.S. Asiatic Fleet was based. Otherwise, according to Wilkinson, U.S. territory did not appear directly threatened.

Ingersoll told the inquiry that “While the Government could not guarantee that we would enter the war if Japan attacked Great Britain,” in line with the ABC Agreement, “they fully believed that we would do so. In our conversations with the British,” however,

we never could make a firm commitment that at any particular time the United States would enter the war, for the reason that unless we were attacked first the Executive Department did not have the power to put the Country into war.³²

²⁹Ibid., p. 303, quoting from ONI’s December 1, 1941 fortnightly summary of international news, airmailed to all flag officers afloat.

³⁰Ibid., p. 303.

³¹Ibid.

³²Ibid., p. 267.

Ingersoll testified that the United States was “virtually at war with Germany” in the Atlantic, although without benefit of a war declaration.³³ “It was felt that Germany was the principal enemy to be disposed of first.”³⁴ Nevertheless, Ingersoll said “We felt that the war would be precipitated in the Pacific and that we would only become involved in the war in the Atlantic as a result of war in the Pacific.” As a matter of fact, efforts had been made

to get our merchant vessels out of the Far East and out of the other areas in the Pacific where they could be captured by the Japanese. . . . [T]he Atlantic situation did not preoccupy our attention to the exclusion of the Pacific.³⁵

Ingersoll had anticipated Japan would strike “without a declaration of war.” But that her surprise attacks

would be made against the Philippines and Guam with possibly raiding attacks on our outlying small islands to the westward of Hawaii, and submarine attacks against our shipping around Hawaii. . . . [He did] not recall anyone in Operations representing to Admiral Stark that the war would be precipitated by an air attack on Pearl Harbor.³⁶

CAPTAIN SAFFORD'S TESTIMONY

Captain Laurence F. Safford of the security (intelligence) section of the Navy's communications division, met informally with Hart and related to him from memory some of the information Washington had derived from decrypted Japanese intercepts before the attack. Hart cautioned him against making statements he

³³Ibid., p. 469.

³⁴Ibid., p. 461.

³⁵Ibid., p. 470.

³⁶Ibid.

couldn't prove and asked him to check the record before returning to give formal testimony.

Safford returned to the Navy Department and looked for the pertinent intercepts. *But they were missing!* Therefore, when Safford testified formally before the Hart Inquiry on April 29, 1944,³⁷ he again spoke from memory and a few notes. However, he was able to recall in considerable detail many of the important Japanese dispatches that had been intercepted, deciphered, translated, and read by top military and administration officials in Washington before the attack.

As early as the spring of 1941 (May 22), they had received "positive proof of Japanese plans for the conquest of Southeastern Asia and the Southwest Pacific." Further indications of Japan's plans for aggression in the southwest Pacific and against southeast Asia were picked up in September and October. On November 4, we received information that Japan's internal situation, both political and economic, was so desperate as a result of the U.S. embargo that the Japanese government had to distract popular attention by a foreign war or by some bloodless diplomatic victory. We learned on November 12 that the Japanese government regarded November 25 as the deadline for negotiations then being conducted in Washington. It was obvious that Japan was preparing for offensive military operations of some nature.

The pace of the urgent intercepts picked up toward the end of November. On November 24, 1941, we learned that November 29 was

definitely the governing date for offensive military operations of some nature. We interpreted this to mean that large scale movements for the conquest of Southeast Asia and the

³⁷Ibid., p. 387.

Southwest Pacific would begin on that date, because, at that time Hawaii was out of our minds.³⁸

On December 1 U.S. officials learned that Japan was going to attack Britain and the United States. Then on December 4 we “received definite information . . . that Japan would attack the United States and Britain, but would maintain peace with Russia.”³⁹

At 9:00 P.M. (Washington time), December 6, 1941, we received positive information that Japan would declare war against the United States, at a time to be specified thereafter. This information was positive and unmistakable and was made available to Military Intelligence at this same time.⁴⁰

Because this information was so important, it “was distributed as a rush job by Lieutenant Commander Kramer.”

Much of the December 6 information was distributed over the telephone by Admiral Wilkinson and by Secretary Hull. The following officials were given this information that night: President Roosevelt (via the White House Aide), Secretary Hull, Secretary Stimson, Secretary Knox, Admiral Stark, Rear Admiral Turner, Rear Admiral Wilkinson, Rear Admiral Beardall. Lieutenant Colonel R.S. Bratton, U.S. Army, was given the same information at 9:00 P.M. [December 6] for dissemination to War Department officials, and we did not know any more, except that he got a copy over to Secretary Hull by 10:00.⁴¹

Finally, at 10:15 A.M. (Washington time), December 7, 1941, we received positive information from the Signal Intelligence

³⁸Ibid., p. 390.

³⁹Ibid.

⁴⁰Ibid.

⁴¹Ibid., pp. 390–92.

Service (War Department) that the Japanese declaration of war would be presented to the Secretary of State at 1:00 p.m. (Washington time) that date.

Before that message was presented to the secretary of the Navy, Kramer appended a note to the effect that “1:00 p.m. Washington time was sunrise in Hawaii and approximately midnight in the Philippines, and this indicated *a surprise air raid on Pearl Harbor in about three hours.*”⁴²

According to Safford, two specific messages received in Washington before the attack gave pretty clear indications that Japan intended to declare war on the United States. The “Winds Message,” intercepted December 4, was “regarded . . . as definitely committing the Japanese Government to war with the United States and Britain.”⁴³ And the message received in the evening of December 6 constituted “positive information that Japan would declare war against the United States, at a time to be specified thereafter.”⁴⁴

Hart: Is there any documentary report which shows the date and hour of delivery of the foregoing information to various officials?

Safford: There is no documentary evidence.

Safford was testifying, he said, on the basis of his “recollection of Lieutenant Commander Kramer’s verbal reports.”⁴⁵ Records of all the Japanese intercepts had been made and filed at the time, but in 1944 Safford could find no copies whatsoever.

⁴²Ibid., p. 390, italics added.

⁴³Ibid., p. 394.

⁴⁴Ibid., p. 390.

⁴⁵Ibid., p. 391.

Hart: Was any of the foregoing information, under dates of November and December, 1941, disseminated by the main Washington unit direct to the corresponding unit in Fourteenth Naval District [Hawaii]?

Safford: No, sir. That was not permitted by a written order then in force; but there was one exception. On the 3rd of December, I prepared OpNav Secret Dispatch 031855. . . . In sending this information, I was overstepping the bounds as established by approved war plans and joint agreement between Naval Communications and Naval Intelligence.

This information was sent to Manila for action and it was routed to Pearl Harbor for information.⁴⁶ It reported the Japanese government's orders to its emissaries throughout the world to destroy their codes and code machines.⁴⁷ Hawaii could not possibly have gained this information through their own efforts. The dissemination of such intelligence was the duty, responsibility, and privilege of the Office of Naval Intelligence, not of Safford's Communications Intelligence Unit.⁴⁸

This was Safford's first testimony before a Pearl Harbor investigation; he had not been asked to testify before the Roberts Commission. His revelations were startling. No one appearing before Roberts had hinted at the availability of such intelligence as Safford described. And of the Washington witnesses questioned by Hart, only Turner and Ingersoll had said anything that might have been interpreted as referring to the Japanese intercepts.

Safford appeared to know what he was talking about, but he was unable to produce copies of any of the Japanese messages to support his testimony. Almost three years had passed since he had actually seen any of the intercepts he was describing. How

⁴⁶Ibid., p. 392.

⁴⁷Ibid., part 14, p. 1408, Safford's Top Secret dispatch of December 3.

⁴⁸Ibid., part 26, pp. 392–93.

much, if any, of Safford's detailed testimony could be believed? Safford's memory could be playing tricks on him.

* * * * *

Secretary of Navy Knox died suddenly of a heart attack on April 28, 1944, while the Hart Inquiry was in progress. James V. Forrestal, then undersecretary of Navy, was sworn in as his successor on May 19.⁴⁹

Hart concluded his inquiry on June 15 and adjourned "to await the action of the convening authority."⁵⁰ The testimony of witnesses was recorded and submitted with the several documents and exhibits introduced to Forrestal.

SAFFORD FINDS THE MISSING INTERCEPTS

After testifying at the Hart Inquiry, Safford continued his search for the intercepts. But he was unsuccessful; all copies seemed to have disappeared. Safford was mystified. Finally someone told him about a packet of papers in a Navy safe labeled "P.H." Perhaps that contained the documents he was looking for. It did! It contained an almost complete set of the missing Japanese intercepts. Safford then had copies made and restored to the files.⁵¹

No one has ever been able to explain how the four original copies of each intercept produced for the government's Army and Navy permanent files and held under tight security had been lost or destroyed. Apparently this one set of intercepts survived because of a series of coincidences. On December 9, almost immediately after the attack, Navy Secretary Knox flew to Hawaii to investigate the damage done by the Japanese. He didn't return

⁴⁹Walter Millis, ed., *The Forrestal Diaries* (New York: Viking Press, 1951), p. xxiii. Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 26.

⁵⁰*Ibid.*, pp. 471–72.

⁵¹Safford's conversations with author; notes in author's files.

until December 14. Hawaii was then a territory, not yet a state. With the secretary out of the country, Undersecretary James V. Forrestal became acting secretary. Forrestal had known nothing of "Purple" and had not been privy to MAGIC. On assuming the responsibilities of secretary, he asked to be briefed. Therefore, apparently on orders of Admiral Noyes, director of naval communications, Lieutenant Commander Kramer, Japanese translator and Navy courier, assembled for Forrestal a special folder of intercepts and other papers "relative to the break in diplomatic relations with Japan."⁵² Because of Safford's familiarity with the traffic, Kramer had gone over the folder with Safford to check for completeness.⁵³ Then both Commander McCollum of Far East intelligence and Kramer briefed Forrestal, "explaining the significance of the various messages"⁵⁴ and "the way things shaped up from this traffic."⁵⁵

When Knox returned and Forrestal was relieved of his position as Acting Secretary, his bundle of intercepts must have been tossed in a safe and forgotten.

COURT MARTIAL DEADLINE EXTENDED

The tides of war had shifted by this time. The Allies were preparing to launch a second front in Europe. The Axis powers were on the defensive both in Europe and in Asia. Many people, Republicans and some anti-New Deal Democrats, were beginning to ask why, after all this time, it was still necessary to maintain secrecy about the Pearl Harbor attack. Why couldn't the truth be told? Was the administration trying to hide something?

⁵²Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 8, p. 3689, Safford testimony before the Joint Committee. At the time, Safford was under the impression the folder of intercepts was being assembled for the use of the Roberts Commission.

⁵³*Ibid.*, part 36, p. 71, Safford testimony before the Hewitt Inquiry.

⁵⁴*Ibid.*, part 36, p. 71, Safford testimony.

⁵⁵*Ibid.*, pp. 83–84, Kramer testimony before the Hewitt Inquiry.

Safford had told Kimmel about the important Japanese intercepts. But except for what he had learned about them from Rochefort in 1942,⁵⁶ Kimmel had only Safford's word that they had ever existed. Even so, Kimmel didn't want to lose the chance of having his day in court. Whenever anyone asked him about his possible court martial, he always replied that he was ready; he had always wanted "a free, open and public hearing."

"In the critical years following Pearl Harbor," Kimmel had understood why he "had to bear, in silence, the burden of shame heaped upon [him] by the report of the Roberts Commission and by published interpretations of that report." However, he felt that now, with our armed forces on the offensive on all fronts, he owed it to his family, friends, and the public to make it clear that he wanted

a trial by Court-Martial at the earliest practicable date. . . . To be held under a shadow of blame for an additional prolonged and indefinite period is intolerable. The public has a right to know what happened.

And he, Kimmel, had "an American's right to [his] day in court."⁵⁷

Kimmel sent his attorney, Charles B. Rugg, and his assistant, Edward B. Hanify, to Washington in the spring of 1944, to try to have Congress extend the deadline for his court martial. After a rather heated debate, Congress approved another six-month deadline extension and, at the same time, passed a joint resolution calling for investigations of the Pearl Harbor attack by both the Army and Navy.⁵⁸

⁵⁶Safford, "The Kita Message: No Longer a Mystery," manuscript (copy in author's files).

⁵⁷Kimmel, May 25, 1944, letter to Senator Sinclair Weeks (R., Mass.). Copy in Thomas Kimmel Collection. Quoted in Toland, *Infamy*, 1982, pp. 78–79.

⁵⁸*The New York Times*, June 8, 1944, p. 14.

FDR signed the joint resolution against the advice of Secretary of War Stimson and Knox. In signing, he stated that he was sure

the Congress did not intend that the investigation . . . should be conducted in a manner which would interrupt or interfere with the war effort. On the strength of this confidence I have approved the resolution.⁵⁹

Thus, by appearing to approve further investigations of Pearl Harbor, the politically astute president succeeded in shifting the responsibility for any delay to his secretaries.

⁵⁹Ibid., June 15, 1944, p. 10.

22.

Army Pearl Harbor Board

The Army Pearl Harbor Board (APHB) was authorized by Congress “to Ascertain and Report the Facts Relating to the Attack Made by Japanese Armed Forces upon the Territory of Hawaii on 7 December 1941, and to Make such Recommendations as It May Deem Proper.”¹ Lieutenant General George Grunert was appointed president of this “Grunert Board.” Two other Army generals also served—Major General Henry D. Russell and Major General Walter H. Frank. Colonels Charles W. West and Harry A. Toulmin had nonvoting positions as recorder and executive officer respectively, and Major Henry C. Clausen was assistant recorder.

The Grunert Board convened in Washington, D.C. on July 20, 1944. Being an Army board, it was primarily interested in Army’s role, especially that of Army Chief of Staff Marshall and Hawaiian Commander General Walter Short. The Board’s members first reviewed the reports of earlier investigations and studied materials supplied by various government agencies and Congressional

¹Public Law 339, 78th Cong., 2nd sess. (June 13, 1944); see also 79th Cong., 1st sess. Joint (Congressional) Committee on the Investigation of the Pearl Harbor Attack. *Pearl Harbor Attack*, 39 vols. (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1946), part 27, p. 12; part 31, p. 3173; part 39, p. 24.

committees. It also wrote Secretary of War Stimson and Army Chief of Staff George C. Marshall, listing the subjects the Board hoped to cover when they testified.² The APHB did not have the power of subpoena, but “in no instance [was] its invitation to appear and testify . . . ignored.”³ The questioning alternated among the members. The board interviewed 151 witnesses and was in continuous session until October 20, 1944.⁴ Because of the nature of the revelations, much of the testimony taken during the final segment of the proceedings was kept off the record and preserved in a separate TOP SECRET report.

ARMY CHIEF OF STAFF GENERAL MARSHALL:
US.-JAPAN RELATIONS IN 1941, INCREASINGLY TENSE

Marshall, the Board’s first witness, stated:

[W]e were very fearful of some warlike act by the Japanese, which immediately would have brought about a state of war in the Pacific, for which, at the time, we were not prepared. . . . [T]here were numerous indications . . . all of which indicated a very serious crisis developing in the Pacific in relation to Japan.⁵

Marshall said he and Chief of Naval Operations Admiral Stark

made it very clear . . . to the Secretary of State, that it was of the utmost importance . . . to delay so long as possible any outbreak in the Pacific. . . . We anticipated, beyond a doubt, a Japanese movement in Indo-China and the Gulf of Siam, and against the Malay Peninsula. We anticipated also an assault on the Philippines. We did not, so far as I can recall, anticipate an

²Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 29, pp. 2087–89.

³*Ibid.*, part 39, p. 24.

⁴*Ibid.*

⁵*Ibid.*, part 27, p. 14.

attack on Hawaii. . . . [W]e thought, with the addition of more modern planes, that the defenses there would be sufficient to make it extremely hazardous for the Japanese to attempt such an attack.⁶

In a joint November 27 memorandum Marshall and Stark told the president emphatically:

The most essential thing now, from the United States viewpoint, is to gain time. . . . After consultation with each other, United States, British, and Dutch military authorities in the Far East agreed that joint military counter action against Japan should be undertaken only in case Japan attacks or directly threatens the territory or mandated territory of the United States, the British Commonwealth, or the Netherlands East Indies, or should the Japanese move forces into Thailand west of 100° East or south of 10° North—Portuguese Timor, New Caledonia, or the Loyalty Islands.⁷

Very soon after Short assumed command of the Hawaiian Department, Marshall advised him (February 7, 1941) of his responsibility for protecting the fleet:

The fullest protection for the Fleet is *the* rather than *a* major consideration for us, there can be little question about that. . . . Please keep clearly in mind in all of your negotiations that our mission is to protect the base and the Naval concentration, and that purpose should be made clearly apparent to Admiral Kimmel.⁸

⁶Ibid.

⁷Ibid., p. 15.

⁸Ibid., pp. 16–18.

When asked if “the mission of the Army out there was the protection of the Navy,” Marshall answered, “Yes. That is the reason for the Army’s being there.”⁹

COOPERATION BETWEEN PEARL HARBOR COMMANDERS ADMIRAL KIMMEL AND GENERAL SHORT

The Roberts Commission had blamed the Pearl Harbor disaster to some extent on the failure of the two Pearl Harbor commanders, Kimmel and Short, to cooperate. Short acknowledged that there had been some instances when the channels of communication between the Army and Navy seemed to break down. For instance, he did not learn until December 8 about the submarine sunk near Pearl Harbor at about 6:45 A.M. on December 7.¹⁰ However, generally speaking he thought the Army’s relation with the Navy in Hawaii and his personal relationship with Kimmel had been good. Kimmel’s associates and Hawaiian locals who were questioned agreed.¹¹

GENERAL SHORT DEFENDS HIS SABOTAGE ALERT

Short had been charged by the Roberts Commission with an error in judgment for having instituted Alert #1 to guard against sabotage and for not having alerted for such an attack as that of December 7. The Army’s July 14, 1941, Standard Operating Procedure,¹² effective November 5, 1941, had described three alerts. So Marshall was familiar with them. However, he had some definite ideas about implementing them. He did not want

⁹Ibid., part 27, p. 18.

¹⁰Ibid., p. 285.

¹¹Ibid., p. 798 (Admiral Bloch); part 28, p. 1447 (Businessman Walter Francis Dillingham).

¹²Ibid., part 39, p. 77. APHB Report; part 7, pp. 2941–44.

the Hawaiian air force used to defend against sabotage and ground attacks, or to provide military police duty. He wrote Short on October 10 that using the air force for anti-sabotage “seems inconsistent with the emphasis we are placing on air strength in Hawaii.”¹³ Marshall told Short to use his Air Force for its normal purposes and not upon antisabotage guard duty.¹⁴

War Department’s November 27 “war warning” message #472 had read:

Negotiations with Japan appear to be terminated. . . . If hostilities cannot repeat cannot be avoided the United States desires that Japan commit the first overt act. This policy should not comma repeat not comma be construed as restricting you to a course of action that might jeopardize your defense. Prior to hostile Japanese action you are directed to undertake such reconnaissance and other measures as you deem necessary but these measures should be carried out so as not comma repeat not comma to alarm civil population or disclose intent.¹⁵

Short found this confusing; he should “undertake such reconnaissance and other measures as you deem necessary,” but these measures should be carried out “so as not comma repeat not comma to alarm civil population or disclose intent.” Because of this stricture, Short had decided upon Alert #1, designed specifically to guard against sabotage, espionage, and subversive activities, rather than one of the more aggressive Alerts.¹⁶ Short had then radioed Washington, as requested, that he had “alerted to prevent sabotage.”¹⁷

¹³Ibid., part 27, p. 22, Marshall testimony.

¹⁴Ibid., pp. 22–23. Marshall testimony.

¹⁵Message #472 quoted in APHB hearings, part 27, p. 155.

¹⁶Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 27, pp. 156, 158. Short testimony.

¹⁷Ibid., part 14, p. 1330; part 27, p. 158: “Re your radiogram 472, Department alerted to prevent sabotage.”

Short explained still further the reasons for his sabotage alert.¹⁸ Hawaiian Intelligence (G-2) had received a message—#473 from General Sherman Miles, Director of Military Intelligence, G-2—advising that “Subversive activities may be expected.”¹⁹ Miles explained that President Roosevelt had delegated to the FBI, ONI, and to his military intelligence division responsibility for counter-subversive activities. When Miles found that nothing had been said about subversion in General Marshall’s November 27 war warning, he felt it necessary to warn all G-2 departments. “The policy had already been laid down,” Miles said, “by General Marshall’s telegram;” he “was simply backing up” Marshall’s policy and emphasizing the form of attack for which he, Miles, was responsible.²⁰ Upon receiving the War Department’s November 27 “war warning,”²¹ Short thought, “from the caution about not taking any provocative measures against Japan and not alarming the public,” there was still some possibility of avoiding war with Japan.

To take the message of the 16th of October [re Japan’s change in Prime Ministers from Konoye to Tojo] and the 27th of November together, they indicated to me [Short] that they were still hopeful of avoiding hostilities.

Stark didn’t hear anything further from the War Department except the short November 28 message (#482), which went into detail about sabotage,²² telling Short to protect his establishments against “subversive propaganda and . . . espionage.”²³ Short

¹⁸Ibid., part 27, pp. 156, 158.

¹⁹Ibid., part 14, p. 1329.

²⁰Ibid., part 27, p. 66, 98–99, testimony of General H.H. Arnold, chief of the Army Air Forces.

²¹Ibid., part 27, p. 25.

²²Ibid., p. 239.

²³Ibid., part 14, p. 1330.

interpreted the several messages from the War Department in Washington as approving his sabotage alert. Other witnesses questioned by the Grunert board also believed Short had been justified in his decision to alert for sabotage. Short had been given no indication that the negotiations in Washington were reaching a breaking point; he had not been told that we were “negotiating with the British and Dutch about coordinated military action in the Pacific area.” If he had known more about what was going on in Washington and about the attitude of Washington officials, it would undoubtedly have made him “more conscious that war was practically unavoidable.”²⁴

WASHINGTON OFFICIALS SEE WAR AS IMMINENT

In their testimony, various Washington officials traced the deterioration of U.S.-Japanese relations back to various points in time. General H.H. Arnold, chief of the Army Air Forces, said it had been apparent as early as January 1941 that relations were “quite strained.”²⁵ General Leonard T. Gerow, acting, or assistant, chief of war plans, said the “general buildup . . . between July and November . . . led to the conclusion in November that war with Japan might occur.”²⁶ Marshall said it had been “a gradual process”; he had come to the conclusion “some time in the fall of ‘41 that war with Japan was inevitable.”²⁷ General Miles of Military Intelligence also saw the situation as precarious from November 27,

when we learned that we had practically given what . . . probably would be considered by them [the Japanese] an ultimatum . . . I considered war as very probable if not inevitable. . . . I

²⁴Ibid., part 27, p. 240.

²⁵Ibid., p. 89, Arnold testimony.

²⁶Ibid., part 29, p. 2158.

²⁷Ibid., p. 2326.

thought that very definitely an action by Japan, a pretty radical action, would be taken almost at once; that that necessarily would be an overt and open attack on the United States.

However, Miles pointed out, war was not the only possibility; “there were a good many things Japan could have done, if she did break those negotiations, short of open war with the United States, and we were considering all of those matters.”²⁸

WHAT DID SHORT KNOW OF THE GROWING U.S.-JAPANESE CRISIS BUILDUP?

Not much! Short believed he knew “in an indefinite way” that U.S. policy from sometime in August or September of 1941 was largely one of delaying, playing for time, with the realization that war with Japan was inevitable.²⁹ But he had not been told about the September 1941 conference when “General Marshall and others who were in conference with the Secretary of State had decided that war with Japan was inevitable.” Nor had he known that “we were negotiating with the British and Dutch about coordinated military action in the Pacific area.” And no one had told him

an agreement had been reached with all nations, the effect of which was that if the Japanese moved forces into Thailand west of 100 degrees east or south of 20 degrees north we would regard that as an act of war.³⁰

Basically, he knew only what was in the papers.

Short learned from an October 16 Stark-Kimmel message, of the resignation of Japan’s Prime Minister Konoye and the rise to power of the more militant General Hideki Tojo creating

²⁸Ibid., part 27, pp. 64–65.

²⁹Ibid., p. 240.

³⁰Ibid.

a grave situation. . . . [H]ostilities between Japan and Russia are a strong possibility. Since the US and Britain are held responsible for her present desperate situation there is also a possibility that Japan may attack these two powers.³¹

All concerned with “the existing grave situation” were “to take due precautions.” Short believed he had done that with his Alert #1: “We had had all the utilities guarded, all the bridges, and . . . I just simply cautioned people that were responsible for that guarding to be unusually careful.” Short’s interpretation was that the Navy Department “felt sure” Japan was going to attack Russia; an attack on the U.S. and G.B. was “only a possibility.”³²

After discussion with the Army’s G-2, Army Chief of War Plans Gerow “reached the conclusion at that time that the Navy estimate was more pessimistic than we believed it should be.”³³ Accordingly the War Department sent Short an October 20 follow-up radiogram in effect toning down the Navy’s warning:

Following War Dept. estimate of Japanese situation for your information STOP Tension between United States and Japan remains strained but no repeat no abrupt change in Japanese foreign policy appears imminent.³⁴

On November 24 the Navy sent another pessimistic message to its field commanders, including Kimmel:

Chances of favorable outcome of negotiations with Japan very doubtful x This situation coupled with statements of Japanese Government and movements their naval and military forces indicate to our opinion that a surprise aggressive movement

³¹Ibid., part 14, pp. 1327, 1402.

³²Ibid., part 27, pp. 218–19.

³³Ibid., part 29, p. 2159.

³⁴Ibid., part 14, p. 1327.

in any direction including attack on Philippines or Guam is a possibility.

The commanders were advised: "Chief of Staff has seen this dispatch concurs and requests action adees [addressees] to inform senior Army their areas."³⁵ Short did not recall seeing this pessimistic Navy message.³⁶

Marshall defended Washington's warnings as adequate to have alerted Short to be prepared for the crisis that was coming. "In our own view," Marshall testified,

an alert of the character, particularly the character of the two that occurred at that time, the Naval alert and then the later Army alert, were sufficient for any commander with a great responsibility.³⁷

Short thought that, if Washington ever really believed that an attack on the United States was imminent, it would have found some means to inform him, as commander in the field, if necessary by scrambler phone. "[O]rdinarily, you could get through in ten or fifteen minutes. It was reasonable to believe," Short testified, "that if there was going to be a hostile attack, they would have tried to get it to us by more than one means of communication." Thus he had been forced to conclude that "there was a feeling still at that time that secrecy was more important than the time element."³⁸ But there had been no word from Washington. Under Grunert's questioning, Marshall admitted that it would have been both "possible and feasible to have sent the substance of this secret information to the Commanding Generals of the Overseas Departments by courier or otherwise." However, Marshall had

³⁵Ibid., pp. 1328, 1405, CNO Dispatch #242005, November 24, 1941.

³⁶Ibid., part 27, p. 220.

³⁷Ibid., part 29, p. 2329.

³⁸Ibid., p.169.

been so sensitive to the threat of endangering Washington's source of intelligence—the MAGIC intercepts—that he had considered it “unwise” to do so.³⁹

PLANES AND SHIPS FOR HAWAII NOT A HIGH PRIORITY

The board questioned Admiral Bloch about the Navy's effort to obtain planes. In 1940 the Navy had gotten money for a 15,000-plane program—a number of PBVs, of which about 108 were allocated to the Fourteenth Naval District (Hawaii) and 150 or so to the U.S. Pacific Fleet. At that time the fleet only had 81. Bloch said he was “quite persistent in . . . trying to get” the planes.

Commander-in-Chief [Kimmel] knew . . . and he supported me. The correspondence went to the Navy Department asking for these planes, and I was told repeatedly they would be given to me but they would not be given to me until some time that was indefinite in the future.⁴⁰ . . . [I]t wasn't a question of appropriation. It was question of priorities: The war was in [the] Atlantic; Pacific wasn't in the war. . . . They say it in the war plan: The war is in the Atlantic; the Pacific is a more or less quasi-defensive [theater] until they get around to it.⁴¹

According to Admiral William S. Pye, commander battle force, Pacific Fleet, and commander Task Force 1, the situation was said to be serious “as early really as April 1941.” However, he reminded the board, the Navy Department had detached from the Pacific Fleet in June

³⁹Ibid., part 29, p. 2328.

⁴⁰Ibid., p. 800.

⁴¹Ibid., pp. 800–01.

one battleship division, one light cruiser division, and two destroyer divisions, to send into the Atlantic. It hardly seemed to the Commanders in the Pacific that if the situation was as bad as it was said to be, that was the time to be moving a large portion of our Fleet into the Atlantic,

especially as “the British Fleet, itself, was many times superior to the available German ships.”⁴²

Not only had the Pacific Fleet been gutted, Pye said, but the commanders encountered resistance from Washington whenever they asked for men and materiel.

During this same period, it became most difficult for the Commander-in-Chief of the Pacific Fleet to obtain patrol planes or even to obtain carrier planes, and, up to December 7, not even all of the carriers were equipped with their normal number of planes. . . . [B]y acts rather than [by] words . . .

Washington failed to indicate urgency. This led to “the almost uniform opinion that while war probably was in the offing,” it was not expected to come without warning. At least the necessary steps to prepare for a surprise attack were not being taken. The impression given was that if war came, it would be “upon the initiative of the United States.”⁴³

NAVY ALERT TO SUBMARINE ATTACK THREAT

Grunert questioned Pye about reconnaissance in Hawaii, the areas in which the fleet operated and patrolled with the available aircraft.

⁴²Ibid., p. 548.

⁴³Ibid.

Grunert: Would it have been reasonable to assume . . . that the enemy could not well approach with aircraft carriers to make an attack on the mainland?

Pye: . . . [I]t should be recalled that we were not in a state of war [T]he patrol was primarily to determine the possible presence of submarines. . . . If attacks had been made by submarines, and the submarine not sighted or sunk or captured, there would have been no way for us to prove definitely that it was not an internal explosion in the ship rather than a torpedo. In addition to that there was always the possibility that German crews might man Japanese submarines or might, in the last analysis, even bring their submarines to the Hawaiian Islands in order to try to force us into war. . . . [T]he implication [of the November 27 “war warning”] was that there was great danger of a submarine attack.

Grunert: Then it would appear from what testimony we have had to date that the Army was sabotage-minded and the Navy may have been submarine-minded.

Pye: I think there is no question but what the Navy was submarine-minded.⁴⁴

PEARL HARBOR ATTACK SURPRISED WASHINGTON OFFICIALS AS WELL AS HAWAIIAN COMMANDERS

The principal task of the U.S. embassy in Japan, particularly of its military and naval officers, was to obtain information concerning probable action on the part of the Japanese Army and Navy.⁴⁵ Yet in the months before the attack the embassy officials in Japan had found this to be increasingly difficult. Ambassador Grew cabled from Tokyo on November 17, 1941: “The Embassy’s field

⁴⁴Ibid., pp. 539–40.

⁴⁵Ibid., p. 62.

of naval or military observation is restricted almost literally to what could be seen with the naked eye, and this is negligible.”⁴⁶

According to General Miles, Chief of Army’s G-2, Military Intelligence, many of our sources of intelligence had dried up. To have avoided being surprised on the morning of December 7, would have called for knowing about Japan’s naval bases, staging areas, and within rather fairly narrow limits, the expected time of the attack and the direction of approach. He testified:

I did not think any Intelligence officer ever thought that he could be sure of picking up a convoy or attack force or task force in Japan before it sailed and know where it was going. . . . It would have been almost a military intelligence miracle.⁴⁷

Pye did “not believe the people in Washington expected the attack any more than the people in Honolulu.”⁴⁸ He “thought the attitude of the officers of the Fleet was just about the same as the attitude of the War and Navy Departments.” Pye, who met Secretary Knox right upon his arrival in the Hawaiian Islands about December 10, said

the first thing Knox said to me was, “No one in Washington expected such an attack—[not] even Kelly Turner.” Admiral Kelly Turner was in the War Plans Division, was the most aggressive-minded of all.⁴⁹

Marshall testified that he had sent Major General Arnold, commanding general, Army Air Force, and deputy chief of staff, to California specifically to expedite the departure of the B-17 bombers to the Philippines.⁵⁰ Arnold in turn testified that in

⁴⁶Ibid., p. 58. See also U.S. State, *Peace and War: 1931–1941*, pp. 788–99.

⁴⁷Ibid., part 27, p. 62.

⁴⁸Ibid., part 27, p. 550.

⁴⁹Ibid., p. 554.

⁵⁰Ibid., part 29, p. 2316.

view of the strained relations with Japan, we were doing “what we could to prepare for any eventuality that might occur, without causing an overt act against the Japanese.”⁵¹ We had not been “so much worried about the immediate attack on Hawaii. It was always a possibility; but we all thought there certainly would be an attack against Midway and Wake.”⁵² The B-17s left the West Coast for Hawaii without ammunition

because at that time it was a question of gasoline or ammunition for that long 2400-mile hop. . . . So they did not take the ammunition, and they got there right in the middle of the Pearl Harbor attack.⁵³

“Obviously,” Arnold said, “we made an error, an error in judgment. Somebody had to weigh the fact against their certainty of arriving there by providing sufficient gasoline against the probability of their using their machine guns and not getting there” because they were carrying ammunition.

The fact that bombers had been dispatched to Honolulu, unarmed, en route to the Philippines on the night of December 6–7, told Short “that the War Department felt that there was no danger of an air attack on Honolulu, or between Honolulu and San Francisco.” The extra weight in ammunition was considered “a greater hazard . . . than it was to take a chance of meeting the Japs without any ability to return their fire.”⁵⁴ “[V]ery definitely,” Short said, “their estimate was exactly the same as [his], they were not expecting an air attack on Honolulu.”⁵⁵

⁵¹Ibid., part 27, p. 89.

⁵²Ibid., p. 92.

⁵³Ibid., p. 96.

⁵⁴Ibid., p. 166.

⁵⁵Ibid., p. 168.

PHILIPPINES CONSIDERED THE MOST LIKELY TARGET

Relations between the United States and Japan were deteriorating in October and November 1941. Washington was expecting a Japanese strike somewhere in the western Pacific or southeast Asia. It seemed logical that she would attack the Philippines to keep the United States from intercepting Japanese ships and planes bound for southeast Asia. Thus, the War Department had been trying desperately to build up U.S. defenses there. According to Marshall, “we were pouring through Hawaii, on the way to the Philippines, convoys [with men and materiel for the Philippines], rushing everybody. Everything was being pushed to the last extreme.”⁵⁶ “[F]rom the information that we were receiving,” Marshall felt “that they [the Japanese] were now getting in a highly nervous state because of the arrival of supplies in the Philippines.” One MAGIC message had asked the Japanese Consul General in Manila “to check up immediately on the presence of Flying Fortresses in the Philippines.” The Japanese consul in Manila was also reporting “the tremendous unloading procedures being carried out at night and the movement of things at night from the docks, and everybody barred from the vicinity.” Marshall concluded that the Japanese were in “a critical posture as to what they must do to prevent us from building up further in the Philippines.”⁵⁷

“Our own belief,” Marshall said,

was that, once we got the planes out there, and particularly these convoys that were then on the Pacific, which had, compared to what the Philippines already had, a wealth of material . . . the Japanese would be in an extremely delicate strategical

⁵⁶Ibid., part 29, p. 2329.

⁵⁷Ibid., p. 2326.

position in trying to carry out any enterprise to the south of the Philippines.⁵⁸

Marshall realized that the shipments being rushed out to the Philippines must be alarming Japan. “Nobody could look at that [buildup],” he told the board,

without realizing that something very critical was in the wind. Our great problem was how to do these things . . . the shipments, and collecting the means and getting them out, particularly to the Philippines, which passed entirely through Hawaii—without giving such notice to the Japanese that it would have an unfortunate effect in our stalling off this affair.⁵⁹

The Joint Board of the Army and Navy conference on November 3 had urged postponing hostilities as long as possible. The November 5 Marshall-Stark memorandum to FDR had recommended that we *not* issue an ultimatum that might provoke Japan to attack.⁶⁰ Yet, on November 26, Hull had handed the Japanese ambassadors the U.S. “ultimatum” he knew the Japanese government would not accept.

Washington’s eyes appeared to be glued on the Philippines. Throughout this time, relatively little thought was given to Hawaii. Further confirmation of Washington’s neglect of Pearl Harbor and its concentration on the Philippines came when Marshall appeared before the board on September 29, 1944. He was asked specifically about the “One P.M. Message” of December 7 and his radiogram to Hawaii which had left Washington shortly after noon that day but was delayed in transit and failed to reach Pearl Harbor until after the attack. Grunert asked Marshall’s “[r]easons for not using the telephone to inform General Short

⁵⁸Ibid., p. 2327.

⁵⁹Ibid., part 29, p. 2329.

⁶⁰Ibid., part 14, pp. 1061–62, Exhibit No. 16.

of the information contained in the Chief of Staff's radiogram of 7 December 1941."⁶¹ Marshall said that if he had used the scrambler phone to relay that message he "would certainly have called MacArthur [in the Philippines] first, and then I would have called Panama Canal second." He had thought "we were open in a more vulnerable way in the Panama Canal, than we were in Hawaii."⁶²

The messages sent Short in Hawaii had been terse and rather cryptic, advising him that

hostilities between Japan and Russia are a strong possibility. Since the U.S. and Britain are held responsible by Japan for her present desperate situation there is also a possibility that Japan may attack these two powers.⁶³

Short had been led to believe, by the urgency of the shipments passing through Hawaii to the Philippines, that Washington must have had definite reasons for believing that the Philippine Islands were the U.S. territory most seriously threatened by Japanese attack.

KIMMEL TELLS THE APHB ABOUT IMPORTANT INTELLIGENCE NOT SENT PEARL HARBOR COMMANDERS

On Friday, August 25, several days after Kimmel testified before the Navy Court of Inquiry, he was called to the witness stand by the APHB which was going on concurrently. He was asked the usual questions about his relationship with Short and other matters pertaining to conditions before the attack.⁶⁴ Kimmel

⁶¹Ibid., pp. 2330–31, Grunert letter of August 31, 1944.

⁶²Ibid., p. 2313; part 27, p. 169.

⁶³Ibid., part 14, p. 1327, Navy message #162203 of October 16.

⁶⁴Ibid., part 28, pp. 909–48.

then discussed intelligence. He said he “got information from the Navy Department . . . so far as the efficiency of the Japanese Air Force [was] concerned.” But his sources had then been limited for he could not “send people to the Mandated Islands to discover what the Japanese were doing” there. His

orders were not to go anywhere near them. . . . We wanted to go into the Gilberts to make some surveys down there . . . and the answer was that we should not evince any interest in the Gilberts, because the Japs might find out that we were interested.⁶⁵

In any event, Kimmel said, “A movement such as that would have had to be approved by the Navy Department.” Kimmel was “convinced that no reconnaissance of the Mandates would have been permitted by the Navy Department at that time.”⁶⁶ He had a statement to make about “the information which was supplied to the two responsible commanders in Hawaii.” He and Short had “thoroughly considered all such information” and had taken “the action which we deemed appropriate. There was no disagreement between the Army and Navy and none between me and my personal advisers.”⁶⁷

However, Kimmel said,

Since Pearl Harbor information has come to my knowledge that vital information in the hands of the War and Navy Departments was not supplied to responsible officers in Hawaii; in particular, that the War and Navy Departments knew that Japan had set a deadline of 25 November, later extended to 29 November for the signing of an agreement, after which they would take hostile steps against the United States; that on 26 November an ultimatum was delivered to Japan by the United States. This was done notwithstanding a joint recommendation

⁶⁵Ibid., p. 944; part 29, pp. 2279–81.

⁶⁶Ibid., part 28, p. 945.

⁶⁷Ibid., p. 946.

to the president by General Marshall and Admiral Stark that no ultimatum of any kind should be made to Japan.

Kimmel said he “had been advised of this recommendation and had received no qualification of that information.” Moreover, he said he had “had no knowledge of the delivery of the ultimatum to Japan on 26 November, 1941.”⁶⁸

Further, Kimmel said, he was

certain that several days prior to 7 December, 1941, there was information in the War Department and the Navy Department that Japan would attack the United States and, very probably, that the attack would be directed against the fleet at Pearl Harbor, among other places; that there was information in the War and Navy Departments on 6 December, 1941, that the hour of attack was momentarily imminent, and that early on 7 December, 1941, the precise time of the attack was known. It was known at least three or probably four hours before the attack.⁶⁹

All this information, Kimmel said, “was denied” to him and to Short, yet he felt they were entitled to it. He had believed that if the War and Navy departments had had such information, they would surely have furnished it to them.

Had we not been denied this, many things would have been different. Had we been furnished this information as little as two or three hours before the attack, which was easily feasible and possible,

Kimmel said, “much could have been done.”⁷⁰

When Kimmel finished his statement, Grunert said, “Some of the things to which you have referred may become the subject

⁶⁸Ibid.

⁶⁹Ibid., p. 947.

⁷⁰Ibid.

of further investigation before the Board is through” and he asked if Kimmel would provide his source. Kimmel agreed to “cooperate to the best of my ability, in conformity with the restrictions which [had] been imposed upon me.”⁷¹

The APHB members could not then pursue Kimmel’s leads as they were flying to San Francisco and Pearl Harbor to question other witnesses. Kimmel’s testimony raised new questions. Grunert wrote Marshall another letter saying he wanted to ask Marshall about information “brought to the attention of the Board, which it did not have when you testified” before.⁷²

APHB FLIES TO SAN FRANCISCO AND HAWAII

En route to and from Hawaii,⁷³ the Board stopped in San Francisco to investigate charges of shoddy construction carried out for the Army by the Hawaiian Constructors.⁷⁴ In Hawaii, the board asked Army officers and local businessmen about Short’s preparations for the islands’ defense. Generally speaking, they approved of Short’s defense preparations. And except for a few Japanese connected with the consulate, American businessmen did not question the loyalty of most ethnic Japanese.⁷⁵

The APHB members left Hawaii for Washington on September 13⁷⁶ and resumed their hearings on September 26.

Only when they were back in Washington were the Grunert Board members able to follow up on Kimmel’s revelations. And the board did not actually obtain copies of the documents on which they were based until October 6, when the board was

⁷¹Ibid.

⁷²Ibid., part 29, pp. 2330–31.

⁷³Ibid., part 28, pp. 951–1352.

⁷⁴Ibid., part 29, pp. 2007–60.

⁷⁵See for example, *ibid.*, part 27, p. 414, and part 28, pp. 1364–65, 1369, 1382–83, 1420–23, and 1441.

⁷⁶Ibid., part 28, pp. 1355–2003.

winding up its hearings. In view of the sensitivity of this material, and to safeguard the confidentiality of witnesses, their remarks were not included in the regular printed hearings but placed in a separate TOP SECRET supplement.⁷⁷

AMBASSADOR GREW DESCRIBES THE TOKYO SITUATION

Joseph C. Grew had been U.S. ambassador to Japan from June 14, 1932, until December 7. Once the two nations were at war, he was placed under house arrest and held until an exchange of diplomats could be arranged. Grew was questioned about U.S.-Japanese relations in general. “[T]he trend of our relations during . . . the years 1940 and 1941 was almost steadily down-hill.” Grew thought that in the embassy they had done everything possible

to arrest that trend. . . . But we were up against what I would call a “tidal wave” of military extremism in Japan. . . . [N]ot being a defeatist by nature, I was unwilling to admit that war was inevitable, up to the last minute.⁷⁸

Grew had warned Washington that economic embargoes should not be imposed

until we were prepared to go all the way through with whatever might result from those embargoes. . . . [O]ur relations with that country were bound to go steadily down-hill and it might, and probably would, end in war.⁷⁹

⁷⁷Ibid., part 29, pp. 2333–57.

⁷⁸Ibid., pp. 2143–44.

⁷⁹Ibid., p. 2144.

And he reminded the board, there were “not only the embargoes, but also the freezing order and the denunciation of our treaty and commerce with Japan.”⁸⁰

Grew thought the attack must have been a surprise also to the civil authorities in Japan. It was “perfectly possible,” he said, “that the Cabinet was not informed of the plans for attacking Pearl Harbor.”⁸¹ He had had a conversation with Foreign Minister Togo at half past midnight on December 7—about three hours before the attack—and was “convinced from the nature of that conversation that Mr. Togo did not at that moment know that Pearl Harbor was about to break.” Grew added:

That does not for a moment mean that they were not informed of the likelihood that under certain circumstances war might occur. Of course, they knew that, without any shadow of doubt, and Nomura and Kurusu knew that, too. I was referring purely to the attack on Pearl Harbor, itself.⁸²

GENERAL SHORT RAISES MORE QUESTIONS

After Short appeared before the APHB, he asked to be furnished the testimony of other witnesses and the board had agreed.⁸³ When he appeared again on September 29,⁸⁴ he said he was concerned about the criticism levied against the Hawaiian commanders because the attack had taken them by surprise. They were not the only ones surprised; he was convinced the attack had been a surprise to Washington officials also. On the theory that

⁸⁰*Ibid.*, p. 2152.

⁸¹*Ibid.*, p. 2151.

⁸²*Ibid.*, p. 2154.

⁸³*Ibid.*, p. 2270, Major General Ulio, adjutant general, August 24, 1944, response to Short.

⁸⁴*Ibid.*, p. 2251, Grunert statement.

“actions speak louder than words,” he pointed to Washington’s pre-attack actions. He reminded the board of Washington’s

constant denials of requests for increases in personnel, for money for the improvement of defenses; and things like sending out planes [from California] the night before the attack without ammunition—all kinds of things, that really were stronger in their effect than mere words.

Assuming “that they were acting in good faith,” Short continued, “you have to arrive at the conclusion that they undoubtedly were not contemplating an air attack on Honolulu.”⁸⁵

The Army had also been considered negligent because its radar was not operational and had not warned of the impending attack that morning. That was not due to the command’s negligence. Rather, Short said, it was due to “a shortage of supplies for the radar, such as vacuum tubes, and so forth.” In an October 1941 memorandum radar equipment had been requested adequate to operate 24 hours daily, but it had been radically cut back to allow only two hours of operation per day. Why? Because, according to the War Department, “the United States was not threatened with attack.”⁸⁶

Short raised three important questions:

(1) Had the APHB learned anything about the coded messages several witnesses had mentioned? For instance, what was the basis for Justice Roberts’s question concerning

A Japanese code message . . . intercepted and . . . broken down by the Department in Washington . . . which gave certain key words which would be flashed over the radio directing the attack on Pearl Harbor?⁸⁷

⁸⁵Ibid., p. 2254.

⁸⁶Ibid., part 29, p. 2261 (Powell October 1941 memo to Short).

⁸⁷Ibid., p. 2255. In part 10, Short read from the testimony before the Roberts Commission of Lieutenant Colonel George W. Bicknell, assistant to the department G-2 in Honolulu; part 22, p. 192.

(2) What new intelligence had prompted Marshall to send the message concerning the Japanese delivery time to the field commanders at noon on December 7?⁸⁸

(3) What were the grounds for Kimmel's statement to the board about information available in Washington during the crucial days before the attack, information not furnished Short and Kimmel?⁸⁹

Short was anxious to learn about the coded messages. He had written Stimson that very day "asking that a search be made . . . and that, if it [the information] is not to be found in the War Department files, that a demand be made on the Navy for the information. . . ." ⁹⁰ Short felt that "all pertinent evidence" should be made available to the board and to him, because the War Department had not permitted him to have a representative attend the APHB hearings and examine witnesses.⁹¹ However, Short's path to securing this information wasn't easy. When he wrote Secretary of War Stimson later (September 29, 1944) asking for permission to see the SECRET documents,⁹² Stimson agreed that Short's military counsel, Brigadier General Thomas H. Green, should have access to this material (October 2, 1944).⁹³ Grunert tried to countermand that permission,⁹⁴ but the War Department refused. Grunert was told to "comply with the instructions of the Secretary of War as issued"⁹⁵ and to allow Green to see the TOP SECRET material. But Short was *not* allowed access. Green was even asked to sign a letter "swear[ing]

⁸⁸Ibid., part 29, p. 2257.

⁸⁹Ibid., p. 2258.

⁹⁰Ibid., p. 2259.

⁹¹Ibid., pp. 2434–35.

⁹²Ibid.

⁹³Ibid., p. 2435.

⁹⁴Ibid., p. 2436.

⁹⁵Ibid., pp. 2436–37.

that you have been appropriately warned relating to the military security concerning these matters.”⁹⁶

MARSHALL REMEMBERS SOME EVENTS, DOES NOT RECALL OTHERS

When Marshall appeared before the board again, he was asked about the questions in Grunert’s letter of August 31, 1944.⁹⁷ Marshall was asked about the Japanese-imposed deadlines—November 25 at first, then November 29. “[T]he first date of the 25th of November . . . puzzled us greatly,” Marshall said.

[T]he only thing that we could think of at the moment was . . . that on that day the anti-Comintern pact expired. . . . During all this period the Japanese had been involved in actions in the China theater and towards Indo-China, which indicated . . . that they were either about to embark on a war in the Malaysia area, at least, or were in the process of carrying out very dire infiltration operations. . . . However, we later received information from our secret sources . . . that the date had been extended to the 29th of November. That, in our view, wiped out any thought that the original date of the 25th of November pertained to the anti-Comintern pact. . . . November 29th arrived and passed, and we entered into December without anything happening other than the continuation of these movements, which we could follow fairly well, down the China coast and Indo-China and headed quite plainly towards Thailand and the Gulf of Siam.

[I]n all the past procedures of the Japanese, they had taken very bold measures . . . on the assumption, I presume—that they could get away with them without the United States entering into war. Their feeling, so nearly as we could determine, was one that the United States would not participate in a war and

⁹⁶Ibid., pp. 2437–38.

⁹⁷Ibid., pp. 2330–31, Grunert August 31, 1944, letter to Marshall.

they could take advantage of that by doing things that otherwise would immediately provoke a state of war.⁹⁸

Throughout November, Marshall and Stark were urging the administration to postpone any confrontation with the Japanese until they could build up their Philippine defenses. The British, preoccupied at home with their struggle against Germany, were overextended and wanted to avoid open conflict with the Japanese. Yet the embargo on oil to Japan, with the cooperation of the British and Dutch, imperiled the Japanese. Also the reopening of the Burma Road by the British made it easier for China to be provisioned, and this was a thorn in the side of the Japanese. Marshall said he believed that the Japanese

were going ahead to get in as strong a position as possible, on the assumption that the reluctance of the United States and the reluctance of the British Government in its dilemma of the moment would permit them to establish themselves.⁹⁹

He thought

the Japanese were capitalizing on the belief that it would be very difficult to bring our people into a willingness to enter the war. That, incidentally, was somewhat confirmed by the governmental policy on our part of making certain that the overt act should not be attributed to the United States, because of the state of public mind at that time. Of course, no one anticipated that that overt act would be the crippling of the Pacific Fleet.

Marshall believed “That the Japanese were going to take every conceivable advantage and finally would reach the point where

⁹⁸Ibid., pp. 2308–09.

⁹⁹Ibid., p. 2309.

they could safely declare war, involve us in war, and get all the other things they were after.”¹⁰⁰

By the fall of 1941, Marshall said, he had come to the conclusion that war with Japan was inevitable. “Prudence dictated that warnings be sent by the War Department to those officers responsible for the defense of all our areas within reach of Japanese action.” However, information available in the War Department led him to believe that any Japanese attack would take place in the vicinity of the Malay Peninsula and the Philippines.¹⁰¹ He wasn’t particularly concerned about Hawaii, especially as he considered it better supplied and better prepared to defend itself than other U.S. outposts.¹⁰²

APHB board member General Russell questioned Marshall on various points Kimmel had raised. Marshall admitted to having no recollection of the several advanced warnings received in Washington. He did not recall having learned that November 29, Tokyo time, “was definitely the governing date for offensive military operations of some nature.” He had no recollection of any messages on November 26, December 1, and December 4 giving “specific evidence of Japan’s intention to wage an offensive war against both Britain and the United States.”¹⁰³

Marshall recalled something about a “Winds Code” setup and the alerting of our code clerks to listen for the crucial words. But, he said,

Colonel Bratton was unable to find that a—our records do not show that a Japanese message using the “Winds” code was intercepted by the F.C.C. or the Army Signal Corps until after Pearl Harbor.

¹⁰⁰Ibid., p. 2326.

¹⁰¹Ibid., p. 2328.

¹⁰²Ibid., pp. 2317, 2318.

¹⁰³Ibid., p. 2321.

However, he admitted that it did appear “from the record,” that “a Japanese message using the ‘Winds’ code had been intercepted.” This indicated, Marshall said, that “Japanese-Great Britain relations were to be broken.” Marshall didn’t mention a possible break in Japanese-U.S. relations.¹⁰⁴ Russell noted this was the Army interpretation. He said,

The Navy people say that the executive order [the “Winds Execute”] whenever it came in—and they alleged it came in on the 3rd [sic] of December . . . meant that war was coming with the United States and with Britain, but not with Russia.¹⁰⁵

Marshall had understood from Bratton that the intelligence officers in Hawaii were privy to the information about the “Winds Code” message.¹⁰⁶

Another important matter which Marshall did not remember related to the first 13 parts of the Japanese reply to our “ultimatum.” According to Kimmel’s statement, they were received during the evening of December 6. Marshall said was he was unaware of this.¹⁰⁷

Responding to Grunert’s question as to when on December 7 Marshall had learned “the precise time of the attack,” he reviewed his December 7 morning movements—his early horseback ride; his arrival at his War Department office about 11 A.M.; his meeting with Miles, Gerow, and Bratton; his discovery of the long 14-part Japanese message; and, finally, the “One P.M. Message.” “Something was going to happen at 1:00, it was quite evident to us.” After digesting all this material, Marshall drafted the message that went out to the field commanders at noon.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁴*Ibid.*, p. 2324.

¹⁰⁵*Ibid.*, pp. 2323, 2325.

¹⁰⁶*Ibid.*, pp. 2324–25.

¹⁰⁷*Ibid.*, p. 2320.

¹⁰⁸*Ibid.*, pp. 2310, 2311.

According to Marshall, he had come to the conclusion about November 1 that war with Japan was inevitable. Concerning the TOP SECRET information known to top Washington officials, he admitted that to have sent this intelligence to the commanding generals of the overseas departments “by courier or otherwise, thereby avoiding the danger of exposing the codes that I was striving so diligently to protect,” would have been “both practical and feasible.” On the morning of December 7, when confronted with incontestable evidence that Japan was planning some definite action that very day at 1:00 P.M. Washington time, Marshall said it would have been possible to notify the commanders by a more rapid method than the coded radio message actually dispatched at noon that day. But he felt then that that would have been “unwise.”¹⁰⁹ Moreover, Marshall was convinced that Short had been sent “sufficient information” and that he had “adequate weapons, ammunition, and other means for the discharge of his defensive mission in the protection of the Island of Oahu.”¹¹⁰

Marshall apologized for not being better prepared to answer the board’s questions, but as chief of staff he had been “busy with the war with Japan and Germany” and had not been able to keep up on the Pearl Harbor situation.¹¹¹

There were still more questions the board wanted to pursue with Marshall, who pleaded pressure of other business—appointments with a Chinese official, the combined Chiefs of Staff, the U.S. Chiefs of Staff, the ambassador going to France. And “confidentially” he was leaving for France himself the next Tuesday.¹¹² Grunert said if it “appears necessary,” the Board might ask Marshall for “another hour early next week.”¹¹³ The next day,

¹⁰⁹Ibid., p. 2328.

¹¹⁰Ibid., pp. 2313, 2319.

¹¹¹Ibid., p. 2329.

¹¹²Ibid., pp. 2329–30.

¹¹³Ibid.

Saturday, September 30, the board sent Marshall still more questions.¹¹⁴ In the meantime, two important witnesses testified—Army courier Colonel Rufus Bratton and Navy Captain L.F. Safford.

COLONEL BRATTON TESTIFIES ABOUT JAPANESE INTERCEPTS

At the time of the attack, Colonel Rufus S. Bratton had been Chief, Far Eastern Section G-2 and Army Courier. When testifying before the APHB,¹¹⁵ he referred to a memorandum written December 10 detailing the events of December 7,¹¹⁶ and to a “Summary of Far Eastern Documents,” based on documents from 1937–1941 and compiled August 1943 by the Far Eastern section, intelligence group, and by War Department’s G-2. It had been compiled for submission to the Army chief of staff and the president. Bratton was “conversant with the Japanese language.”¹¹⁷ Although he had not been involved with the actual interception and decoding of the Japanese messages on which that Summary had been based—that had been the responsibility of the Army’s Signal Intelligence Service (S.I.S.) and the Navy’s Office of Naval Intelligence (O.N.I.)—he had seen “all secret messages relating to the Japanese situation received by the War Department.”¹¹⁸ In August 1940, U.S. cryptographers had succeeded in deciphering the Japanese diplomatic code, which became known as “purple,” and ever since then we had been reading many, if not most, of the Japanese intercepts transmitted in this code. The intelligence derived from this source was considered so valuable that it had been code-named MAGIC. Much of the information Kimmel

¹¹⁴Ibid., pp. 2413–15.

¹¹⁵Ibid., pp. 2335–55.

¹¹⁶Ibid., pp. 2346–47.

¹¹⁷Ibid., p. 2338.

¹¹⁸Ibid., p. 2335.

referred to, that had not been furnished the Pearl Harbor commanders, had come from MAGIC.

According to Bratton, tight security maintained in the distribution of the Japanese intercepts.

As to the intercepts, and translations of Japanese intercepts, they were handled in a special way. . . . In 1941, certainly in the latter part of it, I was the custodian and the disseminator of this type of intelligence. . . . The translations, made either in the Signal Corps SIS section or in the corresponding section of Naval Communications were sent to me in sextuplet, six copies of each one. Out of the mass of material . . . say 10 to 20 percent was of intelligence value; the remainder dealt with administrative or personal matters . . . and that material I destroyed by burning. The remaining "flimsies" containing military intelligence of value to our Government officials was arranged in cardboard folders which in turn were placed in locked dispatch cases, one for the Secretary of State, one for the Secretary of War, one for the Chief of Staff, one for the AC of S, G-2, and one for the AC of S, WPD.

I delivered these pouches in person to the officers concerned, who had keys to the pouches. . . . I collected all of these pouches on my next visit, or on my next round the following day, and destroyed the contents of them by burning and retaining in my file a complete copy of everything that had been seen by all of these officials.¹¹⁹

The critical messages sent by G-2, in November and early December, 1941: "The translated intercepts, you refer to, are on file in G-2, War Department."¹²⁰

"During this period," Bratton said,

¹¹⁹Ibid., pp. 2450–51.

¹²⁰Ibid., p. 2417.

the president, the Secretary of State, the Secretary of War, the Chief, the AC of S G-2, and the Chief of the War Plans Division all saw the same material, they all read the same translations, as fast as I could get them to them.¹²¹

These materials

did not go out to the field. . . . We felt considerably hampered in G-2 by two restrictions that were placed upon us. The first I have mentioned as the policy which prevented us from giving out intelligence to G-2s in tactical units or in overseas department, which might have the effect of bringing about operational results. The other restriction was imposed on us by the Navy, who refused to allow us to send any of this intercept intelligence out to any of our people in the field over Army net, using any Army code cipher . . . fear of the Japanese breaking our Army code, and finding out that we were reading their own. It was a security measure.¹²²

Bratton testified that on the morning of December 7, between 8:30 and 9:00 A.M., he had received the short Japanese English-language intercept "relating to the destruction of the code machines and the delivery of the ultimatum." He realized this was "about the most important message" he had received during this period and immediately phoned Marshall's quarters.¹²³ Bratton was told Marshall "had gone horseback riding." He "requested his [Marshall's] orderly to go out and find him at once and ask him to call . . . as soon as practicable, as [he] had an important message to deliver to him." In spite of the urgency of the message, it was not until "sometime between ten and eleven" that Marshall returned Bratton's call. Bratton then told Marshall that he "had a message of extreme importance which he should see at once" and

¹²¹Ibid., p. 2451.

¹²²Ibid., p. 2453

¹²³Ibid., pp. 2344-45.

offered to bring it out to Marshall's quarters. Marshall told him to report to him in his office.¹²⁴

Marshall arrived in his office at "about 11:25." Then finally, almost three hours after this "message of extreme importance" had been received, Bratton was able to show it to Marshall. Marshall discussed it with Bratton, Miles, and Gerow, who were present. They "thought it probable that the Japanese line of action would be into Thailand but that it might be into any one or more of a number of other areas."¹²⁵ Marshall then radioed the Army field commanders "by the fastest possible safe means, giving the Philippines first priority,"¹²⁶ advising them of the 1 P.M. deadline, and telling them to "be on the alert accordingly."¹²⁷ This was the message that reached Pearl Harbor in the afternoon, hours after the attack had ended.

The APHB wanted to know whether or not the "Winds Code" setup had ever been "executed," i.e., implemented. Bratton had known that the FCC had been looking for such a message and he remembered talking about weather messages with Colonel Sadtler, Navy Lieutenant Kramer and Navy Commander McCollum. But his memory was vague. He did remember talking with Sadtler on the morning of December 5, who said something about a message that had come through indicating a break between Japan and Great Britain. Bratton did not remember seeing before the attack an implementation, a "Winds Code" Execute, with reference to a Japanese-United States break.¹²⁸ However, he did remember, vaguely, seeing a "Winds Execute" referring to a Japanese-U.S. break in relations *after* the attack.¹²⁹

¹²⁴Ibid., p. 2346.

¹²⁵Ibid.

¹²⁶Ibid., p. 2344.

¹²⁷Ibid., part 14, p. 1334, Marshall radio message #529 to Hawaii.

¹²⁸Ibid., part 29, pp. 2338, 2341.

¹²⁹Ibid., p. 2341.

APHB members Russell and Grunert then asked Bratton how it would affect the Japanese if they learned then—1944—that we had intercepted a “Winds Execute” message in 1941. He did not believe those code words were being used by the Japanese today. He was then asked if the Japanese knew we had intercepted these messages and had broken that code before the war, would it give them any information as to whether or not we had broken the code they are using today.

Bratton: Oh, yes, sir, it would, because these code phrases are a code within a cipher. . . . The whole message about this “Winds” signal was in a very secret cipher. . . .

Grunert: And they are continuing to use that cipher? . . . Therefore, the danger that any leak of this thing might affect the war effort exists now as it has in the past?

Bratton: Yes, sir.¹³⁰

On this point, Navy Captain Safford flatly disagreed, as the APHB soon learned.

CAPTAIN L.F. SAFFORD DESCRIBES THE JAPANESE “WINDS CODE” INTERCEPTS

As head of the communications security division, naval operations, in 1941, Safford had been much involved with naval intelligence information.¹³¹ He remembered many details from 1941. However, when testifying before the APHB on October 2, he consulted a record of the intercepts prepared more recently (November–December 1943 and January–March 1944) from original sources borrowed from OP20G, i.e., “the communication intelligence section, or communication division, of Naval

¹³⁰Ibid., pp. 2340–41.

¹³¹Ibid., pp. 2361–400.

Operations.”¹³² Russell asked Safford about his statement before Hart’s investigation that we had received on November 26 “specific evidence of Japan’s intentions to wage an offensive war against both Britain and the United States.” Safford replied that this message, S.I.S. No. 25392,

said that Japan would announce her intentions in regard to war or possibly breaking off diplomatic relations with Russia, England including the Netherlands East Indies, and the United States by means of a word sent five times in the middle and at the end of their information broadcast.

Safford continued, “On November 28th, 1941, we read another message . . . giving a ‘Winds’ code to be used in their voice broadcasts.”¹³³ We had verification of this “Winds Code” setup from other sources—Hart (Manila), Singapore, Batavia (NEI), and our intercept station in the state of Washington.¹³⁴

Russell: [T]ell us about the follow-up on this code . . . whether or not on or about December 4th you did receive information which indicated that the Japanese Empire had employed this code and the intercepted messages indicated final decisions affecting the United States, Russia, Britain; one or more of these powers.

Safford: Yes, sir, we did. That was received in the morning of Thursday, December 4, 1941. It was received about 8:00. . . by teletype. I saw it when I first came to the office . . . the writing at the bottom in lead pencil in Kramer’s handwriting, “War with England, war with America, peace with Russia.” The message as received was not the way we expected it, because

¹³²Ibid., pp. 2362, 2367.

¹³³Ibid., pp. 2367–68.

¹³⁴Ibid., pp. 2368–71.

they had mixed up their voice procedure with the Morse code message.¹³⁵

Distribution of this “Winds Execute” was made, not only in accordance with the special arrangements set up by Noyes of naval communications, but also in the usual fashion, through the war and navy departments.

And also I know that in the Navy Department that copy was distributed around noon, in connection with the daily routine distribution of translations, and that went to the Chief of Naval Operations [Stark], Assistant Chief of Naval Operations [Ingersoll], Director of Naval Communications [Noyes], Director of Naval Intelligence [Wilkinson], and the Director of War Plans Division [Turner], also went to the State Department and to the White House.¹³⁶

Safford was positive as to the date when the “Winds Execute” came in because its receipt had prompted him to send four messages that very day, between 3:00 P.M. and 3:19 P.M., to the naval attachés at Tokyo, Peiping, Bangkok, and Shanghai, directing them to destroy “all secret and confidential files except those essential for current purposes and all other papers which in the hands of an enemy would be a disadvantage to the United States.”¹³⁷

Safford believed that all the Army S.I.S. messages he had been describing were in the custody of the Army’s G-2, general staff, and that the same messages, filed by their Navy numbers, were at 20G, the Navy’s communication annex—*except for the implementation of the “Winds Code.”* “Unfortunately, we cannot find any written record of the [‘Winds Execute’] message,” in spite of

¹³⁵Ibid., p. 2371.

¹³⁶Ibid., p. 2372.

¹³⁷Ibid., p. 2397, OPNAV dispatch #042019. See also part 14, p. 1408, Message #040330, supplementing #042019, which is not included with other Navy Department dispatches to field officers in Exhibit No. 37, *ibid.*, part 14.

having “looked now for more than six months.”¹³⁸ And there was no way to trace it because “all the station logs unfortunately had been destroyed sometime during ‘43,” which was “[m]ore or less” Standard Operating Procedure when a government office moved or expanded.¹³⁹

More important in Grunert’s view than the “Winds Execute” itself was whether the war effort in 1944 would suffer if the Japanese learned that we had intercepted and deciphered this message in 1941. Russell described the dilemma:

[T]he Board is debating the effect on the war effort of a public disclosure of the contents of the “Winds” message. Assuming that the Japanese Empire knew that the American Government was in possession of those facts which are contained in that “Winds” message, would it . . . cause them to make changes which would make it more difficult for us to obtain Japanese information now?

When questioned, Bratton had said it would. Safford disagreed.

No, sir, not the “Winds” message or this other so-called hidden-word or stop-code message. The setup for those two was sent in what they call a low-grade cipher held by all their Consuls. Everybody was solving that. The Dutch solved it, the British solved it in Singapore, and we solved it ourselves—both of them—and they must know that we have been reading those messages, and I believe that that particular system is not in use any more, anyhow. It is not the high-class machine which is a literal gold mine at the present time. The other stuff it would be very bad to let public.¹⁴⁰

¹³⁸Ibid., part 29, pp. 2371–72.

¹³⁹Ibid., pp. 2368–73.

¹⁴⁰Ibid., pp. 2392–93.

By “this other stuff,” Safford meant “the declaration of war,” i.e., the 14-part reply to our “ultimatum” that the Japanese sent December 6–7, and their December 7 “One P.M. Message.” That, Safford said, “is in their [high-class, “purple”] machine which they think no one can read, and they are still talking their fool heads off in it, particularly from Germany.”¹⁴¹

Even though the “Winds Execute” had been sent in the “low-grade” cipher, Safford said it was extremely significant. By announcing the imminence of a break in relations, or of an outbreak of war, with the United States and Britain, Japan was explaining the reason for her November 25 deadline, later changed to November 29. And the deadline showed that the break in relations it portended was not just talk. Thus the “Winds Execute” “made the deadline message mean a lot more, and the deadline message made that [the Winds Code Execute] mean a lot more.”¹⁴²

Safford told the APHB that we knew from Japanese intercepts picked up December 1 and 3, 1941 that Japanese embassies and consulates in London, Hong Kong, Singapore, Manila, Batavia, and Washington had been told to destroy their codes, ciphers, and code machines. “[T]his destruction of codes immediately threw the ‘Winds’ message into prominence,” Safford said.

Before, we couldn’t understand why they had this [“Winds Code”] setup arranged. It seemed a foolish thing to do . . . but they had this in mind, I think: Well, all right, one step short of war. They are destroying their codes to play safe, but they are still reserving the decision as to peace or war to come in the “Winds” message, which was the reason that, from the first on, we thought the “Winds” message was so highly important, and yet that information did not get out to either

¹⁴¹Ibid.

¹⁴²Ibid., p. 2370.

Commander-in-Chief Pacific Fleet or Commander-in-Chief Asiatic Fleet until 48 hours after we had the news.¹⁴³

Safford had recognized the significance of the “Winds Code Execute” at the time. However, his responsibilities were limited to communications *security*. “The evaluation [of a message] was out of my hands, and that is a function of Naval Intelligence.”¹⁴⁴ Thus, Safford had focused his December 4 messages to the naval attachés necessarily on the issue of *security*.

Grunert then turned to another subject. Safford had “indicated . . . that at sometime in the not too distant past it was not intended to give the Navy Court of Inquiry and the Army Board certain secret information.” Had special instructions been issued to that effect?

That was “rather a long story,” Safford said. He explained that Kimmel had asked to see the Hart report. On the basis of information revealed there, Kimmel had requested permission for his counsel, Captain Lavender, “to inspect all the files out at 20G, communications intelligence files, to see what information had been in existence in the Navy Department.” Lavender had been permitted to see the files and had then asked for copies of about 60 messages. The department had assembled the intercepts, turned them over to the director of naval communications, and notified S.I.S. S.I.S. had protested. The assistant secretary of the Navy, Ralph A. Bard, had also disapproved of their release. But when Navy Secretary Forrestal, then in London, returned to Washington, he reversed that decision and directed that the intercepts be made available to the NCI. But the APHB had not obtained copies. Safford suggested they put in a request to the secretary of the Navy.¹⁴⁵

¹⁴³Ibid., pp. 2396–97.

¹⁴⁴Ibid., p. 2379.

¹⁴⁵Ibid., p. 2375.

MARSHALL DEFENDS GOVERNMENT'S POLICY OF SECRECY; DOESN'T RECALL IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS

On Monday, October 2, 1944, Marshall returned once more to the APHB to answer questions posed in the board's September 30 letter. He explained that it was considered essential *at all cost* to prevent the enemy from learning that Japanese intercepts were our source of secret information. War and Navy department policy concerning "secret, ultrasecret information" directed that "No action is to be taken on information herein reported, regardless of temporary advantage, if such action might have the effect of revealing the existence of the source to the enemy." According to Marshall,

there have been cases where convoys have been permitted to go into the most serious situations rather than diverting them from the assemblage of the so-called wolf packs because of the fear that that would convey to the Germans that we had some means of knowing just how this was managed.

Apparently, Marshall continued, the Japanese thought we were obtaining knowledge of these convoy movements from spies and observation posts. So long as they did, we felt free to go ahead.

[B]ut if there is any danger of our giving away our sources, then we would have to hold off somewhat on seizing each opportunity, for fear we would lose tremendous long-term advantages.¹⁴⁶

Marshall believed he had been "kept fully informed by the State Department on the development of the relations between the Japanese Empire and the American Government." Even so, he couldn't remember some important events. He didn't recall

¹⁴⁶Ibid., p. 2403.

the department's November 26, 1941, memorandum, or "ultimatum," rejecting Japan's proposal for a *modus vivendi*. Nor did he remember Secretary of State Hull's remark to Secretary of War Stimson the next morning to the effect that Hull had broken off discussions with the Japanese: "I have washed my hands of it and it is now in the hands of you [Stimson] and Knox, the Army and Navy."¹⁴⁷ Marshall admitted, however, that he

must have known on the 26th of November that the negotiations were nearing an impasse, because Admiral Stark and I evidently directed the preparation of a draft of the 27th of November warning on that day, the 26th.¹⁴⁸

Marshall didn't remember the War Department's November 27 warning to Short (#472) advising that "Negotiations with Japan appear to be terminated" and asking Short to "report measures taken."¹⁴⁹ Nor did he remember Short's "sabotage alert" reply (#959). And he had not realized that his failure to respond to Short's sabotage alert, admittedly inappropriate for defense against attack, meant that it had "obtained during the entire period 27 November–6 December inclusive." Marshall was forced to admit that Washington's November 27 warning "did not accomplish the desired results"¹⁵⁰ of defending Pearl Harbor against attack.

Perhaps most astonishing of all, however, was that Marshall still maintained that he had heard nothing at all prior to the morning of December 7 about the Japanese reply to the U.S. November 26 "ultimatum." This in spite of the fact that the first 13 parts of that reply had been delivered to the White House and the State Department and were "in the hands of some agency

¹⁴⁷Ibid., p. 2402.

¹⁴⁸Ibid., p. 2405.

¹⁴⁹Ibid., p. 2402.

¹⁵⁰Ibid., pp. 2404–05.

of the War Department” during the evening of December 6. Marshall believed that it was

not . . . until I was before the Navy Court here recently that I knew this had come in, had been made available to the Secretary of State, the larger portion of that message, the night before.¹⁵¹

Russell pointed out to Marshall:

The evidence which is before the Board at this time is to the effect that as early as 8:30, possibly not later than 9:00 A.M., on the morning of December 7th, the message which indicated that the ultimatum would be delivered by the Japanese Ambassadors at 1:00 on that day, and that the code machines were being destroyed, was in the hands of a Colonel. . . . Bratton of G-2.

Bratton’s energies from the time he received that message “were devoted exclusively” to trying to locate Marshall and Miles.¹⁵² Yet Marshall couldn’t be reached for a couple of hours, not until he finally arrived in his office at about 11:30 A.M. The situation was further complicated by the fact that the Army apparently had no clear plan for handling emergencies when Marshall was not available.¹⁵³ Moreover, this was a message, APHB member Frank commented, “where the time of its delivery by two hours would have made an awful lot of difference.”¹⁵⁴

Marshall offered no explanation for his inaccessibility that Sunday morning, except to describe his activities:

¹⁵¹Ibid., p. 2409. See also Bratton testimony, *ibid.*, p. 2349.

¹⁵²Ibid. See also Bratton testimony on delivery, *ibid.*, pp. 2349–50.

¹⁵³Ibid., p. 2409.

¹⁵⁴Ibid., p. 2410.

I remember very distinctly the message from Colonel Bratton because it came to me as I was coming out of a shower, as my habit was to ride at 8:30 on Sunday morning, and it takes me about fifty minutes to go around the only available loop to ride in. It takes me about eight or ten minutes to get a shower and dress. And when the message came from Colonel Bratton he wanted to come out there, and I said, "No. I am on my way down to the War Department." And it couldn't have been more than five or ten minutes at the outside before I had left to come down here. I have a very clear recollection of that because naturally I thought about it at the time. . . . I was not aware of the fact that this message had been available the night before.¹⁵⁵

Marshall concluded his testimony with a further comment on the importance of secrecy. "[E]verybody that is concerned with this top secret thing is very cagey about saying anything about it."¹⁵⁶ This, he implied, explained the reluctance of the War Department to release TOP SECRET intercepts to those investigating the Pearl Harbor attack.

ARMY COURIER BRATTON REPORTS HIS DELIVERIES OF JAPANESE INTERCEPTS

Now that more information about the Japanese intercepts had come out, Bratton returned twice more to testify—October 2 and 6. He said the secret "Summary of Far Eastern Documents,"¹⁵⁷ copies of the translated Japanese intercepts documenting the "Summary," together with an Appendix containing many of the crucial Japanese intercepts, were "on file in G-2, War

¹⁵⁵Ibid., pp. 2409–11.

¹⁵⁶Ibid., p. 2413.

¹⁵⁷Ibid., part 31, pp. 3201–35, Exhibit A to Army Pearl Harbor Board Top Secret Transcript: Summary of Far Eastern Documents; and pp. 3235–58, Exhibit B to Army Pearl Harbor Board Top Secret Transcript. Exhibit consists of copies of the 45–50 most important documents themselves.

Department,”¹⁵⁸ being held in tight security and “will be made available to you later.”¹⁵⁹

Bratton had been convinced on December 3 that war with Japan was imminent. On that day a December 2 message from Tokyo directing the Japanese embassy in Washington to burn its codes, to stop using their code machine, and to destroy it completely, had been translated.¹⁶⁰ “After the receipt of this translation,” Bratton said, “any further intercepts that were brought to me would simply contribute toward the climax that I saw coming. This was it.”¹⁶¹ He “had a feeling that further warnings or alerts should be sent out to our overseas commands. Gerow felt that sufficient warning had been sent. Miles thought he couldn’t go over Gerow’s decision” because of the War Department policy then in effect that War Department G-2 (Intelligence) should not send out any intelligence to the G-2s of tactical commands or overseas departments “which might produce an operational reaction, without the complete concurrence of the War Plans Division.”¹⁶²

Bratton “still felt uneasy” and thought “further warnings should be sent out.” He went to the Navy Department to see Commander McCollum, head of the Far Eastern Section in ONI. McCollum felt as Bratton did and was going to write up a warning and “try to get the Chief of Naval Operations to dispatch it.” McCollum told Bratton also that the Navy’s “S.I.S. man in Honolulu, a Commander Rochefort . . . had all the information that we had, and was listening for this Japanese winds-weather broadcast.” McCollum suggested that Bratton instruct Army’s G-2 in Hawaii to talk with Rochefort at once, “as in a short

¹⁵⁸Ibid., part 29, p. 2417.

¹⁵⁹Ibid., p. 2416.

¹⁶⁰Ibid., part 12, p. 215; part 31, p. 3250.

¹⁶¹Ibid., part 29, p. 2442.

¹⁶²Ibid., pp. 2444, 2453.

period of time Rochefort could tell Colonel Fielder, our G-2, exactly what was going on and what we knew.” Thus Bratton tried by this indirect route to communicate his fears to Army’s G-2 in Hawaii.¹⁶³

When delivering the Japanese intercepts, Bratton’s usual practice was to go first to Marshall, Miles, and Gerow, and then to the State Department. He had followed this procedure the evening of December 6, when delivering the first 13 parts of the Japanese reply. Bratton said he “very seldom” delivered the locked pouch of intercepts to Marshall in person. That evening he had left the “locked bag” containing Marshall’s copy with his secretary, Colonel Bedell Smith, advising him “that it was an important document. . . and that the Chief of Staff . . . [s]hould see it right away.”¹⁶⁴

Bratton had then made delivery in person to G-2’s Miles, with whom he had discussed the message at some length.¹⁶⁵ He had left the copy of the message for Gerow with his “executive officer,” Colonel Gailey.¹⁶⁶ Then, at about 10 or 10:30 Bratton had gone with the 13-part message to the Department of State, where he had delivered the locked pouch “to the watch officer in the State Department, with the request that it be gotten to Mr. Hull immediately.”¹⁶⁷

The next morning, after receiving the last installment of the Japanese reply and the 1:00 P.M. deadline message at about 8:30–9:00 A.M., Bratton spent a couple of frantic hours trying to locate Marshall. When he finally reached him by phone, Marshall asked Bratton to wait for him at his office. Marshall arrived at 11:25 A.M.; Bratton was sure of the time because he “kept looking at the

¹⁶³Ibid., p. 2444.

¹⁶⁴Ibid., part 29, pp. 2421–23.

¹⁶⁵Ibid., p. 2422.

¹⁶⁶Ibid., p. 2421.

¹⁶⁷Ibid., pp. 2422, 2419.

clock on the wall and at my watch.” The long Japanese reply was on Marshall’s desk when he came in. Marshall read it and then “a discussion of the entire communication” ensued.¹⁶⁸

Bratton urged the APHB to obtain, not only the Japanese reply to the U.S. November 26 “ultimatum,” but also

the 30 or 40 other messages which preceded it; that is, the exchanges between the Ambassador in Washington and the foreign minister in Tokyo. . . . And consider the picture that lay before all of our policy-making and planning officials, from the Secretary of State down through the Secretary of War, to the Chief of the War Plans Division. They all had the same picture; and it was a picture that was being painted over a period of weeks, if not months.¹⁶⁹

APHB OBTAINS JAPANESE INTERCEPTS – FINALLY!

On October 6, 1944, the board gained access to the 45 to 50 intercepts requested.¹⁷⁰

After it actually had the intercepts in hand, it questioned a few final witnesses and then its proceedings were concluded.

THE ARMY PEARL HARBOR BOARD REPORT

The APHB’s hearings and those of the NCI had run concurrently, the NCI from July 24 through September 27, 1944, the APHB from August 7 through October 6. The NCI report was dated October 19, that of the APHB, October 20, 1944.¹⁷¹

¹⁶⁸Ibid., pp. 2419, 2420, 2422.

¹⁶⁹Ibid., p. 2424.

¹⁷⁰Ibid., p. 2449. For list of documents, see *ibid.*, pp. 2456–57; for documents themselves, see part 31, pp. 3235–58.

¹⁷¹Ibid., part 39, pp. 23–178, APHB Report, October 20, 1944; *ibid.*, pp. 179–230, Appendix to Report; *ibid.*, pp. 231–69, Judge Advocate General (Major General) Myron C. Cramer’s analyses.

The APHB issued a detailed report describing the background of the attack, the situation in Washington and in Hawaii, and the responsibilities of the several officials. It had brought out in the course of its hearings several significant points not previously covered in depth:

- a. The Army was clearly responsible for the defense of the fleet when it was at its home base in Pearl Harbor;
- b. Given the instructions he had received, Short appeared justified in ordering Alert #1 for sabotage;
- c. Short's Washington superior commander, Marshall, was obviously familiar with Short's system of alerts and should have notified Short if his order for a sabotage alert, issued in response to Washington's November 27 warning, was not considered adequate;
- d. Short had been told very little about the crisis that Washington officialdom knew was looming;
- e. The attack on Pearl Harbor apparently took everyone by surprise, not only in Hawaii but also in Washington. Officials both in Washington and Hawaii had expected the first Japanese strike would be in the western Pacific or southeast Asia and, quite likely, the Phillipines.
- f. Two witnesses—Kimmel and Safford—revealed that, as a result of decoded Japanese intercepts, Washington officials had had access to considerable intelligence concerning Japanese intentions, which was not furnished the Hawaiian commanders.

The APHB was impressed by the quantity and quality of the intelligence available in Washington. The record shows that from informers and other sources the War Department had complete and detailed information of Japanese intentions. Information of the evident Japanese intention to go to war in the very near future was well known to the Secretary of State, the Secretary of War,

the Chief of Staff of the Army, the Secretary of Navy, and the Chief of Naval Operations. It was not a question of fact; it was only a question of time. The next few days would see the end of peace and the beginning of war.

If it be assumed that for any reason the information could not have been given to the Hawaiian Department, then it was a responsibility of the War Department to give orders to Short what to do, and to tell him to go on an all-out alert instead of a sabotage alert.¹⁷² The board was especially concerned about the warnings sent Short, his sabotage alert response to the November 27 warning, and the failure of Washington to respond.

Having asked for a report of what he was doing, the War Department placed itself in the position of sharing the responsibility if it did not direct Short to take such measures as they considered adequate to meet this serious threat.¹⁷³

However, the APHB pointed out, Short “had two threats.” Yet “he only took measures as to one.” The message on which he particularly relied as to sabotage came from G-2 on November 28, the report said,

after he had made his decision to go to Alert Number 1. This last message . . . does not in any way change previous messages. Short should have known, as a trained soldier, that a G-2 message is informative and is of lesser authority than a commanding message from the Chief of Staff.¹⁷⁴

¹⁷²Ibid., part 39, p. 139.

¹⁷³Ibid., p. 90.

¹⁷⁴Ibid., p. 91.

After the conflicting Navy and Army dispatches of November 27, and the additional November 28 sabotage messages from Army G-2 and from the adjutant general,¹⁷⁵

Short had only silence from Washington. He was given no further clarification of this conflict amongst the messages. There is no explanation why Short was not told of the so-called [November 26] ultimatum. It was known to the Japanese because it was handed to them.¹⁷⁶

In its report, the APHB discussed the intelligence available in Washington and Hawaii, the “amiable relationship” between Short and Kimmel,¹⁷⁷ the warnings that had been sent to Hawaii, the Hawaiian commanders’ defense plans, the Army’s radar facilities, Short’s sabotage alert, the shortage of planes in Hawaii for long-range reconnaissance, and so on.

As has been repeated so many times, there was positive evidence in the War Department that it was only a matter of days before war would ensue and the War Department had notice that Hawaii was on only a sabotage alert, inadequate for full warfare. Had a full war message, unadulterated, been dispatched or had direct orders for a full, all-out alert been sent, Hawaii could have been ready to have met the attack with what it had. What resulted was failure at both ends of the line. Responsibility laid both in Washington and in Hawaii.¹⁷⁸

Among other things, the APHB report criticized Marshall “for not providing an arrangement by which another could act in

¹⁷⁵Ibid., part 14, p. 1406, Navy #272337; p. 1328, Army #472; p. 1329, Miles, G-2, #473; and p. 1330, Army Adjutant General, #482.

¹⁷⁶Ibid., part 39, p. 141.

¹⁷⁷Ibid., p. 61.

¹⁷⁸Ibid., p. 145.

so critical a situation when he could not readily be reached.”¹⁷⁹ No accounting for this was made even though

[t]he evidence indicates that the manner in which authority to act was delegated or not delegated had its influence on this situation. The Chief of Staff had three deputies, Generals Bryden, Arnold, and Moore. None of these three was given the secret information concerning the known Jap intentions. . . . Complete authority to act in General Marshall’s absence does not seem to have been given to any one subordinate. Had there been an officer either with authority or with courage to act on the information that was in the War Department on the evening of December 6, and had he sent a message to Short, Hawaii should have been fully alerted.¹⁸⁰

The board report attributed the extent of the Pearl Harbor disaster

primarily to two causes: (1) The failure of the Commanding General [Short] of the Hawaiian Department adequately to alert his command for war, and (2) The failure of the War Department, with knowledge of the type of alert taken by the Commanding General, Hawaiian Department, to direct him to take an adequate alert, and the failure to keep him adequately informed as to the developments of the United States-Japanese negotiations, which in turn might have caused him to change from the inadequate alert to an adequate one.¹⁸¹

The board cited several factors that contributed to the disaster: The failures of (1) The Secretary of State, Cordell Hull, (2) The Chief of Staff of the Army, General George C. Marshall, (3) Chief of War Plans Division, War Department General Staff, Major General Leonard T. Gerow, and (4) Commanding General of the

¹⁷⁹Ibid., p. 140.

¹⁸⁰Ibid., pp. 144–45. APHB report, part 39.

¹⁸¹Ibid., p. 175.

Hawaiian Department, Lieutenant General Walter C. Short.¹⁸² The APHB report then detailed the extent to which each shared in the responsibility.

The report was submitted to Stimson only a couple of weeks before the November 7 presidential election. The APHB had been critical of Short, who was no longer on active duty. But it had also criticized Secretary of State Hull, Army Chief of Staff Marshall, and General Gerow, all of whom were still actively involved in the administration and the war. The report's release could prove an embarrassment to the administration, the president, and the war effort.

When Stimson received the report, it was announced in the press that it would not be released until it had been "reviewed for security by appropriate military authorities."¹⁸³ Then, on December 1, after Roosevelt had won his election to a third term, Stimson announced that

it would be highly prejudicial to the successful prosecution of the war and the safety of American lives to make public during the war the report of the Army Pearl Harbor Board or the record on which it is based.

Thus both secretaries, war and navy, refused "[o]n the ground of national security . . . to make the real story of Pearl Harbor," as revealed in the NCI and APHB reports "public until the war had ended."¹⁸⁴

¹⁸²*Ibid.*, pp. 175–76.

¹⁸³*New York Times*, October 24, 1944, p. 12, col. 2.

¹⁸⁴*New York Times*, December 2, 1944, pp. 1, 5.

23.

The Navy Court of Inquiry (July 24–October 19, 1944)

On July 13, 1944,¹ the new Navy Secretary, James V. Forrestal, ordered the convening of a Navy Court of Inquiry (NCI) “for the purpose of inquiring into all circumstances connected with the attack made by Japanese armed forces on Pearl Harbor, Territory of Hawaii, on 7 December 1941.”² Three retired admirals were appointed to the court: Orin G. Murfin, president; Edward C. Kalbfus; and Adolphus Andrews. Commander Harold Bieseemeier was named judge advocate.³ The court opened its doors on July 24, and took testimony over 32 days. Admirals Harold R. Stark, chief of naval operations at the time of the attack, Claude C. Bloch commandant of the 14th Naval District (Hawaii), and Husband E. Kimmel, who had been commander-in-chief of the Pacific Fleet,⁴ were named “interested parties,” entitled to attend the hearings, have counsel, and cross-examine

¹*New York Times*, June 15, 1944, p. 10.

²79th Cong., 1st sess. Joint (Congressional) Committee on the Investigation of the Pearl Harbor Attack. *Pearl Harbor Attack*, 39 vols. (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1946), part 32, p. 5.

³*Ibid.*, p. 9.

⁴*Ibid.*, p. 12.

witnesses. The court began by exploring the situation at the time of the attack and thus covered much of the same territory as had the Roberts and Hart investigations.

The jurisdiction of the NCI was not limited to investigating Navy personnel only; it was to inquire “into *all* circumstances connected with the attack made by Japanese armed forces on Pearl Harbor” (*italics added*). Moreover, as Captain L.F. Safford had located the Japanese intercepts and had had copies replaced in the files by the summer of 1944, these intercepts were available to be introduced to the NCI. Kimmel was determined that they be made a part of the record. But obtaining NCI access to them would not be easy.

JAPANESE INTERCEPTS LOCATED

Kimmel brought the subject of the intercepts up at his first opportunity. He said he had been “branded throughout this country as the one responsible for the Pearl Harbor disaster.” He was anxious that “this investigation should go far enough to disclose all the facts in connection with the matter;” it should call “witnesses from the Army, from the State Department, or from any other federal department” in order to establish “the facts that are necessary . . . to refute the utterly false and misleading statements made throughout the Roberts Commission.”⁵ Unless the intercepts were introduced, Kimmel maintained, it would be impossible to properly assign responsibility for the disaster.

Judge Advocate Biesemeier asked Forrestal on August 1 for access to the Japanese intercepts. No answer. On August 4 Biesemeier was told that the letter had been “misplaced.” Then apparently it was found and returned to Biesemeier with a request for “a change in its classification—from SECRET to

⁵Ibid., p. 19.

TOP SECRET.”⁶ Finally on the morning of August 8, due to “the purely fortuitous circumstance” that Admiral Ernest J. King was acting secretary of the Navy that day,⁷ Biesemeier received Forrestal’s permission for one of Kimmel’s attorneys to examine the secret files.⁸ “Mr. Knox promised you access to all the files,” King said, “so I can see no reason to refuse.”⁹ Thus Navy Captain Robert A. Lavender of Kimmel’s legal staff was given the chance to inspect the secret files. He made his inspection that very afternoon.¹⁰

When Lavender was ushered into the room where he was to examine the intercepts, he was “astounded” to see a stack “two and a half feet high of intercepted messages.” He had only a limited time to look through them. But Safford had given him the numbers of the most important intercepts, so he was able to make his examination rather quickly. Lavender became physically “nauseated,” he said, “when [he] realized what the information in [his] hands would have meant to Kimmel and the men of the Fleet who died.” He selected some 43 messages that he thought should have been sent to Kimmel in Pearl Harbor and had them copied and authenticated.¹¹ That evening, attorneys Rugg and Hanify dined with Lavender. Lavender “was still so sickened by what he had uncovered that he could not eat.”¹²

The next day, General Joseph McNarney, then deputy chief of staff of the Army and an FDR appointee to the Roberts Commission which had heaped opprobrium on Kimmel and

⁶Ibid., p. 54.

⁷Husband E. Kimmel, *Admiral Kimmel’s Story* (Chicago: Henry Regnery Co., 1955), p. 130.

⁸Ibid., pp. 53–54. Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 32, pp. 53–54.

⁹John Toland, *Infamy: Pearl Harbor and Its Aftermath* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1982), p. 81.

¹⁰Kimmel, *Admiral Kimmel’s Story*, p. 123.

¹¹Ibid. See also Toland, *Infamy*, p. 82.

¹²Toland, *Infamy*, p. 82.

Short, protested to Naval Communications that Lavender's access to the secret files violated orders. When the director of naval communications said he had received no such orders, McNarney backed down. However, Admiral King, who had agreed to Lavender's examination, told Kimmel later that he would not recommend making the information available. And then Naval Communications refused to turn over to Lavender the copies of the intercepts he had selected.¹³ But Kimmel did not let the matter rest. He asked the judge advocate to pursue the matter with Navy secretary Forrestal,¹⁴ who replied on August 10 that it was "not in the public interest to introduce this type of material in evidence. . . ."¹⁵ However, Kimmel's man had seen the intercepts. So Kimmel persisted.

During the court's first 19 days, Kimmel made requests almost daily to have the secret Japanese intercepts introduced in evidence. Finally on the 20th day, August 28, Kimmel's efforts bore fruit. The file copies of the selected documents, "duly authenticated under official seal," were placed in the NCI's record "at the request of the judge advocate of this court."¹⁶ The remaining days of the Inquiry, therefore, dealt with this new material. . However, before getting to that, we should first review briefly the situation before the intercepts were introduced.

CNO HAROLD R. STARK DOESN'T RECALL PRE-ATTACK DETAILS

The court's first witness, Chief of Naval Operations Stark¹⁷ offered no startling revelations. Stark held that he had sought

¹³Ibid.

¹⁴Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 32, pp. 103–04.

¹⁵Ibid., pp. 120–21.

¹⁶Ibid., part 33, p. 735.

¹⁷Ibid., part 32, pp. 11–152, 247–50, 527–38, 727–31.

to keep Kimmel informed “so far as we thought he could have a vital interest.”¹⁸ Did he know of any “important development” preceding the attack of which Kimmel had *not* been advised, as Kimmel had requested, “by the quickest secure means” then available? Stark replied:

I have searched my brain, my conscience, my heart, and everything I have got, since Pearl Harbor started, to see wherein I was derelict or wherein I might have omitted something. There is only one thought . . . that I regretted . . . [T]hat was the dispatch which was sent by the Army on the morning of December 7, that I had not paralleled it with my own system, or that I had not telephoned it. . . . [T]hat is the one conscious realization I remember and regret.¹⁹

The Japanese intercepts had not been actually introduced into the record, but Kimmel used what he had learned about them from Captain Lavender in questioning Stark. Kimmel asked Stark if he had received “information that the Japanese Government regarded November 25 as an absolute immovable deadline for the negotiations then being conducted between Japan and America.”

Stark: No; I don't remember that.

When Kimmel tried to refresh Stark's memory by referring to Safford's testimony before Admiral Hart, Biesemeier objected: “It was an attempt to show in the form of a question that there was certain evidence before the Hart examination, what the evidence was, and the fact that the evidence was given under oath.”²⁰

Kimmel tried another tack. “Between December 1 and December 4 [had Stark received] information that Japan was

¹⁸Ibid., p. 82.

¹⁹Ibid., p. 99.

²⁰Ibid., part 33, pp. 727–28.

going to attack Britain and the United States and maintain peace with Russia?”

Stark: Not that I recall.

Kimmel: Do you recall the phrase “Winds Message”?

Stark: I don’t recall such a message. . . . Not the slightest recollection of a discussion of the so-called “Winds Message.”

And more in the same vein.²¹

Bieseimer objected.²²

Kimmel then asked Stark if he recalled receiving any important intelligence on December 6, the evening before the attack.

Stark: I couldn’t say what I was doing that evening. My remembrance is—I think I was home but I couldn’t say. I don’t recall clearly. . . . I haven’t the slightest recollection of any message bearing on this, or any other subject, being given to me between the time I left the office and the . . . next morning.²³

Stark did remember a discussion with Marshall Sunday morning, December 7 about the message asking the Japanese ambassador to call on Hull that day at 1:00 P.M. But otherwise he recalled nothing of significance about that message.²⁴

ADMIRAL SCHUIRMANN, NAVY LIAISON WITH STATE DEPARTMENT, EVASIVE

Rear Admiral R.E. Schuirmann, who had been director of Central Division, Office of Chief of Naval Operations, and liaison with the State Department, was not much more responsive.

²¹Ibid., p. 729.

²²Ibid., p. 730.

²³Ibid., part 32, pp. 132–33.

²⁴Ibid., pp. 134–36.

In answer to Kimmel's repeated questioning, Schuirmann hesitated and replied only that it "would involve the disclosure of information detrimental to the public interest. . . . [H]e claimed his privilege against revealing state secrets."²⁵ Finally after being recalled to testify after the court rescinded its earlier ruling restricting questions on subjects not previously in evidence before the court,²⁶ Schuirmann admitted having known about the Japanese deadlines—November 25 and 29.²⁷ He also said the dispatch directing the Japanese ambassadors to deliver their reply to Hull on Sunday, December 7, at precisely 1:00 P.M. Washington time, had been available by 9:30 A.M. when Stark reached his office. And Schuirmann also recalled the Marshall-Stark telephone conversation concerning the last minute message to the field commanders.²⁸

WASHINGTON'S ADVICE TO PEARL HARBOR COMMANDERS CONFUSING, CONFLICTING

General Short, the Army's commander at Pearl Harbor at the time of the attack, was NCI's next witness. Like Kimmel, Short had been under a cloud of suspicion ever since the publication of the Roberts Commission report. One of Short's most telling points was that the planes which had been en route to the Philippines via Hawaii, the planes that had arrived over Hawaii during the attack, had been sent out from California *unarmed*. "As late as 1:30 A.M. in the War Department on December 7," when the planes were dispatched from California, Short said,

they did not believe there was any danger of air attack at Honolulu, or they never would have been so rash as to send

²⁵Ibid., p. 159.

²⁶Ibid., part 33, pp. 732–33.

²⁷Ibid., p. 733.

²⁸Ibid., p. 759.

planes out in those conditions. . . . Whoever sent them out felt that the hazard of carrying the ammunition was greater than the hazard of a Japanese attack. In other words, he [the dispatcher] considered that there was no probability of an air attack at Pearl Harbor on the morning of December 7 or the planes would not have been started from Hamilton Field in that condition, as late as they were.²⁹

Then Kimmel himself spent three days on the witness stand, August 15–17. He spoke about the Army's responsibility for the defense of the fleet when in port, his training procedures, the possibility of a submarine attack, and so on. Before the attack, he had made frequent requests to Washington for information and had received repeated assurances "that [he] would be kept informed." However, Kimmel felt sure that "there must be details [known in Washington] about which [he] was not informed," details about which he "could only guess."³⁰

Kimmel had known that both Marshall and Stark had recommended against our issuing an ultimatum to the Japanese. However, he did not know that when he received the November 27 "war warning," the State Department *had* issued Japan an ultimatum the day before. He had simply assumed that "one of the primary causes for the [war warning] dispatch was, as stated, that negotiations had ceased" and that U.S.-Japanese relations were reaching a breaking point. Kimmel received no later message from the CNO canceling or modifying the November 27 "war warning." As a result, when later press reports indicated that "further conversations were continuing between the Japanese ambassadors and the State Department, the warning lost much of its force."³¹

²⁹Ibid., part 32, p. 186.

³⁰Ibid., p. 291.

³¹Ibid., p. 233.

Kimmel was asked about the last-minute December 7 Marshall-Stark dispatch stating that the Japanese ambassadors “were presenting at 1:00 P.M. Eastern Standard time today what amounts to an ultimatum.” Marshall had closed this dispatch by saying, “Just what significance the hour set may have we do not know but be on alert accordingly.”³² This message did not reach Short and Kimmel until well after the attack. Devastated by the disaster, Kimmel had told the courier then that “it wasn’t of the slightest interest to me at that time, and I threw the thing in the waste basket.”³³

Asked what difference it would have made had he received the warning before the attack, Kimmel said two other factors were more significant. “One was that an ultimatum was being delivered. The other was that . . . the Japanese Ambassador had instructions from his government to deliver it at a specific time.”³⁴

Kimmel had been under orders “to permit Japan to commit the first overt act.” Technically, Kimmel said,

I could not fire a shot at a Japanese Fleet until after they had first shot at us, and also, technically, had I sent out patrol planes armed, I would have had to wait until the enemy fired at these patrol planes or committed some other overt act before I could do anything more than protest.³⁵

The war-warning dispatch had given Kimmel “an excuse to do something that I had wanted to do for several months . . . to bomb submarine contacts.”³⁶

Kimmel considered his orders confusing. Just the day before the “war warning,” Stark had advised him that the Army had

³²Ibid., part 33, p. 1282.

³³Ibid., part 32, p. 253.

³⁴Ibid., p. 264.

³⁵Ibid., p. 254.

³⁶Ibid., p. 259.

“agreed to station 25 Army pursuit planes at Midway and a similar number at Wake.”³⁷ Short had received a War Department message along the same line, asking him “to relieve the marine infantry units on the outlying islands with Army personnel.”³⁸ The “proximity of these two messages in point of time to the war warning message . . . lessened the force of the war warning message.” Apparently, Kimmel said, CNO Stark was “willing to temporarily upset, to a considerable degree, the defenses of Pearl Harbor as well as of the outlying bases” to reinforce Wake and Midway, especially as the Navy was being asked to transport the planes, ground crews, essential spare parts, tools, and ammunition. Now, Kimmel said, “the difficulties of reinforcing the outlying stations were undoubtedly well-known to the Chief of Naval Operations,” so that the War Department’s message “indicated a conflict betwixt the ideas of the War Department and the Navy Department at that time.”

PEARL HARBOR, U.S. FLEET’S BASE, VULNERABLE TO ATTACK

The NCI questioned Admiral James O. Richardson, Kimmel’s predecessor as commander-in-chief of the U.S. Fleet at Pearl Harbor. Richardson’s testimony revealed that he had also encountered difficulties in obtaining men and materiel, in conducting reconnaissance, and in acquiring reliable information to guide him in planning, training, and preparing for defense.³⁹ Richardson had also objected to basing the fleet at Pearl Harbor and had recommended that it be headquartered on the West Coast, “except a

³⁷Ibid., part 33, p. 1177.

³⁸Ibid., part 32, p. 238.

³⁹Ibid., pp. 624, 629.

detachment to remain in Pearl Harbor that could be adequately cared for by the facilities there.”⁴⁰ He said

the operating areas were not adequate, either for surface ships or air; there were no air fields adequate to care for the planes that were on carriers, and could not be trained from the carriers because of the shortage of fuel. The only safe anchorage was Pearl Harbor, and it was entirely inadequate to handle the Fleet; the distance from the West Coast increased the cost and the delay and the difficulty of maintaining and supplying the Fleet; that there were no recreational facilities; that in time of peace the men and officers could not see any reason for remaining for such a long time away from home; that they were two thousand miles nearer a possible enemy; that we were unprepared to undertake offensive operations from Pearl Harbor, and that if we were involved in war, it would be necessary for us to return to the West Coast for stripping and mobilization and preparation for war; and that our presence in the Hawaiian area, when we were absolutely not trained, couldn't make any military people believe that we were planning offensive operations.⁴¹

In spite of Richardson's objections, Stark had directed him in May 1940 “to announce to the press that the Fleet would remain in Hawaiian waters” at Richardson's request “to carry out exercises that [he] had in mind.”⁴² Asked if he knew why Stark had ordered the Fleet held in Hawaii, Richardson replied “For the restraining influence it might exercise on the action of the Japanese nation.”⁴³

When Richardson was still commander of the U.S. Fleet, he had been warned several times that war was possible. He had received

⁴⁰Ibid., p. 628.

⁴¹Ibid., pp. 627–28.

⁴²Ibid., p. 624.

⁴³Ibid., p. 628.

an increasing number of warnings. . . . They were not clear-cut. . . . They were in personal letters, the general tenor being—"I hope you will keep ever present in your mind the possibility that we may be at war tomorrow."

The first warning had not come from the Navy Department, but rather from the War Department to the Commanding General of the Hawaiian Department, probably on June 19, 1940. When Richardson "asked the Chief of Naval Operations for information regarding it [this warning]" he received no reply.⁴⁴

Kimmel "agreed . . . in general" with Richardson as to the inadvisability of basing the fleet at Pearl Harbor and he had discussed Richardson's objections with Stark. However, when he took command, he had not made "any formal protest;" he had "accepted the situation." Later he had "pointed out the dangers that existed so long as the fleet was in Pearl Harbor." The single entrance might be blocked; it took a long time for the Fleet to sortie, and the oil stocks were vulnerable. In view of these dangers, Kimmel had requested "repeatedly, in correspondence" that he "be kept informed of developments."⁴⁵

In order to reach their own conclusions, the NCI went over much of the same material covered by the Roberts and Hart investigations. And it inquired about the radar facilities in Hawaii at the time of the attack. Commander William E.G. Taylor, U.S. Navy Reserve, radar expert on temporary duty with the Pacific Fleet, testified that the Army "radar operators themselves were well-trained," although given the technology available at the time, it was

impossible to decide whether the plots picked up by the radar station were a Japanese raid, an air group from one of our

⁴⁴Ibid., p. 626.

⁴⁵Ibid., p. 282.

own carriers, or some planes being ferried in from the United States.⁴⁶

The two men who had actually manned the radar station on Oahu on December 7, Joseph L. Lockard, radar operator, and George E. Elliott, told of having picked up a cluster of blips on the radar screen indicating “an unusually large flight . . . coming in from almost due north at 130 some miles.” When they reported this to the information center, it was assumed these blips were from B-17 bombers being ferried to Hawaii from California. So their radar report was not passed along to higher authority.⁴⁷

Admiral P.N.L. Bellinger, who on December 7 had been commander of Hawaiian Based Patrol Wing Two and liaison with the commandant of the 14th Naval District, testified:

I was surprised to find that there in the Hawaiian Islands, an important naval advance outpost, we were operating on a shoestring, and the more I looked the thinner the shoestring appeared to be.

Moreover, according to a letter from NCO Stark, it appeared that

there was no intention to replace the present obsolescent type of patrol planes in Patrol Wing Two prior to one year, and that Patrol Wing Two would practically be the last wing to be furnished new planes.

This, “together with the many existing deficiencies,” led Bellinger to conclude “that the Navy Department as a whole did not view the situation in the Pacific with alarm, or else is not taking steps in keeping with their views.”⁴⁸ There were by no means enough

⁴⁶Ibid., pp. 461, 473–74.

⁴⁷Ibid., Lockard and Elliott testimony, pp. 475–96.

⁴⁸Ibid., p. 501, Bellinger testimony referring to Stark serial letter O95323.

men and equipment to carry out the kind of continual long-range surveillance that would have been required to guard against a surprise attack.

NAVAL COURT OF INQUIRY GAINS ACCESS TO JAPANESE INTERCEPTS

Finally on August 28, the 20th day of the inquiry, Kimmel's efforts to have the Japanese intercepts introduced bore fruit. Bieseimer introduced 40 or 50 items selected from among the secret Japanese "Purple" intercepts known as MAGIC received from November 26 to December 7, 1941.⁴⁹ The intercepts were not actually entered into the text of the hearings, but would be available to the court for reference. They were "extracted from the record and deposited with the Secretary of the Navy . . . in the interest of national security and the successful prosecution of the war."⁵⁰

Stark objected strenuously:

Should the secret classification of the proceedings of this court be removed, or should a copy of those proceedings or information gained therefrom come into the possession of persons unfriendly to this country while the present war with Japan is still in progress, these certain questions . . . might suggest enough to the enemy to be definitely injurious to our present and continuing war effort. . . . [I]n due time,

he said, "proceedings of this court and all of the evidence it might have secured will be a matter of open record available to the public." Therefore, "as a responsible naval officer and as a former Chief of Naval Operations with knowledge of many of the intelligence activities of my subordinates," Stark urged that

⁴⁹Ibid., part 33, pp. 735, 767–69.

⁵⁰Ibid., part 32, p. 521.

that part of the record which would in any way identify material now held so secret that it has been denied this court be taken out of the record and placed in a top secret status which will absolutely preclude any leak and reference thereto.

Judge Advocate Biesemeier concurred. As a result, substantial blocks of NCI testimony referring to secret intelligence were “deleted from the record and filed in a secure place with due reference to them so that they may be seen by proper authorities on demand.”⁵¹

Schuirmann was called back again to testify. Now that the MAGIC intercepts had been introduced, he was somewhat more, although not much more, responsive.⁵² He did not remember some documents. His recollection of the message setting up the Winds Code was “quite hazy” or “extremely hazy.”⁵³ When asked about the December 6 13-part Japanese reply to our November 26 proposal, he asserted without hesitation that he “was not acquainted with the contents on the 6th of December, 1941.”⁵⁴

Schuirmann did admit discussing some of the November 26 to December 7 messages with Admiral Stark.

Schuirmann: Yes, sir. I did discuss the situation but when it came down to pointing out certain messages, you ask if I made a particular point of discussing that particular message with the Admiral and I just don't remember.⁵⁵

There was a “general feeling,” Schuirmann said,

⁵¹Ibid., pp. 249–50. When the hearings were published after the war, these special sections were printed out of context in a later part of the hearings, forcing the reader to shuffle pages continually back and forth to follow a witness's testimony.

⁵²Ibid., p. 159.

⁵³Ibid., part 33, pp. 738, 755.

⁵⁴Ibid., p. 749.

⁵⁵Ibid., p. 758.

that everybody recognized that there was a very tense situation; that diplomatic relations were in danger of being severed, but that a severance of diplomatic relations did not necessarily mean that war was going to result.

He could not speak for others, “but my own opinion . . . was that Japan would go her own way in East Asia and would put up to the United States the onus of using force to oppose her.”⁵⁶

CAPTAIN SAFFORD RELATES MANY WARNINGS CONTAINED IN JAPANESE INTERCEPTS

At the time of the attack, Captain L.F. Safford had been in charge of the security section of Naval Communications, which was concerned with “security proper, that is, codes and ciphers, and surveillance over their use . . . also . . . Communications Intelligence [C.I.]. The name was used in peace-time,” Safford explained, “purely to mask the *major* mission of the section . . . *collecting information from enemy or prospective enemy nations through their communications*” (italics added). Most of the section’s effort at that time had been concentrated on Japan. Safford had been “in charge of the intercept stations, direction finder exchanges, and decrypting units.”⁵⁷

Safford’s testimony was forthright and factual. He identified the selected Japanese intercepts that had been made available to the NCI. Asked what information, if any, had been “received in the C.I. Unit in Washington prior to the evening of December 6th that indicated a break in relations between the United States and Japan,”⁵⁸ Safford discussed several intercepts other than those available to the NCI, with which he was familiar because of his duties in communications intelligence. He pointed out that on

⁵⁶Ibid., pp. 759–70.

⁵⁷Ibid., p. 769.

⁵⁸Ibid., p. 775.

November 5 the Japanese set a November 25 deadline for the signing of the agreement the United States and Japanese ambassadors were working on.⁵⁹ On November 14 the Japanese advised their Washington ambassador, “Should negotiations collapse . . . we will completely destroy British and American power in China.”⁶⁰

On November 16, Tokyo wired that “The fate of our empire hangs by the slender thread of a few days.”⁶¹ On November 22 Tokyo postponed the deadline to November 29, advising Nomura,

There are reasons beyond your ability to guess why we wanted to settle Japanese-American relations by the 25th, but if within the next three or four days you can finish your conversations with the Americans; if the signing can be completed by the 29th . . . and in short if everything can be finished, we have decided to wait until that date.⁶²

Safford testified about other Japanese intercepts that gave still further indications of impending war. On December 1 we translated and read a November 30 dispatch from Tokyo to the Japanese ambassador in Berlin advising him:

The conversations . . . between Tokyo and Washington . . . now stand ruptured. . . [T]here is extreme danger that war may suddenly break out between the Anglo-Saxon nations and Japan through some clash of arms, and . . . this war may come quicker than anyone dreams.⁶³

⁵⁹Ibid, part 12, p. 100 (Japanese intercept #736, November 5); also part 33, p. 1365.

⁶⁰Ibid., part 33, p. 776 (Japanese Circular 2319); also part 12, pp. 126–27.

⁶¹Ibid., part 33, p. 775, 1366; also part 12, pp. 137–38.

⁶²Ibid., part 33, p. 1366 (Japanese intercept #812); also part 12, p. 165.

⁶³Ibid., part 33, p. 776 (Japanese intercept #985); also part 12, p. 204.

Also on December 1, we read a long intercepted message from the Japanese ambassador in Berlin to Tokyo reporting that German Foreign Minister Ribbentrop had said, “Should Japan become engaged in a war against the United States, Germany, of course, would join the war immediately.”⁶⁴

Tokyo also advised its Washington ambassadors on December 1 that London, Hong Kong, Singapore, and Manila had been “instructed to abandon the use of code machines and to dispose of them.”⁶⁵ Tokyo advised Hsinking (Changchun, Manchuria) on December 1,

in view of various circumstances it is our policy to cause Manchuria to participate in the war in which event Manchuria will take the same steps toward England and America that this country will take in case war breaks out.⁶⁶

On December 2, we translated and read a November 28 dispatch to Tokyo from Hsinking:

[I]n the event that war breaks out with England and the United States . . . [p]ersons to be interned: a. British nationals—339. b. American citizens—81 . . . d. Nationals of the Soviet or other third powers observed to be obnoxious characters with pro-British and American leanings are to be suitably taken care of.⁶⁷

We had intercepted several messages to and from Tokyo and the Japanese consul in Honolulu concerning surveillance of the ships at Pearl Harbor. On December 3 we read a Tokyo message

⁶⁴Ibid., part 33, p. 776 (Berlin to Tokyo #1393, November 29, 1941); also part 12, pp. 200–02.

⁶⁵Ibid., part 33, p. 776–77 (Japanese circular #2444, December 1, 1941); also part 12, p. 209.

⁶⁶Ibid., part 33, pp. 755–56 (Japanese intercept #893); also part 12, pp. 09–10).

⁶⁷Ibid., part 33, p. 776 (Japanese intercept #781); also part 12, p. 198.

to Honolulu dated November 15, asking them to “make your ‘ships in harbor report’ irregular, but at a rate of twice a week.”⁶⁸ On December 4, we learned that on November 20, Tokyo had told the consul general in Honolulu to “investigate comprehensively the fleet _____[sic] bases in the neighborhood of the Hawaiian military reservation.”⁶⁹ Safford testified: “On December 5 we learned that Tokyo had instructed [the consul] in Honolulu on November 29: ‘In the future, report even when there are no ship movements’.”⁷⁰

During the Hart inquiry, Safford had testified about the “Winds Code,” but the Japanese intercepts had not then been available. Safford brought the subject up again. The Japanese message setting up the “Winds Code” had been sent from Tokyo, Safford said, on November 19.⁷¹ It provided for inserting false weather reports, each containing a secret meaning, in the middle and at the end of daily Japanese language shortwave news broadcasts, permitting the Japanese government to reach her representatives around the world in the event it could no longer communicate in normal code.⁷² Safford testified that his first indication the code setup had been implemented and that a “Winds Codes Execute” had actually been picked up came on December 4, around 8:00 A.M. He had not seen a copy of the translation since “about the 15th of December, 1941,” but to the best of his recollection, the translation had said, “War with America; war with England; and peace with Russia.”⁷³ This “Winds Code Execute,” the Navy Department communications intelligence unit had then

⁶⁸Ibid., part 33, p. 777 (Japanese intercept #111); also part 12, p. 262.

⁶⁹Ibid., part 12, p. 263 (Japanese intercept #111).

⁷⁰Ibid., part 33, pp. 777, 1379 (Japanese intercept #122); also part 12, p. 263.

⁷¹Ibid., part 33, pp. 738, 1368 (Japanese circular #2353); also part 12, p. 154.

⁷²Ibid., part 33, pp. 770–75, Safford testimony.

⁷³Ibid.

“regarded . . . as definitely committing the Japanese Government to war with the United States and Britain.”⁷⁴

Safford was asked:

Captain, in a previous answer you stated that the copy of the intercept using the winds code which you saw on the morning of 4 December 1941 indicated a break in diplomatic relations between the United States and Japan and Japan and Great Britain, and war between these nations. Was there anything in the establishment of the code originally which would indicate . . . war as contrasted with a mere break in diplomatic relations?”

Safford said,

The Dutch translation said “war.” The Japanese language is very vague and you can put a number of constructions or interpretations or translations on the same message. In very important documents it was customary for the Army and Navy to make independent translations. . . . The general facts would be alike. However, the people in Communications Intelligence and the people in Signal Intelligence Service and the people in the Far Eastern Section of Naval Intelligence, as well as the Director of Naval Intelligence, considered that meant war, that it was “a signal of execute for the Japanese war plans.”⁷⁵

Safford continued, “[I]mmediate distribution [of the “Winds Code Execute”] was made to the regular people before 9:00 A.M., that morning.” It went to the director of naval intelligence (Wilkinson), the director of war plans (Turner), the director of naval communications (Noyes), the assistant chief of naval operations (Ingersoll), and the chief of naval operations (Stark). Copies were also sent to the State Department, the White House, and the

⁷⁴Ibid., part 26, pp. 390–94, especially p. 394, Safford testimony before the Hart Inquiry.

⁷⁵Ibid., part 33, pp. 772–73.

War Department. And, Safford said, this message was included “in the routine distribution, which was made around noon each day.”⁷⁶

Safford’s dogged search for the pre-attack intercepts located most of them, including the November 19 “Winds Code” setup message.⁷⁷ However, in spite of repeated searches since mid-November 1943, he said he could find no trace of its implementation.⁷⁸ Thus doubt was cast on whether the Japanese had ever actually used a “Winds Code Execute” to communicate with their overseas officials. “A great many messages and other material were misplaced during frequent moves consequent to the growth of the Naval Intelligence organization,” Safford said, although he thought all the Japanese messages intercepted had been located or accounted for *except this “Winds Code Execute.”* Even the Army’s Signal Intelligence Service had failed to locate a single copy. “[T]his Winds Message,” Safford said, “is very conspicuous by its absence.”⁷⁹

He continued with his testimony about intercepts not given to the court. On November 26, 1941, the United States had rejected the Japanese proposal for a *modus vivendi*. Tension and uncertainty prevailed among top Washington officials; the State Department was on the *qui vive*. On November 28, when our State Department officials read the intercept saying that Tokyo would reply “in two or three days” to what they called our “humiliating proposal,” the Department realized the Japanese government was not going to agree to our terms. Japan’s ambassadors were told by their government that “negotiations will be de facto ruptured” but not to “give the impression that the negotiations

⁷⁶Ibid., p. 773.

⁷⁷Ibid., pp. 738, 1368 (Japanese circular #2353); pp. 755, 1367 (Japanese circular #2354); also part 12, pp. 154–55.

⁷⁸Ibid., part 33, p. 772.

⁷⁹Ibid., p. 782.

[were] broken off. Merely say to them [the U.S. officials] that you are awaiting instructions.”⁸⁰ Thus those privy to the intercepts knew that, in the words Stanley K. Hornbeck, special assistant to Secretary of State Hull, “[T]here would be no further negotiations” between Japan and the United States.⁸¹

Safford testified that “Tokyo serial No. 901 [the “Pilot Message” announcing the impending arrival of Tokyo’s #902, the 14-part reply] in English to the American note of November 26, 1941.”⁸² Safford continued:

On this week-end [December 6–7] we handled about three times the normal messages for a busy day. The most important was a very long, 14-part message which contained the Japanese declaration of war. . . . Up to this time, the language implied had been very courteous. Because of the harsh and abusive language used throughout this [the Japanese reply], there was no doubt in the minds of the men who were on watch at the time that the Japanese meant war and that this was their declaration.⁸³

Safford was asked if he knew whether any information concerning the messages which you have outlined was sent to Kimmel or Bloch in Hawaii.

Safford: The only information sent him [sic], was with reference to the Japanese destroying their code machines.⁸⁴

Safford was then asked specifically about the message translated and read in Washington on December 1, in which Tokyo notified Berlin that “war may suddenly break out between the

⁸⁰Ibid., part 12, p. 195, Japanese intercept #844.

⁸¹Ibid., part 33, p. 784.

⁸²Ibid., p. 783.

⁸³Ibid., p. 783.

⁸⁴Ibid., p. 782.

Anglo-Saxon nations and Japan. . . . [T]he time of the breaking out of this war may come quicker than anyone dreams.”

Safford: That was not sent . . . neither to [Kimmel] nor [Hart in Manila].⁸⁵

Safford knew of one attempt to disseminate intercept information to Kimmel and Bloch. Commander McCollum, chief of the Far Eastern section of naval intelligence, “wrote up a long message about 4 or 5 or 6 pages long, approximately 500 words, giving a complete and brief and very forceful summary of developments up to that time, up to 4 December, 1941.” On the afternoon of December 4, Safford had been in the office of Admiral Leigh Noyes, director of naval communications, when Captain Theodore S. Wilkinson, director of the office of naval intelligence, came in with McCollum’s message for Kimmel and gave it to Noyes to read. As Noyes finished a page, he handed it to Safford to read. According to his testimony,

It was a very complete summary of what had happened. It began with the withdrawal of Japanese merchant ships from the Atlantic and Indian Oceans in July. It mentioned the evacuation of Japanese Nationals from Malaya and the Netherlands East Indies. It included the fact that diplomatic relations were at an impasse; that neither party would yield, and it had a direct reference to the winds message . . . and said that we considered that this was . . . the signal of execute of the Japanese war plans; that we expected that war was imminent.

According to Safford, McCollum had done a very thorough job. When Noyes finished reading, Wilkinson asked what he thought of it. Noyes responded, “I think it’s an insult to the intelligence of the Commander-in-Chief.”

⁸⁵*Ibid.*, p. 782. For Tokyo-Berlin message, see part 12, pp. 204–05.

According to Safford's testimony, Wilkinson disagreed, saying

Admiral Kimmel is a very busy man and may not see the picture as clearly as you and I do. I think it only fair to the Commander-in-Chief that he be given this information and I am going to send it if I can get it released by the front office.

Wilkinson then left, Safford presumed, to see Admiral Royal E. Ingersoll, assistant CNO, and to have the message released. Until November 1943, Safford had assumed that it had been sent. But it hadn't!⁸⁶

CNO ADMIRAL STARK'S MEMORY IS POOR

Admiral Stark was then called back to the witness stand and asked about specific messages. His November 24 message to the field commanders "may well have been based upon or certainly had taken into consideration" the Japanese intercepts. It had warned that a "favorable outcome of negotiations with Japan very doubtful. . . . [A] surprise aggressive movement in any direction including attack on Philippines or Guam is a possibility."⁸⁷ Moreover, the November 27 "war warning" message announced, "Negotiations with Japan . . . have ceased and an aggressive move by Japan is expected within the next few days . . . against either the Philippines Thai or Kra peninsula or possibly Borneo."⁸⁸

In his messages to the field commanders Stark had not mentioned any of the Japanese-announced deadlines in his dispatches; he "had become leery of dates." "If I had set a date of the 25th, for example," he said,

⁸⁶Ibid., part 33, pp. 774–75.

⁸⁷Ibid., p. 788; see CNO Dispatch 242005, part 14, p. 1405.

⁸⁸Ibid., part 33, p. 789; see CNO Dispatch 272337, part 14, p. 1406.

and nothing happened on the 25th, it would have, in my opinion, been bad ball. Again, if I had sent a date of the 29th . . . and nothing had happened, again it would probably have weakened the dispatch which we did send, and which, in my opinion, covered the situation. Judging by what is now perhaps hindsight, I am glad that I did not include the dates.⁸⁹

Stark's memory appeared poor. He did not recall seeing the document mentioning the "Winds Code." According to him, the setup intercept, translated November 28, "added nothing to what I had already sent in the [war warning] dispatch of the 27th."⁹⁰ He did not recall the Japanese ambassadors' two-part dispatch of November 26, summarizing for their government's benefit the U.S. proposal of that day.⁹¹ Nor did Stark remember seeing—in the form in which it was presented to the NCI—the Tokyo message of December 1 reporting that the "situation continues to be increasingly critical" but that "to prevent the United States from becoming unduly suspicious we [the Japanese government] have been advising the press . . . the negotiations are continuing." It "may very well have been discussed at that time." But in any event, he said, it "added nothing . . . to what had been sent" out formerly.⁹² Stark did not remember "specifically" the Tokyo requests for "reports relative to ships in Pearl Harbor." Nor did he recall Tokyo's request about ships by specific areas there. When asked if he remembered the message translated December 6, "relative to the movements of American warships in Pearl Harbor, the courses taken and speeds maintained," he answered, "No, I do not."

⁸⁹Ibid., part 33, pp. 788–89.

⁹⁰Ibid., p. 789.

⁹¹Ibid.

⁹²Ibid., p. 791.

Was any information concerning [the ships-in-harbor messages] sent by you to the Commander-in-Chief, Pacific Fleet?

Stark: “No I think not.”⁹³

And Stark did not recall seeing the “Pilot Message” intercept.⁹⁴ Asked if he had seen or “been made acquainted with” the contents of Japan’s 14-part reply before the attack, Stark said he “had not seen” it and didn’t have “the slightest recollection of having seen its contents.”⁹⁵ When asked later if he knew on December 6 that 13 parts were at the Navy Department, he replied, “I did not know it.”⁹⁶

Many messages were received in Washington during the weeks before the attack on Pearl Harbor. “It was physically impossible,” Stark said, for him to have read, or even to have seen, all the intercepts. He explained the Navy Department procedure for delivering classified information to him as CNO:

Some I saw directly. Some came to me with evaluations. Sometimes some came to me with a general picture—sometimes orally, sometimes on a written memorandum. To take a single dispatch with a specific question, we may read into it now, in the light of hindsight, what we couldn’t see then.

Stark said, however, that he “was in complete touch—at least that I assumed I was in complete touch—with the broad general trend.” We were “unquestionably continually talking things over.” And, he said, he always “aimed to keep the commanders in the field advised” of their conclusions; “we did not send them every specific document.”⁹⁷ The general tenor of Stark’s remarks

⁹³Ibid., pp. 793–94.

⁹⁴Ibid., p. 792.

⁹⁵Ibid.

⁹⁶Ibid., p. 801.

⁹⁷Ibid., p. 791.

throughout his testimony was that he believed he had conveyed to Kimmel all the information he needed.

ARMY CHIEF OF STAFF GENERAL MARSHALL'S MEMORY IS POOR

General Marshall appeared before the NCI. Since “that tragedy occurred,” he said, his whole attention had been “turned to other things from that instant, and I didn’t see a record or look at a thing until, as a matter of fact, the last day or two, trying to get something for this board.” He had considered the pre-attack events simply “water over the dam.”⁹⁸

Marshall testified at length about the problems of supplying men and materiel to the outlying military posts—Hawaii, the Philippines, Panama, and the Pacific Islands—while at the same time supporting Great Britain in the Atlantic and Africa, and continuing the training of men here at home.⁹⁹ “[O]ur relations with the Japanese appeared to degenerate progressively throughout 1941,” he said. In February the Army and Navy departments decided “to take all the women and children out of the Philippines.” According to Marshall, “in July and August the situation became conspicuously critical. That was the time of the enforcement of the economic sanctions against Japan.” He had “thought for some time that war was imminent.” He and Stark were trying

to do all in our power here at home, with the State Department or otherwise, to try to delay this break to the last moment, because of our state of unpreparedness and because of our involvement in other parts of the world.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁸Ibid., part 32, p. 557.

⁹⁹Ibid., pp. 554–59.

¹⁰⁰Ibid., p. 560.

Marshall continued:

The information that we obtained from the Japanese actions in China, and particularly as they approached Indo-China, as well as from our most secret sources, pointed to an evident intention to move into Thailand. . . . It seemed to us that they were definitely going to take some action to cut the Burma Road, possibly closing the port of Rangoon. It seemed evident to us that Malaysia—the Malay-Kra Peninsula—was very definitely threatened. It was plainly evident to us that they were accumulating supplies to go into Indo-China, and apparently were going into Thailand. We had no specific indications . . . of their intentions regarding the Philippines other than those which automatically suggested themselves to us geographically. . . . [W]e had reports of movements of convoys down the coast of Indo-China.

Marshall recalled “no indication of any Japanese plans in preparation for an assault on Hawaii.”¹⁰¹

With respect to the intercepts, Marshall did not recall the Tokyo message setting November 29, 1941, as the deadline by which the Japanese ambassadors should complete their negotiations with the United States, although he was “reasonably certain” that he had seen or been informed about it.¹⁰² He had a “very dim recollection” of the “Winds Code” setup intercept, but didn’t recall any information about any part of the “Winds Code” having been put into effect.¹⁰³

Marshall had “no definite recollection” of being on the alert, expecting a Japanese reply to Hull’s November 26 note to the Japanese.¹⁰⁴ Asked whether, on Saturday, December 6, he had been “acquainted with the fact that Japan had sent to her ambassadors

¹⁰¹Ibid., p. 561.

¹⁰²Ibid., part 33, p. 820.

¹⁰³Ibid., pp. 821–22.

¹⁰⁴Ibid., p. 821.

13 of 14 parts of a message or note to be delivered or transmitted at some later date to our Secretary of State?” he replied: “I do not recall that I was aware of such information.”

Was his failure to receive this information Saturday due “to some failure in the echelons of command in transmitting the information to [him]?”

Marshall: I couldn’t say offhand. It would depend on where I was which I do not recall on that particular Saturday. I might have been quite a number of places. I don’t know now where I actually was. . . .

Q: And you have no recollection of where you were on Saturday night?

Marshall: No, I haven’t.¹⁰⁵

Marshall stated flatly that until Sunday morning, December 7, he had received none of the 14-part Japanese reply.¹⁰⁶

Marshall was willing to talk about Sunday morning, December 7. He had been horseback riding and had come in to the War Department immediately after the ride. There he had found the long reply from the Japanese government. “This was a most unusual message,” he said.¹⁰⁷ He “read it through, naturally carefully, and some parts of it several times to get the full significance of it. As I finished it I found another page which was the message referring to 1:00 P.M.” as the specified delivery time.¹⁰⁸ Marshall then told about the last-minute message he had drafted, which he and Stark sent to the field commanders, advising them that the Japanese had been instructed to deliver their

¹⁰⁵Ibid., pp. 825–26.

¹⁰⁶Ibid., p. 823.

¹⁰⁷Ibid., pp. 826–27.

¹⁰⁸Ibid., p. 822.

reply to Hull that day at precisely 1:00 P.M., Washington time.¹⁰⁹ This message, coded and sent as a radiogram, left Washington about noon on December 7. It apparently went through without delay to the Philippines, Panama, San Francisco. But for some reason, possibly unusual air turbulence, Hawaii couldn't be raised by radio. So the dispatch to Hawaii was delayed. It was sent from San Francisco via Western Union.¹¹⁰

After 24 days of hearings, the NCI transferred its operations to Hawaii. Kimmel's pre-attack decisions and actions were generally defended by his fellow officers. It was recognized, however, that because of the shortages of men and materiel there was inevitably a need for compromises between preparing for war and conducting surveillance.

NAVY COURIER COMMANDER KRAMER'S MEMORY SHARP AND CLEAR

By far the most significant testimony taken by the NCI at Pearl Harbor was that of Commander A.D. Kramer. Kramer, a Japanese-language scholar, had been stationed in Washington at the time of the attack. He had been "attached to the Office of Naval Intelligence, Navy Department, Washington, on loan to OP-20-G, Office of Naval Communications." He became "head of the translation section of the communications security group" and was responsible for "translating all decrypted traffic obtained from intercepts." Kramer's translation section had a staff of civilian civil-service translators. He normally looked over the important messages and edited the translations before they were typed up; he translated "only an occasional message" himself. As a Navy courier also, Kramer had delivered many of the crucial decrypted

¹⁰⁹Ibid. For text of Marshall/Stark message, see *ibid.*, p. 1282.

¹¹⁰Ibid., p. 823.

and translated intercepts to Navy officials and others authorized to see them.¹¹¹

Soon after Kimmel's counsels, Lavender and Hanify, arrived in Pearl Harbor, they encountered Kramer in the corridor as he was getting off an elevator. Kramer had only just arrived from duty in the southwest Pacific. The two lawyers introduced themselves and said: "There is probably one question, Commander Kramer, that you will be asked. 'Do you recall the Winds Code?'" He said he did.

Then, "Do you recall whether or not there was ever an Execute of the Winds Message?"

Kramer's answer was immediate: "Yes. *Higashi No Kazeame*. East Wind Rain."

"Right like that," Hanify reported later. "Without any hesitation. Here was a man, just in from the Pacific, and he was that definitive about that formulation."¹¹²

When Kramer testified before the NCI, he was just as open and forthright in his testimony before the court as he had been in responding to Hanify and Lavender's informal questions. He described the procedure for processing and delivering the large volume of Japanese intercepts picked up in the weeks preceding the attack. He discussed specific dispatches—the Japanese instructions to their overseas diplomatic offices to destroy their codes, the ships-in-harbor messages, the "Winds Code Execute," and the December 6–7 delivery of the Japanese reply to the United States' November 26 "ultimatum."¹¹³

"The greatest percentage of the traffic in the fall of '41," Kramer said, "had to do with two main types of material: One was the Japanese-U.S. negotiations, and the other was the circuit

¹¹¹Ibid., pp. 848, 849.

¹¹²John Toland interview of Hanify, August 29, 1979, on file with Toland papers, Franklin Delano Roosevelt Library, Hyde Park, N.Y.

¹¹³Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 33, pp. 847–76.

from Berlin to Tokyo.” These two categories of traffic “were being followed with considerable interest and detail by all the senior addressees. . . . They therefore wanted to see those things as promptly as possible.” The skill of the U.S. cryptographers was such that, in spite of the daily adjustments made by the Japanese to their “Purple” code machine, the U.S. cryptographers were often able to decrypt a Japanese intercept and have it translated an hour or two before the Japanese ambassador was to meet Secretary of State Hull to discuss it.¹¹⁴ To speed up the delivery of this material to Hull and our other top officials, Kramer said he didn’t take time to write summaries during the final weeks, as he had done earlier, but would only indicate subject matter “by attaching clips to the messages in the folders . . . of most immediate interest.”¹¹⁵

Although the intelligence gleaned from the intercepts was necessarily incomplete, Kramer noted many clues to Japan’s intentions. The Japanese were negotiating for Thailand to enter the conflict on their side; on November 30; they reported to their German allies on the status of their negotiations with the United States; they asked their specially trained espionage man in the United States, Terasaki, mistakenly called “Takahashi” by Kramer, to leave the country. On December 6 Japanese ships had been sighted moving down the coast of French Indochina and rounding its southern tip “approximately a day’s run from Kota Bharu,”¹¹⁶ north of Singapore on the Malayan peninsula near the border of Thailand; and the Japanese “were very concerned about what action we were taking, where our Fleet might be, what action we might take in case the Japs did make a move against the British.”¹¹⁷ Kramer testified that the Japanese had wired their ambassador in Berlin

¹¹⁴Ibid., pp. 851–52.

¹¹⁵Ibid., p. 852.

¹¹⁶Ibid., pp. 859–60.

¹¹⁷Ibid., p. 867.

there is extreme danger that war may suddenly break out between the Anglo-Saxon nations and Japan through some clash of arms and . . . the time of the breaking out of this war may come quicker than anyone dreams.¹¹⁸

Kramer said he

prepared a special paraphrased version of that for Mr. Roosevelt which he retained; otherwise, neither the State Department nor the White House were ever permitted . . . to retain any of these dispatches.¹¹⁹

Kramer remembered the “Winds Code” set-up clearly. “On receipt of this particular message, on the instructions of the Director of Naval Communications, Admiral Noyes,” Kramer prepared some cards with “the expressions contained in this exhibit, and the meaning:”¹²⁰ HIGASHI NO KAZEAME (East wind rain, Japan-United States relations in danger); KITANOKAZE KUMORI (Japan-U.S.S.R. relations in danger); NISHI NO KAZE HARE (West wind clear, Japan-British relations in danger).¹²¹ Noyes indicated that he intended to leave these cards with certain senior officers of the Navy Department. According to Kramer, Noyes “arranged with Captain Safford, the head of Op-20-G, the section of Communications that handled this material, to have any message in this phraseology handled promptly by watch officers, not only in OP-20-G but through the regular watch officers of the Communications section of the Navy Department.”¹²² “[A]ll that Op-20-G organization were very much on the *qui vive* looking for that . . . warning,” Kramer

¹¹⁸Ibid., p. 869. See also part 12, p. 204 (Japanese intercept #985).

¹¹⁹Ibid., part 33, p. 873.

¹²⁰Ibid., p. 853.

¹²¹Ibid., p. 738, (Tokyo-Washington Circular #2353). See also part 12, p. 154.

¹²²Ibid., part 33, p. 853.

testified.¹²³ Kramer also remembered the “Winds Code Execute.” He said he “was shown such a message by the GY watch officer, recognized it as being of this nature, walked with him to Captain Safford’s office.”¹²⁴

When this “Winds Code Execute” came through on December 3 or 4, “Captain Safford took the ball.” Kramer did not handle its distribution himself “because of the fact that this was a plain language message, and because of the fact that special arrangements had been made to handle” it.¹²⁵ Kramer believed Safford took the message directly to Admiral Noyes’ office; he

knew that Admiral Noyes was highly interested in that particular plain language code because of his previous instructions to me [Kramer] to make out these cards so that he could leave it with certain high officers and the Secretary, all with the view of getting the word to those people promptly, whether it was any time of the day or night.¹²⁶

Kramer recalled the Japanese language words, HIGASHI NO KAZEAME. Their “literal meaning,” he said, “is East Wind, Rain. That is plain Japanese language. The sense of that, however, meant strained relations or a break in relations, possibly even implying war with a nation to the eastward, the United States.”¹²⁷ It “could be inferred to imply as including an actual rupture of relations, or possibly even war.”¹²⁸

Kramer continued:

[W]e knew they were planning something against Britain. . . . We knew, too, that the Japs were very much aware of the fact we

¹²³Ibid., p. 871.

¹²⁴Ibid., p. 853.

¹²⁵Ibid., p. 853.

¹²⁶Ibid., p. 871.

¹²⁷Ibid., p. 853.

¹²⁸Ibid., p. 867.

were doing a great deal for the British in their war and working closely with them. In fact, it was almost a joint front as regards negotiations with the Japs. That note that we had handed the Japanese on 26 November had only been given to them after consultation, with Japanese knowledge, with the Dutch and Chinese as well as the British. Consequently . . . the Japs were very concerned about what action we were taking, where our Fleet might be, what action we might take in case the Japs did make a move against the British.¹²⁹

Kramer testified about relaying information to Stark and occasionally even discussing it with him. “The majority of times,” Kramer said, “the folder [of Japanese intercepts] was left with his aide.” Just how much Stark read, Kramer didn’t know, but Kramer said he

made a point of pointing out to his aide, his flag secretary, which were the things of most immediate importance or interest to the Admiral. Occasionally I would indicate that the Admiral should see them at once, or as soon as possible. At other times when a particular hot item . . . came in, I would request permission to see the Admiral directly and would take it in. That happened quite frequently during the fall of ‘41.

By “frequently,” Kramer meant, “two or three or four times a week.”¹³⁰

When asked whether Stark had seen one of the intercepted Tokyo-Honolulu ships-in-harbor messages, Kramer couldn’t be “positive whether the Chief of Naval Operations actually saw it, but . . . it would have been in a folder that was left in his office.”¹³¹

¹²⁹*Ibid.*, p. 867.

¹³⁰*Ibid.*, p. 852.

¹³¹*Ibid.*, p. 856.

Had Stark received the November 28 intercept stating that, with the Japanese government's reply "in two or three days" to the State Department's note of November 26,¹³² "the negotiations will be de facto ruptured"? This message "was delivered," Kramer said, "as all the negotiation messages were delivered, to the Chief of Naval Operations." Kramer was as certain as he could be that "all these important messages were delivered to the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations."¹³³

Among the most important messages Kramer handled was this Japanese reply to our November 26¹³⁴ "humiliating," according to the Japanese, proposal. On December 6 we intercepted the "Pilot Message"¹³⁵ announcing to the Japanese ambassadors that Tokyo would soon be sending their government's reply to the United States November 26 proposal. This reply would be in English and would be "very long," fourteen parts.¹³⁶ In the middle of the afternoon, Kramer became aware that this message was coming in.¹³⁷ "[I]n guarded language" he explained to Admiral Wilkinson the nature of the message. Then he proceeded to the White House. From there he went to Knox's apartment and Wilkinson's home. Kramer was unable to reach Stark that evening, although he believed Wilkinson was in touch with him or his aides.¹³⁸

¹³²Ibid., part 33, pp. 870, 1370; also part 12, p. 195. Japanese intercept #844, November 28, 1941.

¹³³Ibid., part 33, p. 870.

¹³⁴Ibid., part 12, p. 195. Tokyo to Washington, #844, November 29, 1941.

¹³⁵Ibid., part 33, p. 1380. Also part 12, pp. 238–39. Tokyo to Washington #901 (Pilot Message).

¹³⁶Ibid., part 14, pp. 239–45. Tokyo to Washington #902, 14 part message, December 6/7, 1941.

¹³⁷Ibid., part 33, p. 857. It was in the Japanese code so it had to be decrypted, but "[a]ll parts of the [14-part] message were in English, so that translation was not required" (ibid., part 14, p. 1413).

¹³⁸Ibid., part 33, p. 857.

The next morning at the Navy Department, Kramer said he found the final part of Japan's reply as well as one or two other messages.¹³⁹ He put part 14 plus the other 13 parts and other new messages in a folder that he left in Stark's office at about 9:00 A.M.¹⁴⁰

When Kramer "returned to the Navy Department at approximately 1020, a message directing [the Japanese ambassadors] in rather emphatic language that delivery [of the Japanese 14-part reply] be made to the Secretary of State at 1300 (1:00 P.M.) had been received." Also received was "a series of other messages," addressed to the Japanese ambassadors. One directed

final destruction of Japanese codes still on hand. . . . There was another message thanking the ambassador for his services, another addressed to the embassy staff, and one or two others of like nature. That material was delivered within ten to fifteen minutes to Admiral Stark's office.¹⁴¹

Kramer delivered the new intercepts to the State Department, where Hull, Stimson, and Knox were meeting. In giving them to Hull's secretary, Kramer emphasized the 1:00 P.M. delivery time (7:30 A.M. in Hawaii), fearing that Knox, a civilian would miss its significance.¹⁴²

ADMIRAL TURNER (WAR PLANS) HAD
ANTICIPATED THE ATTACK; ADMIRAL NOYES
(COMMUNICATIONS) EQUIVOCATES

The NCI stopped in San Francisco on their return trip from Hawaii to Washington, to question Director of War Plans Admiral Richmond K. Turner and Director of Naval Communications

¹³⁹Ibid.

¹⁴⁰Ibid., pp. 858–59.

¹⁴¹Ibid., p. 859.

¹⁴²Ibid.

Leigh Noyes, both of whom had been stationed in Washington before the attack.

Turner was asked what he knew about Stark's knowledge of the Japanese intercepts. He said he had "discussed" the super-secret decrypted messages with Stark "frequently," although they hadn't talked about the importance of transmitting their contents to Kimmel.¹⁴³ As a matter of fact, Turner got the impression from what Stark said that Hawaii had facilities for decoding these messages and that "they were actually doing more of the decrypting in Pearl Harbor than we were in Washington."¹⁴⁴

According to Turner, a War Plan (Rainbow Three) was issued in January 1941 that

envisaged a major attack, a major line of effort of Japan against the Philippines and either Borneo or Malaya; ultimately both, depending on the direction of the strength that they had available. . . . [W]e considered that any attack of that nature would almost surely be accompanied by an attack on the Hawaiian Islands and the Fleet of one or more forms of attack—air, submarine, Fleet, or a combination of any of those.¹⁴⁵

Turner testified that he had anticipated a Japanese-United States war even before the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. He realized that "British and United States relationships had become very close." Although he knew

nothing about what assurances were given by the president to Great Britain . . . [he] was convinced then that if Japan attacked Britain in the Far East that the United States would immediately enter the war against Japan.

Turner believed

¹⁴³Ibid., p. 886.

¹⁴⁴Ibid., pp. 881–82.

¹⁴⁵Ibid., part 32, p. 605.

a certain section of the Japanese hierarchy were very anxious to keep the United States out of the war, that is, keep the United States from assisting Great Britain, but many of the moves that had been made against Japan during 1940 and '41 were made by the United States.¹⁴⁶

When the Japanese assets in the United States were frozen by executive order in July 1941, Turner said he

had expressed the opinion previously, and I again expressed it, that that would very definitely bring on war with Japan. There was no possibility of composing matters after that unless Japan made a complete backdown, which it was very apparent she was not going to do.¹⁴⁷

Turner had helped draft the Navy's November 24 message warning the field commanders that "a surprise aggressive movement [by the Japanese] in any direction including attack on Philippines or Guam is a possibility."¹⁴⁸ By that time, he "was personally convinced that they were going to go into Siam and also into the Malay Peninsula as the initial move and also attack the Philippines."¹⁴⁹

Turner recalled discussing with Stark the "substance" of the U.S. note, the so-called "ultimatum" of November 26. According to Turner, Stark said at the time that "there wasn't any possibility that Japan would accept it."¹⁵⁰ Turner said, "Mr. Hull kept Admiral Stark very well informed at all times. . . . Their relations," Turner testified, "were very close and cordial." So Stark's November 27 "war warning" message to Kimmel had been based,

¹⁴⁶Ibid., p. 604.

¹⁴⁷Ibid.

¹⁴⁸Ibid., part 33, pp. 1173–74, CNO Stark November 24, 1941 dispatch to field commanders, #242005; also part 14, p. 1405.

¹⁴⁹Ibid., part 33, p. 878.

¹⁵⁰Ibid., pp. 877–78.

on Hull's advice "over the inter-office phone . . . that to all intents and purposes the thing was all over as far as negotiations were concerned."¹⁵¹

Turner wrote the November 27 "war warning," discussed it with Stark, and it went out with Turner's recommendation. Turner was asked: "Why was it [that] the Hawaiian Islands were not included [in that message] as a possible objective for Japan?"

Turner: The objectives which were put in there were the strategic objectives. We did not believe that Japan would launch an amphibious attack against the Hawaiian Islands.¹⁵²

However, Turner had felt

an attack was coming, and I was not at all surprised at the air attack. I knew our carriers were out, and with the warnings which had been given, I felt we would give them a pretty bad beating before they got home. . . . We had done what we could to take precautions against the attack carrying through. The order was issued to deploy the Fleet in a defensive deployment.¹⁵³

According to Turner, that order meant

To send scouting forces out of different kinds, to deploy submarines in threatened directions, to put the Fleet to sea and in a covering position for the Hawaiian Islands and a supporting position for Midway.¹⁵⁴

¹⁵¹Ibid., p. 878.

¹⁵²Ibid., part 32, p. 616.

¹⁵³Ibid. Included in the November 27, 1941 "war warning message" (#272337): *ibid.*, part 33, p. 1176; also part 14, p. 1406, was the directive "Execute an appropriate defensive deployment preparatory to carrying out the tasks assigned in WPL46."

¹⁵⁴Ibid., part 33, p. 879.

Turner said he believed that the December 7, 1:00 P.M., delivery time indicated an attack by the Japanese against the United States or Great Britain. “[O]n certainly the Kra Peninsula,” Turner said, “a landing in Siam and attacks of one nature or another, air probably, on the Philippines, because we had scouting planes out there, and some form of attack in Hawaii.” Turner considered that an air attack against the Hawaiian Islands “was one of the possibilities,” even “a probability.”

Q. Were you surprised on the morning of the 7th when Japan made an air attack on the Hawaiian Islands?

Turner: Not in the least.¹⁵⁵

At the time of the attack, Admiral Noyes had been serving in Washington as director of naval communications. According to him, “The handling of communication intelligence was a joint affair between Office of Naval Communications and the Office of Naval Intelligence,” then headed by Wilkinson. Naval Communications “was responsible for the mechanics of cryptanalysis, including interception which could be done by naval means.” As intelligence was developed it “was turned over to the Office of Naval Intelligence to handle according to their usual procedure.” However, Noyes pointed out, the intercepts were not handled by the *usual* procedure as they were considered

most secret—a much higher degree of secrecy than the ordinary designation, “Secret,” due to the fact that it is useless if any inkling reaches the enemy of the fact that we are able in any way to read his communications.¹⁵⁶

Noyes proved a reluctant witness. He avoided issues, or limited his responses to the obvious or irrelevant. When asked,

¹⁵⁵Ibid., part 32, p. 616.

¹⁵⁶Ibid., part 33, p. 889.

“Were you acquainted with the contents of this [“war warning”] dispatch on or before 7 December 1941?” he replied, “These are my initials on this draft; those are my initials.”¹⁵⁷

Q. Were you present at any conference or discussion regarding this dispatch prior to its having been released?

Noyes: Admiral Turner showed me that dispatch before he took it in for release. These are his initials. (Indicating.) These are mine. (Indicating.) It was prepared by Op12, which was War Plans.¹⁵⁸

Noyes couldn’t remember what had sparked the November 27 “war warning” that “Negotiations with Japan . . . have ceased.”

[I]t wasn’t based on any information that came through me. Whatever the statement was, I assumed at the time it was correct. I hadn’t any doubt it was correct. I will be glad to express an opinion. It is purely my recollection—a general recollection; it may not be correct. I think that at that time Nomura and Kurusu stated that they were through. The United States hadn’t accepted what they had proposed, and negotiations were supposed to be over. Afterwards, they were reopened, like all diplomatic situations; it was a case of bluff at the time—a diplomatic bluff in regard to the ceasing of negotiations, but that is purely my memory, and that wasn’t anything that I had any official knowledge of.¹⁵⁹

The judge advocate tried to determine if there was some special reason for sending, on December 4, the dispatch directing the Naval Station, Guam, to destroy all secret and confidential

¹⁵⁷Ibid., p. 892.

¹⁵⁸Ibid.

¹⁵⁹Ibid.

publications.¹⁶⁰ That was when Safford said the “Winds Code Execute” had been received,

Noyes: This was one of a series of dispatches sent, directing the destruction of all secret publications in the Pacific that could be spared in view of the imminence of war. I prepared it. It was sent on the 4th of December. This is my handwriting (indicating); and I prepared this dispatch, which is one of some others.¹⁶¹

Judge Advocate Bieseimer pursued the matter: “Imminence of war with what country, Admiral?”

Noyes: Japan.

Bieseimer pressed on. Why did Noyes believe a war with Japan was “imminent”?

Noyes: The seriousness of the situation in the Pacific. I couldn’t give you the exact items as they came up between the 27th [the date of the “war warning”] and the 4th. Things had gotten progressively worse. . . .¹⁶²

Judge Advocate: But you have not yet told us the developments [between 27 November and 4 December 1941] . . . which made you think this dispatch was necessary?

Noyes: No, I don’t think I could give you the exact sequence of events between those two dates. Ambassador Nomura, and I expect, Ambassador Kurusu, were in Washington, and the negotiations were apparently not proceeding well. There was

¹⁶⁰Ibid., pp. 1178–79, OPNAV message #-042017; see also part 14, p. 1408.

¹⁶¹Ibid., part 33, p. 893.

¹⁶²Ibid., pp. 893–94.

no specific event that occurred on the morning of the 4th that caused me to send this dispatch.¹⁶³

When Bieseimeier asked Noyes whether he had seen the “Winds Code” setup intercept on or after November 28, Noyes said he had and that he “took steps to get immediate notice from our intercept stations to cover this point.”¹⁶⁴ This response was consistent with Kramer’s testimony that Noyes had had cards made up with the Winds code words on them.¹⁶⁵ However, when asked later about the cards, Noyes “couldn’t say.”¹⁶⁶

Had Noyes known before the attack of the secretary of state’s November 26 proposal to the Japanese?

Noyes: I couldn’t say whether I was familiar with this particular paper or not. . . . That is three years ago. I can’t say on what day. This traffic which has my initials, and things that I prepared, I am glad to testify to, but I cannot say exactly when I saw or if I did see many of these hundreds of dispatches.¹⁶⁷

Q. We have testimony before this court, Admiral, from subordinates who were in your office as of this period immediately preceding 7 December 1941, that all personnel were on the alert for the receipt of some very important—or a very important answer from the Japanese government. Do you have any knowledge of this situation?

Noyes: From the time of the 27 of November, gradually getting more acute, we were making every effort to obtain any information possible. I couldn’t say that we expected any particular message. . . .

¹⁶³Ibid., p. 894.

¹⁶⁴Ibid.

¹⁶⁵Ibid., p. 853, Kramer testimony.

¹⁶⁶Ibid., p. 899.

¹⁶⁷Ibid., p. 895.

Q. But were you expecting any information of importance immediately preceding 7 December 1941, from the Japanese government?

Noyes: I might say we were hoping. I couldn't say we were expecting.¹⁶⁸

Had Noyes seen or been informed about parts 1 to 13 of the Japanese reply, intercepted, decoded, and delivered to top Washington officials during the evening of December 6? He said he had not seen or been informed of the subject matter before December 7. He did not know where he was after working hours on the night of December 6. Nor did he know whether he went back to the office or stayed home.

Q. But your present recollection is that you have no knowledge of having seen that document, Parts 1 to 13, on the night of 6 December 1941?

Noyes: That is my recollection.

Asked about part 14, he replied, "This message wasn't translated until the 7th of December."

Q. Had you ever been informed of it at any time, and if so, when?

Noyes: I will have to say I don't remember.

Noyes said he did not see the "One p.m. Message" instructing the Japanese ambassadors to deliver their government's reply to the secretary of state at that time until after 7 December.¹⁶⁹

Asked if the Navy had facilities in Pearl Harbor for intercepting information in the Purple code, which was usually sent by

¹⁶⁸Ibid., pp. 895–96.

¹⁶⁹Ibid., p. 896.

cable, Noyes replied, “At the time there were no legal facilities [in Pearl Harbor] for intercepting cable. . . .”

Q. Do I understand your answer to mean that they were not receiving these cable dispatches transmitted in the purple code?

Noyes: I should say they probably were not.¹⁷⁰

Q. Did you ever inform the Chief of the War Plans Division, Captain Turner, that the Commander-in-Chief of the Pacific Fleet was decrypting intelligence information of a character similar to that which you were receiving in the Navy Department?

Noyes: No.¹⁷¹

When Noyes was asked “whether any of the code words as set out in document 15 [the “Winds Code” set-up message] were received in the Navy Department, either in Japanese or in plain English?” that is whether there had been a “Winds Code Execute,” he replied, “They were not.”¹⁷²

Testimony had been presented “before this court to the effect that the execution of the winds code system was received and that a thorough search in the Navy Department files had failed to reveal a copy of the execution signal.” Noyes was asked about that: “Would the Director of Naval Communications files be the normal place in which that record would be kept?”

Noyes: If it was received by naval means, yes. . . . Otherwise, the Office of Naval Intelligence.

¹⁷⁰Ibid., p. 898.

¹⁷¹Ibid., p. 897.

¹⁷²Ibid., p. 894.

Q. The testimony before this court was that it had been received by naval intercepting means and therefore the record of this message would naturally be kept in the files of the Director of Naval Communications, would it not?

Noyes: Yes.

Q. Can you explain why this document is missing from the files of the Director of Naval Communications?

Noyes: I don't think . . . that any such message was received by naval means.

Q. Then at no time did you learn from anyone of the execution of the winds message in any form, and at no time did you tell anyone of the execution in any form of the winds message? Is that the way you want to leave your testimony on that subject?

Noyes: That is right; yes.¹⁷³ . . . [T]o the best of my remembrance no execution of the so-called "Winds Message" was finally received.¹⁷⁴

At the conclusion of Noyes's questioning, he apologized for "not hav[ing] been able to answer the questions more specifically." But, he reminded the Court, it had been three years since he had handled any of these messages, and there had been thousands of them.

September 21, 1944, found the NCI back in Washington, with only a few more witnesses to be heard.

INFORMATION ON SHIP MOVEMENTS

At the request of Stark, 16 messages between Tokyo and Manila, Tokyo and Seattle, Tokyo and Singapore, and Tokyo and

¹⁷³Ibid., p. 900.

¹⁷⁴Ibid., pp. 905–06.

San Francisco concerning the movements of U.S. ships into and out of those harbors were introduced into the record.¹⁷⁵ Admiral Joseph R. Redman, Assistant Director of Communications, was asked if there were other similar reports to Tokyo.

Redman: Why, the general tenor of the Japanese traffic was in a searching expedition all over the world as to the movements not only in United States ports but also in those of foreign countries. [It had been going on for some time.] During the several months preceding December, 1941, it was intensified.¹⁷⁶

Redman admitted that the November 16 Honolulu to Tokyo message concerning the location of ships in Pearl Harbor had been “more specific” than the other Japanese messages he had seen reporting on ship movements,¹⁷⁷ even more specific than any answer from Manila, “because this apparently referred to some particular chart upon which he was reporting.”¹⁷⁸

Redman was asked, “Can you give the court any reasons why that [diplomatic traffic] should not have been transmitted to all commanders in the Pacific, including the coastal frontier commanders on the Pacific Coast?”¹⁷⁹ After some discussion of the difficulty of retaining security if messages were recorded word-for-word, or if they were sent by airmail, Redman finally admitted that the information could have been sent by courier. But a courier wasn’t used.¹⁸⁰ Or it could have been briefed, encoded,

¹⁷⁵Ibid., pp. 908 and Exhibit #68, pp. 1391–96. For more complete compilation of such messages including those not made available to NCI, see part 12, pp. 270–310.

¹⁷⁶Ibid., part 33, pp. 914–15.

¹⁷⁷Ibid., Japanese Intercept #222, translated December 6, 1941, pp. 1384–85.

¹⁷⁸Ibid., p. 917.

¹⁷⁹Ibid., p. 915.

¹⁸⁰Ibid., p. 917.

and then sent, with little threat to security.¹⁸¹ But that hadn't been done either.

KIMMEL REVIEWS PRE-ATTACK PEARL HARBOR SITUATION

Admiral Kimmel said he had received none of the secret Japanese intercepts introduced to the NCI that had been received in Washington between November 1 and December 7, 1941.¹⁸² He had, of course, received the November 27 “war warning” dispatch. In response to that, on November 30 he set forth in a memorandum “the action which we would take in case hostilities should suddenly break out.” He thought that “it was well to be prepared and ready to take action immediately.” These plans were revised as necessary from time to time and on December 5, a new memorandum was “prepared and approved and put in the hands of the Staff Duty Officer . . . so that he would know exactly what to do . . . in case of an emergency.”¹⁸³

Kimmel reviewed again the situation at Pearl Harbor in the months preceding the attack.¹⁸⁴ During the months preceding the attack, Stark sent Kimmel a number of rather general warnings concerning the Japanese threat in the Pacific. In Washington, tension was building toward the end of November; many Japanese messages were being intercepted, decrypted, and translated every day offered clues to the thinking of the Tokyo government. Those privy to this ultra secret MAGIC were well aware that the Japanese were planning some kind of aggressive action. Yet in spite of Kimmel's frequent requests to Stark for information,

¹⁸¹*Ibid.*, pp. 915, 918.

¹⁸²*Ibid.*, part 32, p. 654.

¹⁸³*Ibid.*, p. 653.

¹⁸⁴*Ibid.*, pp. 658–59.

the actual warnings sent to Kimmel revealed little of this growing sense of emergency.¹⁸⁵

In Hawaii, Kimmel “put into effect all the security measures that I thought we could put into effect, and still continue the training at anywhere near a satisfactory condition.” The “war warning” of November 27 as well as the warnings he had received earlier, Kimmel said, “followed a pattern that had continued for some time.” He “felt that before hostilities came that there would be additional information, that we would get something more definite.” When the attack actually came without his having heard anything more specific, he

was inclined to blame myself for not having been much smarter than I was. But when I found, some time later, that the information was, in fact, available in the Navy Department; that the information which, if it had been given me, would have changed my attitude and would have changed the dispositions, I ceased to blame myself so much.¹⁸⁶

Hindsight is always better than foresight. Yet Kimmel believed that, if he had known what was in the November 26 State Department note to the Japanese government and that the Navy Department thought this note “would prove entirely unacceptable to the Japanese government,” his outlook would have been affected “very considerably.”¹⁸⁷ Moreover, the ships-in-harbor “messages inquiring as to the disposition of ships inside Pearl Harbor itself, wanting to know which ones were in areas, the report of the Japanese Consul giving in detail the courses taken by those in the harbor, would have indicated to me that they [the Japanese] were not only interested in the ships that were in the

¹⁸⁵Ibid., pp. 655–57.

¹⁸⁶Ibid., p. 659.

¹⁸⁷Ibid., p. 660.

Pearl Harbor area but that they were interested in exactly where they were in Pearl Harbor proper.”¹⁸⁸

There were only two “effective” forms of attack against ships in Pearl Harbor itself. One would be for submarines actually to enter the harbor. At that time Kimmel would have “discounted largely” that possibility because he didn’t know they had midget submarines. He would also have discounted the possibility of an aircraft torpedo attack. He “would have considered that about the only thing that could get in would be a bombing attack.” Therefore, if he had known about the Japanese messages asking about the specific locations of ships in the harbor, he would have concluded, “Well, they probably are going to make an air bombing raid here.” Kimmel could not see “any other conclusion you can draw from it, unless you put it down to Japanese stupidity in wanting all this information.” And Kimmel did not “think they were so stupid.”¹⁸⁹

With respect to the “Winds Code Message,” Kimmel said he did not want to appear “to be so wise now that everything has happened.” But still, he said, he had

a right to an opinion. . . . The definite fact that Japan, at least, was going to break off diplomatic relations and, at most, was going to war with us would have had a very great effect on me and all my advisors. That would have been something definite.¹⁹⁰

What would Kimmel have done if he had been privy to the intelligence available in the secret intercepts that had been introduced to the NCI? He said that was “a very difficult question to answer . . . after the fact.” However, he was sure he would at least have alerted all shore-going activities in the Hawaiian Islands, including the Army. He would have

¹⁸⁸Ibid., part 33, p. 920.

¹⁸⁹Ibid., pp. 920–21.

¹⁹⁰Ibid., p. 921.

in all probability, had the Fleet put to sea . . . probably 300 miles west of Oahu in an intercepting position for any attacking force that would have come either to the northward or to the southward.

He couldn't put them too far away, for he had to consider their fueling. But he would have put them "just far enough so they couldn't be readily located." He was "torn betwixt a desire for the security of the Fleet and for preparations to make the initial moves in case of war with Japan. . . . Any Fleet which sits and waits to be attacked," Kimmel added, "labors under an enormous handicap." However, he thought it "fair" to say that he "would have alerted everything on shore to its maximum that could be maintained over a long period." He would have "instituted the reconnaissance to the best of our ability and I would have had the Fleet put to sea."¹⁹¹

Kimmel added, however, that it was "well within the realm of possibility that had I taken the Fleet to sea, the losses could have been greater than they actually were from submarine and air attack [in the harbor]. However, you must also realize," he said,

that you presuppose then that they would have found our Fleet and that they would have been able to deliver an attack. It is not impossible that, had the Fleet gone to sea, the Japanese would not have attacked at that time at all. They might have deferred the attack. We all know how difficult it is to locate a Fleet at sea, particularly if they do not want to be located. All this is in the realm of conjecture, but I think it is fair to say that there are some things to be said for keeping the Fleet in port, and the only change we would make would be to go to a little higher state of alert than we had at the time.¹⁹²

¹⁹¹Ibid., part 32, p. 659.

¹⁹²Ibid., p. 661.

“[T]he efficiency of the Japanese Air Force” was, Kimmel thought, “a surprise to the Navy Department as well as to the people in Hawaii. We had on the ships no adequate antiaircraft defense.”¹⁹³ Nor did we have sufficient patrol planes “to maintain an adequate patrol over a long period of time. . . . [A] patrol out to 300 miles or less is of very doubtful value,” Kimmel said, “particularly against air raid.” It was “almost useless,” he added. Kimmel wanted it “clearly understood” that giving the orders to the planes was his responsibility; he had used them to protect operating areas and in training in preparation for war. He believed that

by my doing so we were employing them to the very best advantage. . . . Of course, had the patrol planes, plus all the Army bombers, been out on search, we would not have had any striking force left.¹⁹⁴

To detect a carrier force, it was necessary to know that it was on the way and also its approximate time of arrival at a certain place. To confirm the difficulty of locating an incoming force, Kimmel mentioned several attacks, just within the previous three or four weeks, when “our own Navy has gone in and made attacks on Japanese-held positions at Saipan, Palau, and Manila.” In each case our planes “effected what amounts to a tactical surprise.” And this in spite of the fact that the Japanese should have been on the alert for we had been at war for nearly three years.

[W]hat is so often overlooked in connection with this Pearl Harbor affair is that we were still at peace and still conducting conversations. . . . We were still in the peace psychology, and I myself, was affected by it just like everybody else.¹⁹⁵

¹⁹³Ibid.

¹⁹⁴Ibid., p. 662.

¹⁹⁵Ibid., p. 663.

NAVY COURT OF INQUIRY REPORT

The court completed taking testimony on September 27 and issued its report on October 19, 1944. In the course of 19 “Findings of Facts,” it reviewed the information revealed in the NCI’s nine and a half weeks of hearings (July 24 to September 27).¹⁹⁶

The NCI concluded that

Admiral Kimmel’s decision, made after receiving the dispatch of 24 November, to continue preparations of the Pacific Fleet for war, was sound in the light of the information then available to him. . . . [A]lthough the attack of 7 December came as a surprise, there were good grounds for the belief on the part of high officials in the State, War, and Navy Departments, and on the part of the Army and Navy in the Hawaiian area, that hostilities would begin in the Far East rather than elsewhere, and that the same considerations which influenced the sentiment of the authorities in Washington in this respect, support the interpretation which Admiral Kimmel placed upon the “war warning message” of 27 November, to the effect that this message directed attention away from Pearl Harbor rather than toward it. . . .

[T]he Court is of the opinion that Admiral Harold R. Stark. . . failed to display the sound judgment expected of him in that he did not transmit to Admiral Kimmel, Commander-in-Chief, Pacific Fleet, during the very critical period 26 November to 7 December, important information which he had regarding the Japanese situation and, especially, in that, on the morning of 7 December, 1941, he did not transmit immediately the fact that a message had been received which appeared to indicate that a break in diplomatic relations was imminent, and that an attack in the Hawaiian area might be expected soon. . . .

¹⁹⁶Ibid., part 39, pp. 297–322, Addendum, pp. 323–30.

Finally, based upon the facts established, the Court is of the opinion that no offenses have been committed nor serious blame incurred on the part of any person or persons in the naval service.¹⁹⁷

The report was promptly presented to Secretary of the Navy Forrestal.¹⁹⁸ The presidential election was less than three weeks off. Roosevelt was running against Republican candidate Thomas E. Dewey for an unprecedented fourth term. The war was still going on. The report dealt with an extremely sensitive topic, the reading of the Japanese codes that were still helping the United States in its struggle against Japan. Moreover, it had exonerated Kimmel, who had been blamed for the extent of the catastrophe and hastened into retirement on the basis of the findings of the presidentially blessed Roberts Commission. Then, too, the NCI's criticism of Stark, a close friend and adviser of FDR's, could prove dangerous in the political campaign. Forrestal faced a difficult question: What should he do?

¹⁹⁷Ibid., p. 321.

¹⁹⁸*The New York Times*, October 21, 1944, pp. 1, 9.

24.

1944: A Political Year

In politics, as in war, crisis is the normal state of affairs. In 1944, with the nation at war, the Germans and the Japanese were doing their utmost to create crises for the United States forces overseas. The people of this country, united in the war effort, were working hard. Our factories were booming; weapons, ships, and planes were coming off assembly lines at unprecedented rates. Yet politics doesn't take time off for war. Although the people were patriotic and united in the national war effort, they were divided politically—between pro-administration Democrats and anti-administration Republicans. And in politics one can be sure of one thing; both parties will try to create crises for the other.

THE PRESIDENTIAL NOMINATIONS

On June 26, the Republican National Convention, meeting in Chicago, nominated as its presidential candidate the vigorous 42-year-old Thomas E. Dewey, a lawyer and former district attorney for New York County, who had won acclaim as a crime-buster, had put mob leaders Legs Diamond and Lucky Luciano

behind bars,¹ and had been elected, and was then serving, as governor of the State of New York.

President Roosevelt had already broken the traditional two-term limit by running for a third term in 1940. Although many people suspected he would run in 1944, even his closest associates did not know for sure. Finally, on July 11, with the Democratic convention little more than a week away (July 19–21), he answered the question reporters had been asking. He read to them from a letter he had written the national chairman of the Democratic Committee, Robert E. Hannegan:² “I do not want to run. . . . All that is within me cries out to go back to my home on the Hudson River, to avoid public responsibilities. . . . [B]ut,” he continued, “as a good soldier, . . . I will accept and serve in this office, if I am so ordered by the Commander-in-Chief of us all—the sovereign people of the United States.”³ It was no surprise, therefore, that Roosevelt was nominated on July 20 to run on the Democratic ticket for a fourth term.

FDR was 62 years old. Although he had lost the use of his legs in 1921 through infantile paralysis,⁴ he had always been vigorous, healthy, and resilient. By 1944, however, he was showing the strain of almost 12 years of heavy responsibility as the wartime commander-in-chief. He looked thin and gaunt. His doctors insisted that he reduce his hours of work and get plenty of rest. But FDR and his political advisers did everything they could to make him appear well and vigorous. Roosevelt took several

¹James MacGregor Burns, *Roosevelt: The Soldier of Freedom, 1940–1945* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1970), p. 501.

²Jonathan Daniels, *White House Witness, 1942–1945* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1975), p. 234; William D. Hassett, *Off the Record with F.D.R., 1942–1945* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1958), pp. 260–61.

³Letter to Robert E. Hannegan, White House release, July 10, 1944.

⁴James Roosevelt and Sidney Shalett, *Affectionately, F.D.R.: A Son's Story of a Lonely Man* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1959), pp. 141–45.

long trips during the campaign. Travel for President Roosevelt was not strenuous, as it was for common folks; rather it was a time of rest and relaxation, on trains in comfortable private cars or aboard luxurious ships in fresh ocean air and sunshine.

THE DEMOCRATS' DILEMMA

In political campaigns, both parties expect crises. However, FDR and his administration faced two potential crises of which the American people were completely unaware. Both concerned the super-secret Japanese MAGIC intercepts. In the first place, the administration feared the reaction of the voters if they learned at this juncture, in the middle of the war, that Washington officials had been intercepting, deciphering, and reading secret Japanese messages as early as 1940 and that, therefore, they had known a great deal about Japanese intentions *before* the attack on Pearl Harbor. Why, then, the people would ask, hadn't Washington officials adequately alerted the Hawaiian commanders? Why hadn't they seen to it that the fleet at Pearl Harbor was better provided with the information, men, weapons, and planes needed to resist attack? After having lost thousands of loved ones at Pearl Harbor and after having lived through almost three years of war, how would the voters feel toward the president and his fellow Democrats? Would they feel revulsion at having been deceived and betrayed? And would they express that revulsion at the ballot box in the coming election? Would they vote for the Republican candidate and against FDR?

In the second place, the administration feared the consequences for the war effort. What if the Japanese learned that the United States was able to decipher some of Japan's super-secret codes, codes she was still using to send messages to her diplomatic and military personnel throughout the world? If Japan realized that the United States was continuing to read many of her most private communications, she would change her codes

immediately; our armed forces would lose a valuable source of intelligence; and the fighting and killing would be prolonged.

REPUBLICAN PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE DEWEY SILENCED

The Republican Party had learned that U.S. cryptographers had deciphered some Japanese codes and had been reading some Japanese intercepts since before Pearl Harbor. As Research Director for the National Republican Party in 1944, I learned that Dewey wanted to make a speech on Pearl Harbor and Washington's knowledge of the Japanese intercepts. When Army Chief of Staff Marshall got wind of this, he considered this matter of such "a highly secret nature" that he felt compelled to prevent Dewey from speaking on the subject. On September 25 he wrote a "Top Secret" letter FOR MR. DEWEY'S EYES ONLY and had his emissary, Colonel Carter Clarke, hand-deliver it to Dewey, then on the campaign trail in Oklahoma.⁵

Marshall wrote Dewey that he was contacting him "without the knowledge of any other person except Admiral King (who concurs) because we are approaching a grave dilemma in the political reactions of Congress regarding Pearl Harbor.

What I have to tell you below is of such a highly secret nature that I feel compelled to ask you either to accept it on the basis of your not communicating its contents to any other person and returning this letter or not reading any further and returning the letter to the bearer.⁶

⁵79th Cong., 1st sess. Joint (Congressional) Committee on the Investigation of the Pearl Harbor Attack. *Pearl Harbor Attack*, 39 vols. (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1946), part 3, pp. 1130, 1133.

⁶*Ibid.*, p. 1130.

Dewey read no further before handing the letter back to Clarke. He felt he could not accept the proviso that he not communicate its contents to any other person.⁷

Marshall discussed the situation with Clarke and General Bissell, head of army intelligence. They concluded that “the matter was so important that we must make it a matter of record.” So Marshall again sent Clarke, traveling in civvies, to see Dewey, by then in Albany. Clarke phoned Marshall from Dewey’s office, saying Dewey was unwilling to read the letter unless he could share the information with at least one adviser and be permitted to retain the letter in his files. Marshall agreed.⁸ Dewey then read the letter.

Marshall wrote that he would have

preferred to talk to you in person but I could not devise a method that would not be subject to press and radio reactions as to why the Chief of Staff of the Army would be seeking an interview with you at this particular moment. . . . The most vital evidence in the Pearl Harbor matter consists of our intercepts of the Japanese diplomatic communications.

Over a period of several years, Marshall wrote, “our cryptograph people” had succeeded in reproducing a copy of the Japanese encoding machine so that we could decipher the Japanese diplomatic code. The Japanese were still using the same code, and this source was providing us with a great deal of valuable information. It had helped us to win victories at Midway, in the Aleutians; it told us of the movements of Japanese convoys and helped us in raiding Japanese shipping. Marshall told also of the serious consequences when the OSS had secretly searched the Japanese Embassy in Portugal. As a result of that incident, the Japanese

⁷Ibid., p. 1133.

⁸Ibid., p. 1135.

had changed their military code all over the world, thus depriving us of an invaluable source of information.

You will understand from the foregoing, the utterly tragic consequences if the present political debates regarding Pearl Harbor disclose to the enemy, German or Jap, any suspicion of the vital sources of information we possess.⁹

As a patriotic American, Dewey honored this request.

Shortly after this, Republican Senator Homer Ferguson of Michigan, unaware of the reason for Dewey's silence, also scheduled a speech on the pre-war reading of the Japanese codes. Dewey called Ferguson to Albany and asked him *not* to say anything about it. There was no further reference to the matter during the political campaign.

One crisis for the administration was safely over. But another loomed.

APHB AND NCI REPORTS COMPLETED TWO WEEKS BEFORE NOVEMBER 7 ELECTION

While the NCI and APHB investigations were going on, FDR became "worried for fear there would be an adverse report by the Grunert [APHB] Committee just before Election."¹⁰ Stimson was worried too. The forces in Congress which had led to the inquiry were "largely political," he said, and were "trying to embarrass the president." So Stimson had spent considerable time preparing for his appearance before the board in the hope of showing "how baseless the charges are that we people in Washington were negligent in any way."¹¹

⁹Ibid., pp. 1128–35.

¹⁰Stimson, Henry L. *Diary*. Yale University Library. Volume 48, p. 101, September 21, 1944.

¹¹Ibid., p. 102.

FDR “wondered whether it [the APHB] could not be asked to adjourn [its hearings] until after Election.”¹² On October 13, Stimson conferred with the Navy as to “what we should do in regard to the two Pearl Harbor Boards.”¹³ Whether or not they tried to persuade the Grunert board to discontinue its hearings temporarily is immaterial; it didn’t. The NCI and the APHB reports were submitted to Navy Secretary Forrestal and Secretary of War Stimson on October 19 and 20, respectively, only a couple of weeks before the November 7 election. As FDR and Stimson had feared, the two reports shifted the burden of blame from Pearl Harbor to Washington.

The NCI effectively absolved Kimmel of responsibility by concluding that the steps he took had been “adequate and effective,” that his action “in ordering that no routine, long-range reconnaissance be undertaken was sound,” and that his decision “to continue preparations of the Pacific Fleet for war, was sound in the light of the information then available to him.” Then, after letting Kimmel off the hook, the NCI had charged Chief of Naval Operations Stark with having “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.”¹⁴

The APHB’s allegations against General Marshall, who was in Stimson’s words “invaluable in the war”¹⁵ disturbed Stimson especially. To be sure, the APHB had placed a share of the blame on Short’s failure “adequately to alert his command for war.”¹⁶ However, it criticized Washington officials severely: Secretary of State Hull for having issued the ultimatum to the Japanese

¹²Ibid., September 26, 1944, p. 107.

¹³Ibid., October 13, 1944, p. 142.

¹⁴Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 39, p. 321.

¹⁵Stimson Diary, vol. 49, p. 51, September 27, 1944.

¹⁶Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 39, pp. 175–76.

on November 26, in spite of the “efforts of the War and Navy Departments to gain time for preparations for war,”¹⁷ also Marshall¹⁸ and Gerow¹⁹ for not having kept Short adequately informed.

On receipt of these reports, the two secretaries faced a dilemma. To make the reports public would reveal to the Japanese that we had broken their codes. To refuse to make them public would lead people to think the administration had something to hide, especially in view of the rumors circulating that the reports would absolve the two Pearl Harbor commanders of blame and shift the responsibility to Washington. The immediate response of the secretaries was to refuse to release the reports at that time. Parts of both reports were classified “Secret” and “Top Secret,” so they pleaded reasons of security.²⁰

Forrestal acknowledged receipt of the NCI report to Admiral Orin G. Murfin, president of the Naval Court. He would “personally examine the report and record of the Naval Court after they had been examined and approved by the Judge Advocate of the Navy” as to legal form. He would consult also with Admiral Ernest J. King, commander-in-chief of the United States Fleet and chief of naval operations, “to ascertain how much of this material sufficiently affected present military operations as to merit a security classification.” In the meantime, “pending inspection,” the report would not be made available to the public.²¹

The War Department proposed a commission to rule on the “Top Secret” issue.²²

¹⁷Ibid., pp. 135ff., 175.

¹⁸Ibid., pp. 144ff., 175.

¹⁹Ibid., pp. 142ff., 176.

²⁰*The New York Times*, October 21, 1944, p. 9.

²¹Ibid., October 21, 1944, pp. 1, 9.

²²Stimson Diary, vol. 48, p. 186, October 26, 1944.

FORRESTAL AND STIMSON CONSULT ARMY AND NAVY LEGAL EXPERTS

Even as Forrestal was announcing that the NCI report would *not* be made public, information about it was being leaked. The same *New York Times* story that reported Forrestal's intentions to keep the report confidential told of reports that had "come from some quarters in recent months, and sometimes with a political background," that "revelation of all details of the Pearl Harbor attack would clear Rear Admiral Husband E. Kimmel and Lieut. Gen. Walter C. Short of suspicion and, on the other hand, cast discredit on the administration"²³—this in direct contradiction to the findings of the pro-administration Roberts Commission. Thus, the release of secret or top-secret information might not only endanger the military but, if the reports really did clear Kimmel and Short and "cast discredit" on the administration, could prove a serious embarrassment to the administration in the coming presidential election.

Forrestal asked the opinion of the Navy's senior legal officer, Judge Advocate General T.L. Gatch,²⁴ and of [Commander in Chief, Atlantic Fleet] King.²⁵ The Army consulted its top legal adviser, Judge Advocate Major General Myron C. Cramer, who wrote a long memorandum for the secretary of war.²⁶ These men concluded that certain portions of the reports should *not* be released in any case.

Cramer, Gatch, and King all went over the APHB and NCI hearings and reports. In reporting to Forrestal and Stimson, they held that the two boards had been in error in maintaining that insufficient information had been supplied the Hawaiian

²³*The New York Times*, October 21, 1944, p. 9.

²⁴Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 39, pp. 330–32.

²⁵*Ibid.*, pp. 332–35.

²⁶*Ibid.*, pp. 231–69.

commanders. In commenting on the APHB report, Cramer referred to Marshall's testimony to the effect that "[t]he [scrambler] telephone was not considered . . . because . . . it would have been too 'time consuming'" to serve as a rapid and reliable means for transmitting an urgent warning.²⁷ "As to General Marshall," Cramer wrote "the conclusions of the Board are unjustified and erroneous."²⁸ And Short, Cramer held, had been

adequately advised of the imminent rupture in diplomatic relations between the United States and Japan, of the imminence of war, of the probable momentary outbreak of hostilities by Japan against the United States, and of the possibility of sabotage and espionage.

Short's

failure stemmed from a mistake of judgment on his part. . . . [He] had adopted wholeheartedly what was apparently the viewpoint of the Navy, namely, that there was literally no chance of a surprise air attack on Pearl Harbor.²⁹

According to King, Kimmel "could and should have judged more accurately the gravity of the danger to which the Hawaiian Islands were exposed."³⁰ Concerning the NCI report, King warned that, if the necessary deletions were made, a "disjointed" picture would be presented,

full of unexplained gaps . . . [which] would lead to a demand of Congress and by the press for more information, on the ground

²⁷Ibid., p. 260.

²⁸Ibid., p. 267.

²⁹Ibid., pp. 239, 268.

³⁰Ibid., p. 344. Yet King "admitted" to Kimmel a month later, in an interview December 7, 1944, that "he had never read the proceedings upon which the Court had based their findings" (*Admiral Kimmel's Story*, Henry Regnery, 1955, p. 161).

that the part made public was incomplete, and that withholding of any information is indicative of a desire on the part of the Navy to “whitewash” high naval officers. A situation such as this might well lead to discussions that would inadvertently disclose just the information that we feel is vital to keep secret.

King pointed out that the law calling for the NCI “does not obligate the Secretary of the Navy to make any public statement of what the Court of Inquiry has ascertained.” Therefore, he concluded, “*there is no necessity for making anything public.*”³¹ (Italics added.)

Stimson worried a great deal about how to handle the APHB report. He resented Congress for having “quite unnecessarily thrown” on him “this wretched piece of labor . . . the most wearing and rasping thing that I have had in the four years that I have been here.”³² He referred to this task in his diary variously as his “cross,”³³ and as “[t]he miserable Pearl Harbor business.”³⁴ He had had to spend his time “stopping rat-holes” because of “[t]he confounded Pearl Harbor case.”³⁵

The analyses of the APHB by Cramer and of the NCI by Gatch and King provided Stimson and Forrestal with the rationale they needed to reverse the APHB and NCI findings, to once more place the blame for the extent of the disaster on the Hawaiian commanders, and to vindicate the acts of Washington officials. Stimson considered Cramer’s analysis “a very fine job—really a humdinger . . . a very good help. . . . [H]e handled the Pearl Harbor Board without gloves and had analyzed very carefully and yet fairly all their mistakes.”³⁶

³¹Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 39, pp. 333–34.

³²Stimson Diary, vol. 49, p. 22, November 11, 1944.

³³Ibid., p. 36, November 20, 1944.

³⁴Ibid., p. 47, November 24, 1944.

³⁵Ibid., p. 51, November 27, 1944.

³⁶Ibid., p. 49, November 24, 1944.

Sooner or later, of course, official statements about the Army and Navy reports would have to be issued. But from the point of view of the secretaries, later was better than sooner. They agonized for weeks over how to word their releases. They consulted. They composed several draft statements. And they agreed that their announcements should be coordinated and issued simultaneously. But they disagreed as to how frank they should be.

Navy Secretary Forrestal, apparently under the influence of King, leaned toward making no mention at all of any NCI criticism of Washington officials. Secretary of War Stimson felt that he should at least acknowledge that the APHB had criticized Washington officials, including Marshall. But Stimson expected to explain, at the time of making such an acknowledgment, that the charges had not been justified. However, his recommendation for acknowledging the APHB criticism of Marshall met opposition in the War Department.³⁷ Stimson reasoned that

if we do not take the initiative ourselves and publish the fact that Marshall has been criticized at the same time with the vindication of it, why it will leak out in a much more disadvantageous way from the enemies who are already in possession of the secret.³⁸

According to Stimson, Marshall, who “has most to lose by the publicity which would come out of it,” favored Stimson’s version as “altogether the wisest thing.”³⁹

UNFINISHED ARMY AND NAVY BUSINESS

Neither the Army nor the Navy was willing to let the findings of the Army Pearl Harbor Board and Navy Court of Inquiry

³⁷Ibid., p. 27, November 15, 1944, and p. 36, November 20, 1944.

³⁸Ibid., p. 36, November 20, 1944.

³⁹Ibid., p. 42, November 22, 1944.

stand as the final word. They both authorized follow-up in-service investigations. On the oral instructions of Marshall, Carter Clarke was asked to explore “the manner in which Top Secret communications were handled.”⁴⁰ Stimson directed Major Henry C. Clausen to investigate “Unexplored Leads in Pearl Harbor Investigation.”⁴¹ And Admiral Kent H. Hewitt was asked to conduct “Further investigation of facts pertinent to the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor.”⁴²

Stimson’s and Forrestal’s stalling tactics succeeded. No releases about the reports were issued before the election.

On November 7 FDR won reelection for a fourth term.

FDR’S DECIDES HOW AND WHEN TO RELEASE NCI AND APHB REPORTS

The president was to cast the decisive vote on how the NCI and APHB reports were to be presented to the press. Finally on November 21, Stimson had a chance to talk with FDR and to show him his draft announcement about the Army’s Pearl Harbor report. The president had evidently already seen and approved of Forrestal’s proposed noncommittal release. FDR thought “the less said the better.” Stimson said the War Department “could not afford to go ahead and be frank when the Navy was not being frank.” And he thought the best hope for “keeping off a Congressional investigation was to make such a disclosure as I proposed to do.”⁴³

Stimson showed Roosevelt the conclusions of the Grunert board, and FDR read them carefully. When he saw the names of the persons the Army Board had criticized, he said, “Why, this

⁴⁰Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 34, p. 2.

⁴¹*Ibid.*, part 35, p. 6.

⁴²*Ibid.*, part 36, p. 359.

⁴³*Ibid.* pp. 39–40, November 21, 1944.

is wicked; this is wicked.” FDR then read Stimson’s paper and praised it. But “he still adhered to his view that the safer plan was to follow as nearly as possible the Forrestal method.” We must “take every step” against Congress getting hold of the papers and the facts. We “must refuse to make the reports public,” he said.

[T]hey should be sealed up and our opinions put in with them and then a notice made that they should only be opened on a Joint Resolution of both Houses of Congress approved by the president after the war.

This resolution, FDR said, should say that that was “in the public interest.”⁴⁴

In spite of the fact that no news release concerning the Navy court’s conclusions had as yet been issued, the *New York Times* of November 26, 1944, reported that the *Army and Navy Journal* had

suggested [that] as a result of the recent [Naval] Court of Inquiry, Rear Admiral Husband E. Kimmel might never be court-martialled for the Pearl Harbor disaster and that his Army associate at Hawaii, Maj. Gen. Short, would be vindicated.

The *Times* quoted the *Journal* as saying:

There will be no court-martial for Admiral Kimmel. . . . under the findings of the Court of Inquiry headed by Admiral Murfin, according to gossip in well-informed Washington circles. . . . As to the Army Board, which simultaneously investigated the disaster, it also is said to support the findings of the Roberts Board in the matter of the failure of officers of the War Department to comment to General Short upon the measures he had reported he took to guard the base in accordance with the instructions given him. . . . In the unlikely case

⁴⁴*Ibid.*, p. 40.

that General Short should be court-martialled, his friends are convinced that he would be vindicated.⁴⁵

Finally on November 30, after Stimson and Forrestal had made some further revisions, the president approved their respective statements and authorized their release. Stimson and Forrestal planned to issue them simultaneously within the next two or three days.⁴⁶

On December 1, the Army and Navy released to the public their statements on the findings of the APHB and NCI investigations.⁴⁷ According to the *New York Times* (December 2, 1944), Stimson and Forrestal revealed that they had

found no evidence to justify a court-martial of Maj. Gen. Walter C. Short and Rear Admiral Husband E. Kimmel. . . . Both Secretaries were careful to speak of the evidence “now” available, and promised further investigation to obtain every bit of testimony. . . . On the ground of national security, both Secretaries refused to make the real story of Pearl Harbor public until the war had ended. Mr. Stimson considered it “highly prejudicial to war prosecution and the safety of American lives” to disclose it beforehand. The Navy Department said tersely that the record of the Court of Inquiry “will not be made public” while the war continued.

In their individual statements, Secretaries Stimson and Forrestal conceded errors on the part of unnamed officers at Pearl Harbor and in Washington. These officers, Mr. Stimson stated, “did not perform their duties with the necessary skill or exercise the judgment needed.” Mr. Forrestal sponsored a statement that there were “errors of judgement” by officers of his service.

⁴⁵*The New York Times*, November 26, 1944, p. 44.

⁴⁶Stimson Diary, vol. 49, p. 62, November 30, 1944.

⁴⁷*The New York Times*, December 2, 1944, p. 5.

However, Messrs. Stimson and Forrestal made it plain that no prosecution of any officer was contemplated now.⁴⁸

PRESS REPORTS NOTE CONTRADICTIONS BETWEEN NCI/APHB REPORTS AND EARLIER ROBERTS CONCLUSIONS

The respected journalist Arthur Krock of the *New York Times* commented on the Forrestal and Stimson releases. He pointed to

a fundamental conflict of finding between the reports on Pearl Harbor of the commission headed by Justice Roberts and of those composed of admirals and generals as reviewed by their departmental superiors. If Admiral Kimmel and General Short . . . were guilty of “dereliction of duty,” as the Roberts commission concluded, then it cannot equally be true, as the Secretaries of Navy and War appraised their officers’ inquiries, that on the basis of available evidence no grounds exist for the courts-martial of the area commanders or any others in the service.

“Dereliction of duty is basis for a court-martial, and the Roberts commission imputed this to both Kimmel and Short.” This fact, Krock said, when

contrasted with the negative results of the official inquiries by the Army and Navy, makes an unsatisfactory situation for everyone concerned, including the Pearl Harbor commanders, who were removed, reduced in rank and refused the courts-martial for which they repeatedly applied.⁴⁹

⁴⁸Ibid. pp. 1, 5.

⁴⁹Ibid., December 5, 1944, p. 22.

Were Kimmel and Short guilty of “dereliction of duty” and liable for courts-martial? Or weren’t they? Krock believed Congress would want to see these contradictions resolved.

Many members of Congress have expressed this dissatisfaction, and their statements indicate revival of the suspicion that the fault for the surprise element in the air attack on Pearl Harbor by the Japanese rests more heavily on Washington than any published report has indicated. Congress forced the officers’ boards of inquiry on the Administration, which clearly wanted to let the entire controversy await the end of the war. . . . Now Congress, unless the continued investigation promised by Secretaries Forrestal and Stimson disposes of the conflict between the two reports and fixes responsibility on the basis of persuasive evidence, can be expected to try to find out the facts for the public and for itself.

Krock recognized, however, that such an investigation would have to await war’s end. To reveal the evidence required to resolve the conflict, as Dewey had learned during the presidential campaign, “would have been to invite a charge of imperiling security and the prospects of the Pacific war.”⁵⁰

The editorial board of the venerable *New York Times* came to essentially the same conclusion:

The Secretaries of the War and Navy Departments, and their advisers . . . have decided that on the evidence now available courts-martial of any officers are not indicated. . . . If the Secretary of War and the Secretary of the Navy, both honorable men, both loyal and devoted Americans, both vitally and successfully engaged in the prosecution of the war, give it as their considered judgment that full publicity and a public discussion now of the many ramifications of the Pearl Harbor

⁵⁰Ibid.

attack would be inimical to the successful prosecution of the war, then that opinion must be heard with respect.

Admiral Kimmel and General Short are entitled to a full and open inquiry into all the circumstances of their preparation, or lack of it, to meet a Japanese attack. They are entitled to an opportunity to give a public explanation. . . . But first things come first. Winning the war is the paramount duty now before every official and every citizen. The best interests of the country will be served if the question of responsibility for the disaster of Pearl Harbor is put aside for the duration.⁵¹

The next day, December 6, “an unpleasant account” about the Pearl Harbor investigation by “muckraker” newspaperman Drew Pearson appeared on the front page of the *Miami Herald*. Stimson considered it unfortunate that the president had thwarted his “original plan for giving a full and frank statement,” and he confided to his diary that he

had warned the president that the thing was sure to leak and here Drew Pearson had gotten hold of so many facts that it looked as if all of the rest would probably come out. Fortunately Marshall’s name was not mentioned and some of the things that Pearson said were entirely inaccurate and wrong and can be denied.⁵²

⁵¹Ibid., editorial, p. 22.

⁵²Stimson Diary, vol. 49, pp. 68–69, December 1–10, 1944.

25.

Administration Directed Supplementary Investigations: Clarke, Clausen, Hewitt

Each of the three supplementary investigations was unique. The first of these three supplementary investigations, the Clarke Investigation, was launched at the request of Army Chief of Staff Marshall, while the APHB was still under way, to help him prepare for his next appearance before that board.¹ The second investigation, the Clausen Investigation, was instigated by Secretary of War Stimson to look into “unexplored leads” in the Pearl Harbor situation from the Army’s point of view.² The third investigation, the Hewitt Inquiry, dealt primarily with the Navy’s situation and was ordered by Navy Secretary Forrestal who had found the NCI investigation had not exhausted all possible evidence.³ Implicit, if not explicit, in the directives setting up the

¹79th Cong., 1st sess. Joint (Congressional) Committee on the Investigation of the Pearl Harbor Attack. *Pearl Harbor Attack*, 39 vols. (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1946), part 34, p. 2.

²*Ibid.*, part 35, p. 5.

³*Ibid.*, part 36, p. 359, Forrestal’s May 2, 1945, memorandum to Admiral H. Kent Hewitt.

Clausen and Hewitt investigations was a desire to uncover information that might contradict, discredit, or at least cast doubts on the findings of the Army Pearl Harbor Board and Navy Court of Inquiry, which the administration had found unacceptable.

THE CLARKE INQUIRY (SEPTEMBER 14–20, 1944)

After the APHB learned of the Japanese intercepts, Marshall was again called to answer questions. In preparation for that appearance, Marshall asked Colonel Carter W. Clarke to explore the “manner in which certain Top Secret communications were handled.”⁴ Marshall hadn’t been able to recall the extremely important Japanese reply to the U.S. November 26 “ultimatum” prior to the morning of December 7. Yet several witnesses had reported that the first 13 parts (of that 14-part reply) had been received and delivered to top Washington officials the evening of December 6. Marshall was also interested in reviewing the events of the morning of December 7 and his response to the radiogram advising the Japanese ambassadors to deliver their government’s reply to Secretary of State Hull on December 7 at precisely 1:00 P.M., Washington time. Clarke interviewed eleven witnesses who had been involved with the receipt and distribution of the intercepts.

Marshall had Colonel Rufus S. Bratton, Army intelligence (G-2), recalled from the European theater where he was then serving. Bratton had been responsible for the pre-Pearl Harbor distribution of intercepts to Army personnel. Bratton described the procedure for distributing various Japanese intercepts to the top military and civilian officials in Washington, including President Roosevelt, Marshall, and the secretaries of state, war, and navy.

⁴Ibid., part 34, p. 1.

Bratton was also asked about the November 27 war warning to Short and about what intelligence had been sent to Hawaii. Bratton believed that Japan's 14-part reply "started coming into the Navy on the 6th," and his recollection was that he "transmitted a copy to the Secretary of State that night."⁵ When testifying, Bratton referred to a memorandum he had prepared shortly after December 7.⁶ He described his efforts to locate Marshall that morning, Marshall's arrival in his office at 11:25 A.M., the discussion then of the significance of the "One P.M. Message," Marshall's decision to notify Short, his consultation with CNO Stark, and the transmission of the last-minute warning.⁷

Clarke then questioned Colonel Edward F. French, Army Communications Service, who had actually transmitted Marshall's last minute December 7 message to the field commanders. Its transmission was delayed, French said, as Marshall's penciled draft was "rather difficult to read" and it had to be typed, "verified and authenticated" before being encoded. "[O]ur channel at Honolulu was out, due to atmospheric conditions." To "avoid the risk of any garbling or error in relaying the message via Army facilities through San Francisco," French decided "the quickest method of dispatch would be via commercial service." So the message to Hawaii was "handled directly to San Francisco via the Western Union and on a tube relay of this message to the RCA office in San Francisco."⁸

Major General Gerow, assistant chief of staff, war plans division, presented Clarke with a memorandum he had prepared December 15, 1941 concerning the "One P.M. Message": "On Sunday, December 7, 1941, about 11:30 A.M., E.S.T., General Marshall called me to his office." Bratton was there and was

⁵Ibid., p. 21.

⁶Ibid., p. 19.

⁷Ibid., pp. 10, 19–20, 20–21.

⁸Ibid., pp. 32–33.

directed to take Marshall's "penciled draft" to the message center and "have it sent immediately by the most expeditious means" to the Philippines, Panama Canal, Hawaii and the West Coast command.⁹

Gerow told Clarke that G-2 (Army Intelligence), not his war plans division, was to advise Hawaiian G-2 with respect to sabotage. Therefore, any reference to subversive activities and sabotage had been "stricken out" of the November 27 "war warning." Gerow had considered that message "a definite warning to be on the alert," not only against sabotage, but also "against a possible enemy offensive." Gerow admitted Short's response left no room for misunderstanding; he had definitely "taken all the necessary precautions against sabotage"¹⁰—and sabotage only.

General Miles, acting assistant chief of staff, G-2, also testified for Clarke. Miles was thoroughly familiar with the MAGIC intercepts, but his memory was "very hazy" about whether the "Winds Message" had been implemented; he did "not remember seeing any document on it, any written statement on it."¹¹ According to Miles, Bratton, chief of the Far Eastern section during this period, selected the important Ultra information for Marshall.¹² Miles had known "we were watching for" the Japanese reply to the November 26 U.S. ultimatum "very eagerly."¹³ He learned during the evening of December 6 that it was in, and he had the whole 14-part reply when he got to the office the next morning. Signs that war was coming had been apparent everywhere and the War Department, Miles said, had even made plans for putting censorship into operation and was training censors.¹⁴

⁹Ibid., p. 41.

¹⁰Ibid., p. 40.

¹¹Ibid., p. 50.

¹²Ibid., p. 49.

¹³Ibid., p. 58.

¹⁴Ibid., p. 58.

In addition to questioning the witnesses separately, Clarke held a roundtable discussion with Miles, Brigadier General Hayes A. Kroner (chief, intelligence branch, military intelligence division), Colonel John T. Bissell (chief of the counter intelligence group of military intelligence), and Bratton—"to iron out any little differences" that may have appeared in their testimony.¹⁵ For instance, Bissell and Kroner had said that the Ultra secret intelligence derived from MAGIC had *not* been made available to them prior to Pearl Harbor but Bratton said it had been—through memoranda concerning subversive activities. Bratton reported that MAGIC was regularly distributed to the top administration and military officials.¹⁶

These four men, all concerned with some aspect of pre-war military intelligence, discussed their pre-attack view of the Japanese threat. Although Kroner hadn't seen MAGIC himself, he knew Bratton and Miles were handling it and insisting it be kept secret.¹⁷ When news of the attack came on December 7, Kroner had actually been reading Miles's November 29 estimate of the Far Eastern situation, so he remembered "distinctly" that that estimate did "not include in the lines of action open to Japan, an attack on Pearl Harbor."¹⁸

According to Miles,

the bulk of our information, all of it including Magic, indicated the major probability of a Japanese move to the south, Indo China, Siam, Thailand, perhaps the Dutch West [sic] (East?) Indies, perhaps Malaya. . . . We did not exclude war with the United States since we specifically mentioned the Philippines as being part of the Japanese southern push and in a war with the United States of course there was a possibility, particularly

¹⁵Ibid., p. 72.

¹⁶Ibid., pp. 70, 72.

¹⁷Ibid., pp. 42–48.

¹⁸Ibid., p. 48.

with the Japanese that a surprise attack might be made anywhere, certainly including Hawaii which had been armed and prepared for such an attack for twenty years.¹⁹

Bratton believed

that initially . . . any attack against an American installation in the middle or eastern Pacific would be in the nature of a diversion and having as its objective the immobilizing of any force that we might call in to help the Dutch and British in west and southwest Pacific, but . . . their primary initial objective was the destruction of Great Britain's power in southeast Asia.²⁰

Clarke questioned witnesses about the elusive "Winds Execute." Cryptanalyst Friedman had had no direct knowledge of a "Winds Execute" himself, he had "only learned of it comparatively recently in talking with Col. Sadtler and Capt. Safford of the Navy."²¹ But he had known monitoring stations had been alerted to watch for a "Winds Code" implementation. Further, he said, a "diligent search," if not "a completely exhaustive search," had failed to find "a single bit of evidence to indicate that an Army station actually intercepted a Winds Execute message."²²

Colonel Otis K. Sadtler, chief of the Army Communications Service at the time of the attack, told the inquiry he heard from Admiral Noyes that "the message is in," meaning that the "Winds Execute" had been received, and it said "war would be declared between Japan and Great Britain." He didn't say with the United States also, but he couldn't verify that for he didn't know the word in the Japanese text.²³ War was expected in the Netherlands East Indies too; by December 5 "the Dutch had ordered the execution

¹⁹Ibid., p. 71.

²⁰Ibid.

²¹Ibid., part 34, p. 34.

²²Ibid., p. 36.

²³Ibid., p. 68.

of the Rainbow Plan, A-2 [for U.S. naval participation] . . . a part of the joint Abducan plan only to be taken in the event of war.”²⁴

Clarke presented his findings to Marshall on September 20, 1944. When Marshall returned to the APHB (September 29 and October 2), his memory was refreshed.

* * * *

THE CLAUSEN INVESTIGATION (NOVEMBER 23, 1944—SEPTEMBER 12, 1945)

The APHB report concluded that Marshall, Gerow, and Short had failed in the performance of their duties. Both FDR and Stimson had been shocked; they much preferred the Roberts Commission findings that Kimmel and Short were responsible for the extent of the Pearl Harbor disaster. Thus, Stimson directed Major Clausen, an attorney who had served as assistant recorder for the APHB to look into “unexplored leads” in the Pearl Harbor situation.²⁵ The investigation was to be limited “strictly to matters which have a bearing on the part that Army personnel, organization, or action may have had in the disaster.”²⁶ Clausen’s assignment was classified an “emergency war mission;”²⁷ he had an unlimited expense account, permission to travel in and out of the war theaters; persons interrogated by Clausen were to answer his inquiries “fully;” all papers, secret or top secret, were to be “furnished him, any present directives to the contrary notwithstanding.”²⁸ His investigation appears to have been aimed primarily at exploring

²⁴Ibid., part 34, pp. 60, 63. Testimony of Lt. Robert H. O’Dell.

²⁵Ibid., part 35, p. 5.

²⁶Ibid., p. 7, Stimson February 6, 1944, letter to Navy Secretary.

²⁷Ibid., p. 9.

²⁸Ibid., p. 5. Stimson’s directions to assistant chief of staff, G-2, re Clausen’s assignment.

the procedure for distributing MAGIC, in order to discover who was responsible for delivering to Marshall the crucial December 6–7 intercepts, and if they had not been promptly delivered, why not. Clausen's questions also indicated concern with the information provided, or not provided, to Short.

For almost ten months, November 23, 1944, to September 12, 1945, Clausen "traveled over 55,000 miles by air and interviewed 92 Army, Navy and civilian personnel," 52 of whom presented their recollections of pre-Pearl Harbor events in sworn affidavits.²⁹ From time to time, Clausen reported to Stimson's special assistant. Major Clausen was promoted to Lieutenant Colonel by March 24, 1945.³⁰

One of Clausen's first interviewees was Colonel Carlisle C. Dusenbury, Bratton's assistant. Dusenbury said he and Bratton "alternated in assembling and delivering these intercepts . . . daily about fifty to seventy-five of these intercepts . . . sorted to about twenty-five for distribution." Dusenbury recalled that the 13 parts of the Japanese reply "started coming in on the night of 6 December 1941." He and Bratton were both on duty. Dusenbury said Bratton "remained until about half of it had been received. Thereupon, he left and went home at about 9 P.M." Dusenbury stayed and waited for the remainder.

The fourteenth part, being the final part of the message, was received about 12 that night. Thereupon I left and went home. . . . None of these parts comprising this intercept was delivered before the morning of 7 December 1941 because the first half had been received while Colonel Bratton was on duty and he had seen this and had not had it delivered that night. . . . I did not wish to disturb the usual recipients who were probably at

²⁹Ibid., p. 1, 20–21.

³⁰Ibid., p. 10, Stimson March 24, 1944, memorandum.

home asleep, as I did not see the implications of immediate hostilities.³¹

Dusenbury's affidavit contradicted Bratton's previous testimony before both the APHB and the Clarke investigation. Bratton had told Clarke that he had transmitted to the secretary of state a copy of the first 13 parts the night they were received.³² Two weeks later, he had told the APHB that he had also delivered the 13 parts "to the office of the Chief of Staff [Marshall], [and] the A.C. of S., G-2 [Miles]."³³ Then a few days later, he had told the APHB that he recalled that Marshall, Miles, and Gerow "got their copies the evening of the 6th." It was his practice, Bratton said "to deliver to them their copies [of the Japanese intercepts] before I went to the State Department."³⁴

In March, Clausen secured the affidavit of Brigadier General Charles K. Gailey, a major and Gerow's executive officer on December 6. The affidavit signed by Gailey, but unquestionably drafted by Clausen, stated that it was Gailey's "customary practice" to deliver to Gerow "as soon as practicable" the deciphered and translated Japanese intercepts received from Bratton or Dusenbury. Gailey did "not recall having received any pouch or intercepts from Colonel Bratton or Colonel Dusenbury or from any other source" on the evening of December 6. Gailey was certain that if Gerow hadn't received any intercepts that evening, they hadn't been delivered to him, "as, if they had been, I would have given them to him [Gerow]."³⁵

Clausen then flew to the Pacific theater, Guam and Honolulu. He was in the Philippines on V-E Day, and from there he flew to Germany, France, Italy, and England.

³¹Ibid., pp. 25–26.

³²Ibid., part 34, p. 21.

³³Ibid., part 29, p. 2349.

³⁴Ibid., p. 2421.

³⁵Ibid., part 35, pp. 39–40.

In June, at Mainz, Germany, Clausen tackled Walter Bedell Smith, who had been Marshall's staff secretary in December 1941 and had risen rapidly in the ranks. By then, he was a lieutenant general and Eisenhower's chief of staff. On December 6–7, 1941, Bedell Smith and his assistants were supposed to maintain a 24-hour watch outside Marshall's office, know where Marshall was at all times and see that important messages reached him promptly. Clausen summarized, for Bedell Smith, Bratton's testimony before the APHB. Bedell Smith then gave Clausen an affidavit setting forth, not his recollections of the pre-attack situation, but rather his "usual practice" for handling the pouches of sensitive material intended for Marshall. When

instructed that the contents should reach him at once . . . the Duty Officer of the General Staff Secretariat would take the pouches to General Marshall at his quarters or wherever he happened to be. . . . Both I myself and the Assistant Secretaries understood that these pouches contained information of such value and importance that they should be shown to the Chief of Staff without delay.³⁶

Bedell Smith had no recollection of having received, or known of, an urgent delivery on the evening of December 6. "To the best of my recollection," he swore, "I left the office at the usual time on the evening of 6 Dec. 41, that is about 7:00 P.M., turning over to the Night Duty Officer." Bedell Smith was

quite certain that I was not at the office after 10:00 P.M. If the intercepted radio message referred to by Colonel Bratton was delivered either to me or to the Night Duty Officer, it would have been delivered in the locked envelope . . . to the Chief of Staff in accordance with our usual procedure, either by the officer on duty or by Colonel Bratton himself.³⁷

³⁶Ibid., p. 91. Smith's June 15, 1945, affidavit.

³⁷Ibid.

In his role as secretary to the chief of staff, Bedell Smith had several assistant secretaries. One of them *must* have been on duty that night. But Clausen interviewed only one, John R. Deane, who had *not* been on duty that night.³⁸

Gerow had been chief of army war plans in 1941. When Clausen secured Gerow's affidavit, at Cannes, France, Gerow was both positive and direct. During November and December 1941 he had received and reviewed the MAGIC intercepts in their raw, unevaluated form, and had always returned them promptly to G-2. He recalled seeing the requests from Tokyo for reports on ship movements at Pearl Harbor, but as "these related especially to Navy, I assumed that the Navy was fully cognizant, and would interpret this information." However, Gerow did not consider Pearl Harbor to be Japan's only interest; he recalled similar inquiries made of Japanese consuls at Manila and Seattle.

Gerow did not remember conversations with either Bratton on December 4 or Sadtler on December 5 concerning alarming Japanese intercepts, at which time Gerow had replied that "sufficient" warnings had already been sent to the overseas commanders. In his opinion, however,

the War Department had sent ample warnings to the overseas commanders, including General Short. . . . General Short at no time informed the War Department that he was not in full agreement with War Department estimates and plans for the defense of Oahu.

Concerning the MAGIC messages, Gerow again warned that "it was necessary to guard most carefully against compromising the source of this extremely valuable intelligence."³⁹ He did not recall seeing the 13 parts of the Japanese reply to our ultimatum before the morning of December 7.

³⁸Ibid., p. 96, Deane's July 24, 1945, affidavit.

³⁹Ibid., p. 93.

In July in Paris, Clausen interviewed Bratton. He showed Bratton ten affidavits he had collected bearing on the “Winds Code” message and delivery of the 13 parts of the Japanese reply to our ultimatum—the five already mentioned (Dusenbury, Gailey, Bedell Smith, Gerow, and Deane) and five others by Army officers who said they couldn’t recall details of pre-attack events. These affidavits did not really differ from Bratton’s APHB testimony, for most of the officers didn’t answer Clausen’s questions directly. Only Dusenbury’s affidavit actually conflicted with Bratton’s previous statements, and when Dusenbury erred, Bratton pointed that out.

Clausen usually typed the affidavits, sometimes retyping them when an interviewee requested changes. At the Joint Congressional Committee Bratton recalled: “[I] dictated what I thought I should say,” making corrections as we went along.

Finally we got it all in shape in pencil. Then he [Clausen] put a piece of paper into the typewriter and typed the affidavit. Bratton made some further suggestions and corrections; only after Bratton was satisfied that the affidavit represented his “best recollection” did he sign it.⁴⁰

The Japanese reply to our ultimatum, Bratton said in his affidavit, started coming in from the Navy the evening of December 6. He and Dusenbury were on duty together. Bratton’s account differed from Dusenbury’s. After receipt of the 13th part, Bratton determined from SIS that the 14th part was not likely to come in that night. Bratton and Dusenbury then assembled the 13 parts in preparation for delivery to the authorized recipients. Bratton

directed Colonel Dusenbury to deliver the set for the Chief of Staff [Marshall] to his home at Fort Myer that night as Colonel Dusenbury went to his home in Arlington. This was about 10:00 P.M.

⁴⁰Ibid., part 10, p. 4616. Bratton before the Joint Committee.

Bratton said in his affidavit that the only set he delivered that evening was to the secretary of state, between 10:00 and 11:00 P.M. to the State Department night duty officer. The sets for Miles, Gerow, and Stimson, Bratton said, “were not delivered the night of 6 December 1941, but were delivered the next morning, 7 December 1941, with the fourteenth part.” Bratton concluded his affidavit:

Any prior statements or testimony of mine which may be contrary to my statements here . . . should be modified and considered changed in accordance with my statements herein. This affidavit now represents my best recollections of the matters and events set forth . . . after having my memory refreshed in several ways and respects.⁴¹

EARLY AUGUST FOUND CLAUSEN BACK IN THE UNITED STATES

In the affidavit Colonel Sadtler, a signal corps officer at the time of the attack, signed for Clausen in August in Washington, D.C., he discussed “a possible ‘Winds Code’ execute message” that Noyes had given him on December 5, 1941. Sadtler was already “alarmed by the series of Japanese diplomatic and consular intercepts which I had been reading over a considerable period of time, and the mounting tension, and the information which Admiral Noyes had just given me.” After conferring with Miles and Bratton, he had gone to his office and “personally typed a proposed warning which I intended to recommend be sent to the overseas commanders.”⁴² According to Sadtler’s recollection, it read substantially as follows:

⁴¹Ibid., part 35, pp. 97–98.

⁴²Ibid., pp. 98–99, August 13, 1945, affidavit.

C.G.-P.I., Hawaii—Panama. Reliable information indicates war with Japan in the very near future stop take every precaution to prevent a repetition of Port Arthur stop notify the Navy. Marshall.

Sadtler hadn't shown his draft warning to anyone in 1941, and he had "made no copy at the time." However, he testified he had talked with Gerow and Bedell Smith after drafting it. However, in June 1945, neither Gerow nor Bedell Smith remembered such a conversation with Sadtler⁴³ and after reading the Gerow and Bedell Smith affidavits Sadtler believed they were correct in saying that he had *not* talked with them about it in December 1941. Moreover, Gerow didn't believe that Sadtler, "purely a Signal Corps officer," should be "concerned with the dissemination or interpretation of 'Magic.'"⁴⁴

Sadtler also denied he had ever "urged General Sherman Miles, G-2, or any other representative of G-2, to send any warning message to the overseas commanders." He denied that he had made "further efforts to obtain the ["Winds"] execute message mentioned by Admiral Noyes." And he denied Friedman's statement to Clarke that he, Sadtler, "had material in a safe deposit box concerning the Pearl Harbor disaster."⁴⁵

Clausen was in Washington on V-J day, his investigation almost over. But he went to Boston to interview Major General Miles, brigadier general and chief of army intelligence in 1941. Miles said that on the instructions of Marshall, transmitted through General Osmon and Colonel Clarke of G-2, he had said nothing to the APHB about the top-secret MAGIC sources. He had known about the 13 parts of the Japanese reply on the evening of December 6 because he had been dining that evening at Admiral Wilkinson's home. Admiral Beardall, FDR's

⁴³Ibid., p. 91, June 15, 1945 affidavit.

⁴⁴Ibid., p. 92, June 20, 1945 affidavit.

⁴⁵Ibid., pp. 99–100.

aide, who was there also, had brought it to Wilkinson's attention, and Wilkinson had shown it to Miles. Miles had been under the impression that before December 7 the Navy in Hawaii had been intercepting, decrypting, decoding, and translating Japanese diplomatic and consular messages.⁴⁶

Back in Washington, Clausen met with Marshall. In his affidavit Marshall said that when he first appeared before the APHB on August 7, 1944, he had "informed" the voting members in a one-hour closed session of "the character of information which had been derived before 7 December 1941 from Top Secret sources then called 'Magic'." In that brief meeting, Marshall said, he did not explain the nature of the information gleaned from these sources except to say that "neither this information nor the source thereof should be made public because it would result in at least temporarily, if not permanently, extinguishing that source." According to Marshall, it was "not until it developed that the 'Magic' papers were being disclosed before the Navy Court of Inquiry" that Army officers concerned with MAGIC had been "authorized to go into all the details regarding 'Magic'."⁴⁷

Marshall stated that it had been his "understanding" that

in the period preceding 7 December 1941 . . . the Commanding General of the Hawaiian Department [Short] was aware of and was receiving some of this information from facilities available in his command.

In this Marshall was mistaken.⁴⁸ Marshall told Clausen that he had advised Short by correspondence (February 7 and March 5, 1941) of the

⁴⁶Ibid., pp. 101–02.

⁴⁷Ibid., pp. 104–05.

⁴⁸Ibid.

risk of sabotage and the risk involved in a surprise raid by air and by submarine. . . . At no time did General Short inform me or, to my knowledge, anyone else in the War Department that he was not in full agreement with these War Department estimates and plans for the defense of Oahu, which in effect warned him to expect air and submarine attacks as primary threats in the event of war with Japan.⁴⁹

Marshall did not say whether he had sent Short any advice or warning later than February or March 1941 concerning the impending crisis. However, Marshall did say that Short's assistant G-2 officer, Colonel George W. Bicknell, had seen a Navy wire sent to Pearl Harbor on or about December 3, 1941, concerning instructions to the Japanese diplomatic representatives in the southwest Pacific, Washington, and London to burn their codes and ciphers.⁵⁰

* * * *

Clausen's investigation had set out to look into "unexplored leads," primarily for Marshall's benefit, about MAGIC and especially about the Japanese response to the U.S. "ultimatum." He tried to discover to whom it had been delivered on December 6-7. Clausen had also inquired after the "Winds Code" and its implementation, the "Winds Code Execute." And he had asked what information had been furnished General Short in Hawaii concerning the impending crisis. Although many questions remained unanswered, the Clausen affidavits did offer two possible excuses for Marshall's failure to notify Short of the developing December 6-7 crisis:

1. Bratton and Dusenbury had been remiss in not delivering the important 13-part Japanese dispatch to Marshall on the evening of December 6.

⁴⁹Ibid.

⁵⁰Ibid. See also p. 30, Bicknell's February 25, 1945, affidavit for Clausen.

2. Washington officials, including Marshall and Miles, believed that the Japanese messages were being intercepted and decrypted in Hawaii.

* * * * *

THE HEWITT INQUIRY (MAY 14 TO JULY 11, 1945)

Upon the completion of the Navy Court of Inquiry's report, Secretary of the Navy Forrestal found

errors of judgment on the part of certain officers in the Naval Service, both at Pearl Harbor and at Washington. The Secretary has further found that the previous investigations have not exhausted all possible evidence. . . . [and] has decided that the [NCI] investigation . . . should be further continued until the testimony of every witness in possession of material facts can be obtained and all possible evidence exhausted.⁵¹

Therefore, Forrestal on May 2, 1945,

appointed Admiral H. Kent Hewitt, U.S. Navy, as investigating officer, with John F. Sonnett as counsel, and Lieutenant John Ford Baecher, USNR, as assistant counsel, to examine such witnesses and to obtain such other evidence as might be necessary in order to fully develop the facts in connection with the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor.⁵²

After reviewing the findings of the previous investigations, Hewitt decided his task was to explore further what information was available in Washington and at Pearl Harbor before the attack; to ask specifically about intercepted Japanese telephone and cable messages, especially the "Winds Code," to find out

⁵¹Ibid., part 36, p. 359, Forrestal's May 2, 1945, memorandum to Admiral H. Kent Hewitt.

⁵²Ibid., p. 364.

whether or not Japanese submarines had been operating in and around Pearl Harbor prior to December 7; and also to determine Kimmel's understanding of various plans for the defense of the fleet.⁵³ With these goals in mind, Hewitt took testimony from 39 witnesses over 26 days, from May 14 to July 11.⁵⁴

As the Hewitt Inquiry opened, Captain Arthur H. McCollum, who in December 1941 had been the Officer-in-Charge of the Far Eastern Section of the Division of Naval Intelligence, Navy Department, reviewed the intelligence then available concerning the Far East. Hawaii was dependent on data derived from direction finders, radio intelligence of fleet activities confirmed later by newspaper accounts, and information from Washington. Before the war started on December 7, they were not permitted by U.S. law to tap telephones or intercept messages to or from the Japanese consul in Honolulu. Hawaii did not have a "Purple" machine, which would have given them access to Japanese diplomatic messages. Messages in other codes that could not be decoded in Hawaii were mailed to Washington for decrypting. After the imposition of the U.S. embargoes on Japanese trade and the outbreak of war in Europe, few Japanese merchant vessels ploughed the seas, few Japanese ships crossed the Pacific to ports in the Americas, and U.S. ships no longer traversed the north Pacific. Thus we had lost the means of keeping track of the few Japanese ships that were still sailing, as well as the "eyes" of observer agents at various ports in Asia.⁵⁵

Given his position at the time of the attack, Captain McCollum was able to keep abreast of developments in U.S.-Japanese relations. When McCollum appeared before the Hewitt inquiry on May 15 he brought with him "an analysis of the situation as it looked to me at that time" which he had submitted on December

⁵³Ibid., pp. 7-9.

⁵⁴Ibid., pp. 7-355, 361, 573-74.

⁵⁵Ibid., pp. 13-15.

1, 1941, to Admiral Wilkinson, director of naval intelligence. He and Wilkinson had then met with Stark and “urged that a dispatch of warning be sent to the fleet.” Stark assured them that “such a dispatch had been sent on the 27th of November which definitely included the term, ‘This is a war warning’.” “Subsequent to this,” McCollum said, “the situation further deteriorated.” He and Wilkinson “did send dispatches out to our naval attaches and various naval agencies throughout the Far East directing that they destroy all their codes and ciphers.” This was “[s]ome time after the 1st [of December], possibly around the 4th.”⁵⁶

Regarding the “Winds Code,” there was no doubt that the Japanese government set up a scheme of weather words with hidden meanings. Yet, mystery and confusion surrounded practically every other aspect of the matter. According to McCollum,

[I]n one instance it [the weather code] meant war with Russia; in the next instance it meant war with England, and another one . . . it meant war with the United States. Those were the three possibilities.

But a literal translation of the Japanese did not actually say “war.” McCollum went on. “Instead of war, the term used was, ‘In case relations are in danger,’ . . . There is the verbatim translation; in Japanese this says, ‘In case there is danger of cutting off our diplomatic relations’.”⁵⁷

When Hewitt questioned Captain Safford about the “Winds Code” message, Safford insisted, as he had in earlier hearings, that a “Winds Execute” had been received before the attack, that it mentioned the United States, that it meant war, that he and Kramer had looked at it together, that it had been delivered to Director of Naval Communications Admiral Noyes, that later he, Safford, could find no reference to the “Winds Code” Execute in

⁵⁶Ibid., pp. 18–19.

⁵⁷Ibid., p. 23.

the files, and that he had been unable to locate any copies of it at all.⁵⁸ Safford couldn't understand what could have happened to them. When Kramer testified before the NCI in Hawaii during the summer of 1944, he had not hesitated to say that the "Winds Execute" *had* been received and that it referred to the United States as well as to Great Britain. But a year later, before the Hewitt inquiry, he was "less positive of that now." Kramer did "recall definitely being shown such a message by the GY watch officer and walking down with him to Safford's office and being present while the GY watch officer turned it over to him." A brief conversation ensued and then Safford had taken the message, Kramer assumed, to Noyes. And that was the last Kramer saw of it. He did not recall the precise wording of that message. He had "a rather sharp recollection in the latter part of that week [December 1–7, 1941] of feeling there was still no overt mention or specific mention of the United States in any of this traffic." His recollection was no longer clear; he was "under the impression that the message referred to England and possibly the Dutch rather than the United States, although it may have referred to the United States, too."⁵⁹

If a "Winds Execute" was received, as Safford claimed, he was under the impression that it had been turned over to the Roberts Commission.⁶⁰ But "within the past month" Kramer had told Safford

that a copy of the "winds" message and other papers relative to the break in diplomatic relations with Japan were not turned over to the Roberts Commission but were given to Assistant Secretary of the Navy Forrestal about 9 December 1941 while

⁵⁸Ibid., pp. 68–77.

⁵⁹Ibid., p. 81.

⁶⁰Ibid., p.71.

he was Acting Secretary in the absence of Mr. Knox who had flown to Hawaii.⁶¹

This is likely because, according to Forrestal's schedule of appointments, he saw both Kramer and McCollum on December 10, 1941.⁶²

Many argue that the reason no copies of a "Winds Execute" have been found in the files is because Tokyo did not send one. It may also be, as Kramer informed Safford on another occasion, that

no written copy was furnished the Army and no written copy was distributed in the Navy Department in the customary manner because Admiral Noyes had given specific orders not to do so and that he would handle dissemination of this message himself.⁶³

Safford told Hewitt that he had heard through Friedman, cryptanalyst, that "written copies of the 'winds' message had been destroyed in the War Department by then Colonel Bissell on the direct orders of General Marshall."⁶⁴

William F. Friedman, Chief Cryptanalyst, had been responsible, with his team in the Army cryptanalytic bureau,⁶⁵ for having deciphered after 18–20 months of hard concentration, the purple (diplomatic) code in August 1940. Friedman testified before Hewitt on June 22, 1945:

Captain Safford indicated that . . . there had been a "winds" execute message; that no copies of it were to be found in the Navy files, and that nevertheless there had been testimony to

⁶¹Ibid.

⁶²Forrestal's appointment records (Princeton University Library).

⁶³Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 36, p. 72, Safford testimony.

⁶⁴Ibid., p. 70.

⁶⁵Ibid., part 34, pp. 84–85.

the effect that it had been intercepted. His story was that it was intercepted by one of their East Coast stations, he believed, and was promptly forwarded into Washington. . . . [H]e [Safford] indicated that it not only had the affirmative for break in relations between Japan and the United States, but it also had a negative for a break in relations between Japan and Russia.⁶⁶

Friedman then said he had had a conversation about a year and a half ago with Colonel Sadtler who had

indicated that the “winds” code execute message had come in some time on the 4th or 5th of December . . . that he hadn’t himself seen a copy, but that he had been told by somebody that the copies had been ordered or *directed to be destroyed by General Marshall*. (Italics added)

Friedman said he had “regarded this as merely hearsay evidence and nothing more than that; highly inconceivable. . . . I probably just passed that [story] out [to Safford] as one of those crazy things that get started.” Friedman said he shouldn’t have done it; he “certainly had no idea that he [Safford] would repeat it.”⁶⁷

As a result of this June 22, 1945, testimony by Friedman, the Clarke investigation was later re-opened to investigate the charges.

Hewitt was interested also in the delivery of the “One P.M. Message.” The 14th part of the Japanese reply was coming in when McCollum arrived at his office early Sunday morning, December 7. While he and Wilkinson were discussing the situation with Stark, about 8:30 to 9:00, the dispatch directing the Japanese ambassadors to deliver their reply to Hull at precisely 1 P.M. was brought in. Stark immediately called the White House.

⁶⁶Ibid., part 36, pp. 305–06 (Hewitt).

⁶⁷Ibid.

At the time, the possible significance of the time of delivery was pointed out to all hands. . . . [W]e didn't know what this signified, but that if an attack were coming, it looked like the timing was such that it was timed for operations in the Far East and possibly on Hawaii.⁶⁸

Kramer told Hewitt a similar story. While the folders for the recipients of MAGIC intercepts were being made up that morning, he recalled "drawing a navigator's time circle to see if this 1:00 P.M. Washington time tied up at all with the developments in the Malay area, which we had been following in considerable detail the previous week." He was

impressed with the fact that 1:00 P.M. here was several hours before sunrise in the Kra Peninsula area, where we knew the Japanese had been contemplating an attack on Kota Bharu with the connivance of the Thaiian Chief of Staff. That further tied up with the movement of a large Japanese convoy down the coast of China the previous three or four days.

When delivering the folder for Knox, who was then at a meeting in the State Department, Kramer also pointed out the time at various points in the Pacific when it was 1:00 P.M. in Washington. He may have mentioned the time difference to eight or ten others, including McCollum, Bratton, several people in the State Department, possibly Wilkinson, Stark, and, he thought, Safford.⁶⁹

All those questioned by Hewitt who had been stationed in Hawaii at the time of the attack were well aware that Japan was on the verge of going to war with someone somewhere. Captain Rochefort, who had been in charge of communication intelligence in Hawaii, noted that "[o]n December 1 all service radio calls were changed, and that this indicated an additional progres-

⁶⁸Ibid., pp. 25–26.

⁶⁹Ibid., p. 84.

sive step in preparing for active operations on a large scale.”⁷⁰ According to Rochefort, “it was generally agreed that there was a definite offensive movement” in the works. “The only error made was in the direction.”⁷¹ All attention had been turned toward the far west, the Philippines, Malaysia, and Thailand.

Captain Layton, who had been fleet intelligence officer for Pacific Fleet, at the time of the attack, also testified before Hewitt that the Japanese Navy had changed all calls only one month after the previous change—six months had been the usual period. To Layton, “service calls lasting only one month indicated progressive steps in preparing for active operations on a large scale.”⁷² When he learned during the first week of December that the Japanese consul in Hawaii was burning papers, he said, “That fits the picture that the Japanese are preparing for something, destroying their codes.”⁷³ Layton said there had been several reports of unidentified submarine soundings in Hawaiian waters.⁷⁴

McCollum testified that “we had suspected for some time that Japanese submarines were keeping our fleet based in Pearl Harbor under observation.”⁷⁵ Vice Admiral Charles H. McMorris, who had been war plans officer for CincPac at the time of the attack, told Hewitt he considered it “highly important to maintain anti-submarine patrols in the operating areas.”⁷⁶ He thought an air attack on Pearl Harbor “possible but not probable and that the fleet should not take as its sole object of existence the defense of itself against a surprise attack, but that it should also carry

⁷⁰Ibid., p. 35.

⁷¹Ibid., p. 37.

⁷²Ibid., p. 128.

⁷³Ibid., p. 137.

⁷⁴Ibid., pp. 164–65.

⁷⁵Ibid., p. 20.

⁷⁶Ibid., p. 182.

on other fundamental duties.”⁷⁷ Admiral Patrick N.L. Bellinger, commander of the Naval Base Defense Air Force, acknowledged that there had been “sound contacts,” indicating the possible presence of submarines, but most such reports were unconfirmed: “[N]o submarine was ever seen.”⁷⁸ Nevertheless, the threat of a submarine raid was widely acknowledged as real, much more real than the likelihood of an attack by air.

Many other witnesses conceded that an air attack on Pearl Harbor was possible but not probable. Kimmel’s chief of staff, Admiral William W. Smith, testified: “We were particularly guarding against their submarine raids in the area. . . . We believed that that was Japan’s first attack to be made upon us and we made every effort to guard against it.”⁷⁹ Smith knew of “no one in this area who really believed there would be a hostile air attack on the Hawaiian Islands.”⁸⁰

Hewitt’s inquiry revealed that the Naval Base Defense Air Force Operation Plan, submitted April 9, 1941, by a group headed by Bellinger, anticipated a possible air attack by planes

launched from one or more carriers which would probably approach inside of three hundred miles. . . . A single submarine attack might indicate the presence of a considerable undiscovered surface force probably composed of fast ships accompanied by a carrier.

This plan of operations pointed out that such an attack at dawn offered “a high probability that it could be delivered as a complete surprise . . . and that it might find us in a condition of readiness under which pursuit would be slow to start.”⁸¹

⁷⁷Ibid., p. 193.

⁷⁸Ibid., p. 293.

⁷⁹Ibid., p. 201.

⁸⁰Ibid., pp. 205, 212, 220.

⁸¹Ibid., part 37, p. 949.

This scenario was followed almost precisely on December 7. The sighting and sinking, shortly *before* dawn, of a Japanese submarine by the destroyer *Ward*, was followed very shortly *after* dawn by the surprise attack on Pearl Harbor by planes launched from carriers about 200 miles away.

It was acknowledged that “The mission of the Army on Oahu is to defend the Pearl Harbor naval base against all attacks by an enemy.”⁸² The Navy was assigned the responsibility for long-range reconnaissance. However, there were nowhere near enough planes or crews on Oahu to conduct long-range reconnaissance for any length of time while training and preparing for offensive action in accordance with the war plan, Rainbow Five. In his testimony, Bellinger estimated that he could have conducted

360 degree reconnaissance with the available Navy planes . . . perhaps four or five days . . . 128 degrees approximately on a daily basis . . . until the failure of planes and lack of spare parts reduced the planes to an extent that it would have made it impossible. Perhaps it could have been carried on for two weeks, perhaps, but this estimate is . . . based on maintaining planes in readiness for flight.⁸³

Moreover, according to McMorris’s testimony,

had the maximum search been instituted from Midway and Pearl Harbor on the 27th of November warning, the situation with regard to aircraft engines by the 7th of December would have been in a highly critical situation.⁸⁴

⁸²Ibid., part 36, p. 285.

⁸³Ibid., pp. 278–302.

⁸⁴Ibid., p. 194.

If all-out reconnaissance was to be carried out in anticipation of an attack, it was imperative not to start so soon that the planes and crews would be exhausted when the emergency arose. As Hewitt pointed out, when the “war warning” was received “on 27 November they had no idea that the attack was coming [1½ weeks later] on the 7th. They had no way to time it. They had to make plans for patrol indefinitely.”⁸⁵

HEWITT INQUIRY CONCLUSIONS

Hewitt’s investigation was completed on July 12. The 134-page report reviewed the previous investigations, discussed war and defense plans, Japanese espionage, naval intelligence, reconnaissance, and the December 7 attack itself.

The NCI report had absolved Kimmel of responsibility for the extent of the Pearl Harbor disaster. The Hewitt report credited Kimmel with being “energetic, indefatigable, resourceful, and positive in his efforts to prepare the Fleet for war,”⁸⁶ and it recognized the difficulties he had faced in trying to juggle his limited resources to maintain reconnaissance, training, anti-aircraft defenses, patrols against submarines, and morale. However, the report revived some of the criticism levied against Kimmel by the Roberts Commission. It held that he *did* have “sufficient information in his possession to indicate that the situation was unusually serious,” and yet he had “not disseminated [this information] to all of his important subordinate commanders whose cognizance thereof was desirable.”⁸⁷

The Hewitt report followed the lead of the NCI report in attributing some of the blame for the disaster to Stark:

⁸⁵Ibid., p. 297.

⁸⁶Ibid., part 39, p. 526.

⁸⁷Ibid., p. 524.

[T]he Chief of Naval Operations did not communicate to [Kimmel] important information which would have aided him materially in fully evaluating the seriousness of the situation. In particular, the failure to transmit the State Department message of November 26th and to send, by telephone or other expeditious means, information of the "1:00 P.M." message and its possible import, were unfortunate. . . . Although various messages of the Japanese Consul General at Honolulu, which indicated Japanese interest in specific locations of ships in Pearl Harbor, were intercepted by radio intercept stations of the Army and Navy and decrypted prior to the attack, this information was not transmitted by the Navy Department to Admiral Kimmel. . . .

A thorough appreciation of the danger, the capabilities of the available planes, and the importance of the defense of Pearl Harbor might have justified the allotment by the Chief of Naval Operations of additional patrol planes to the Pacific Fleet.⁸⁸

Regarding the existence of a "Winds Execute," the report held unequivocally that "no message was intercepted prior to the attack which used the code words relating to the United States."⁸⁹

* * * * *

With the Hewitt Inquiry report finished, Forrestal submitted it for analysis and recommendations to the Department's judge advocate general and Admiral King, commander-in-chief, U.S. Fleet and Chief of Naval Operations. On August 10, Judge Advocate General T.L. Gatch wrote that now that this report is in

the investigation of the Pearl Harbor attack should be considered completed. . . . It appears that there was no lack of

⁸⁸Ibid., pp. 523–27.

⁸⁹Ibid., p. 523.

appreciation on the part of any of the responsible officers that war was coming, and coming quickly, during the critical period immediately preceding 7 December 1941. The point on which those officers failed to exercise the discernment and judgment to be expected from officers occupying their positions, was their failure to appreciate, from the information available to them, that Pearl Harbor was a likely target for aerial attack and their failure to take the necessary steps to prevent or minimize such a surprise attack. Each of these officers, in estimating the critical situation, demonstrated a poor quality of strategical planning, in that he largely ruled out all possible courses of action by which the Japanese might begin the war except through an attack in the Western Pacific. . . . I submit that the importance of information from Japanese sources has been over emphasized: for had more basically sound principles been observed, the Pearl Harbor disaster would not have occurred. The security of Pearl Harbor was the very core of our Pacific strategy, a fact which did not receive sufficient consideration in the strategic concept of responsible officers.

Gatch did not recommend court martialing any officer, although he held that “the Navy Department is morally obligated to order Admiral Kimmel tried by general court-martial should Admiral Kimmel so insist.” However, no courts martial should be held “prior to the end of hostilities with Japan;” not only would it be “highly impractical” but it would also “be detrimental to the war effort.”⁹⁰

In his August 13 endorsement of the Hewitt report, King held that

the evidence is not sufficient to warrant trial by court martial of any person in the Naval Service. . . . Admiral Stark and Admiral Kimmel, though not culpable to a degree warranting formal disciplinary action, were nevertheless inadequate in emergency,

⁹⁰*Ibid.*, pp. 388–89.

due to the lack of the superior judgment necessary for exercising command commensurate with their duties.

Appropriate action appears to me to be the relegation of both of these officers to positions in which lack of superior strategic judgment may not result in future errors. The action has been taken in the case of both Admiral Stark and Admiral Kimmel. No further action is recommended.⁹¹

* * * * *

CLARKE INVESTIGATION, PART II (JULY 13–17, 1945)

The Clarke investigation was reopened in July 1945 at Marshall's request.⁹² Its primary purpose was to investigate Friedman's statements before the Hewitt inquiry [May 14–July 11, 1945] about the destruction, *under Marshall's orders*, of Pearl Harbor records, especially of a Winds Code execute, if one had actually been received.⁹³ According to Army courier Colonel Bratton at the APHB⁹⁴ and Chief of G-2, Military Intelligence, Major General Sherman Miles⁹⁵ file copies of all the Japanese intercepts were supposed to have been held in tight security in both Army and Navy files. Yet no Winds Code execute could be found. So Clarke wanted to clear up that mystery.

William F. Friedman, Chief Cryptanalyst, told Clarke that he had had conversations with Captain Safford who said "there had been such a Winds execute message and that he believed that a copy of it was still in somebody's safe in the Navy Department but that all of his attempts to locate a copy of the Winds execute

⁹¹Ibid., p. 387.

⁹²Ibid., part 34, p. 77.

⁹³Ibid., pp. 78–79.

⁹⁴Ibid., part 29, p. 2416.

⁹⁵Ibid., part 2, p. 789.

message in the official files of OP-20-G had been fruitless.”⁹⁶ Months later, somebody higher up in the War Department—perhaps General Bissell—“directed that a search be made through our files at Signal Security Agency to see if we could locate such a Winds execute message, and that was fruitless.”⁹⁷ Yet Safford was “quite convinced that dissemination had been made to the Army, if not to the Signal Intelligence Service then to some body in G-2.” Safford could not explain this “mysterious disappearance . . . of all copies of the Winds execute message,” especially as copies of all the Japanese intercepts were supposed to have been held in tight security in both Army and Navy permanent files. This “mysterious disappearance” was naturally also

of extreme interest to me, and some time after my first or possibly second, conversation with Capt. Safford, I learned of the return to Washington for duty of Colonel Sadtler. We were old friends. . . . Shortly after he came back he came over to my office one day—and I don’t know whether he had specifically in mind to talk about Pearl Harbor—he may have—but at any rate in the course of our reminiscences about those days, he told me some very startling things. . . . I asked him about the Winds execute message his recollection was apparently extremely clear, and he certainly was positive about this recollection of the fact that such a Winds execute message had been intercepted by a Navy source, because he told me that he was called over to either Gen. Miles’ office or Col. Bratton’s office . . . I recall now that he said that Adm. Noyes called him one morning and my recollection is that it was on December 4—might have been the 5th—1941, saying—and this stands very bright in my memory—“It’s in,” meaning that the Winds execute message had been transmitted and had been intercepted and that it meant a break in relations between . . . Japan and England, and that he had then gone over to either Gen. Miles’ office or to Col. Bratton’s

⁹⁶Ibid., part 34, p. 78 (see Hewitt, part 36, pp. 305–06).

⁹⁷Ibid., part 34, p. 78.

office—or Adm. Noyes had telephoned the same message or the purport of the Winds execute message to Gen. Miles or to Col. Bratton. At any rate, Col. Sadtler was either summoned or presented himself to G-2 and said that the Winds execute message had come in and that something should be done right away. . . . Col. Bratton, the Japanese language expert, wanted Col. Sadtler to tell him what the Japanese word was that had been included in the Winds execute message. . . . Sadtler said that he himself had not seen the message, he had gotten the information from the Navy source by telephone and that he therefore couldn't give the Japanese word. . . . [W]hen he was unable to produce the message or the Japanese word they said there was nothing they could do. . . . [H]e being deeply concerned about the threat of negotiations with the Japanese Government and noting the tenor of the messages that we were turning out in translation, became extremely apprehensive that war might break out at almost any hour without any declaration on the part of the Japanese. And he felt that somebody high up in the War Department ought to send a message out to Gen. Short warning him . . . the type of message that he actually prepared in his own hand: "Break in relations between Japan and United States may be expected within the next 24 or 48 hours. Take all necessary steps to insure that there will be no repetition of Port Arthur." . . . Well he tried to interest some of the people in the higher echelons. . . . He tried somebody in G-2; he tried somebody in Operations Division, the Secretary of the General Staff—I can't enumerate them all now—but at any rate he said that he got turned down all the way and nobody would pay any attention to him. . . .

Well, in the course of this conversation I asked him, "What do you suppose happened to the Winds execute message which we believe so firmly was intercepted?" Well he said he was told that they were ordered destroyed. And that sort of took me aback, and I said, "By whom?" And he said, "By Gen. Marshall." . . . [M]y disbelief of the story was discredited by him apparently, because he still remained very firm in his belief that all copies

of the Winds execute message, both in the Army and in the Navy, had been destroyed and ordered to be destroyed. . . . I am quite sure that it was not of his own knowledge. He was passing on second-hand information.⁹⁸

Friedman: Col. Sadtler didn't impose any secrecy upon what he was telling me. Oh naturally he trusted to my discretion. . . . I certainly wouldn't have said anything to Capt. Safford about it if he imposed some sort of secrecy upon what he was telling me, and of course you understand that, not giving any credence to it myself, I didn't feel that Safford would believe any of it. But to my astonishment, Safford seemed to think there might be something to it, at least he thought there was a Winds execute message and now it can't be found.⁹⁹

Colonel E.W. Gibson, aide to Clarke Inquiry: Mr. William F. Friedman has testified before Adm. Hewitt of the Department of the Navy recently as follows: "Then if I remember correctly I asked Col. Sadtler whether he had a copy, had ever gotten or seen a copy of this message [the Winds Code execute], and his answer was, if I remember correctly that he hadn't himself seen a copy but that he had been told by somebody that the copies had been ordered or directed to be destroyed by Gen. Marshall."

Col. Sadtler: I will make an absolute flat denial of that statement made by Mr. Friedman because as far as I know, that message was never in the War Department and I never made any statement that Gen. Marshall ordered it destroyed or that anyone told me that Gen. Marshall ordered it destroyed. . . .

Gibson: At some time did somebody tell you that messages pertaining to the Pearl Harbor affair were being destroyed?

⁹⁸Ibid., pp. 79–81.

⁹⁹Ibid., p. 82.

Sadtler: Yes. Sometime during 1943 Gen. Isaac Spalding at Ft. Bragg, North Carolina, told me something to the effect that J.T.B. Bissell had told him that everything pertaining to Pearl Harbor was being destroyed or had been destroyed. Sadtler said that he might possibly have told that to Friedman in one of their conversations.¹⁰⁰

Sadtler went on to tell about the warning message he had written:

After leaving Gen. Miles' office where Gen. Miles and Col. Bratton more or less casually threw off this information about the execute of the Winds message, I went back to my office and thought that something ought to be done. The message was typed up and I went to see Gen. Gerow and talked this over for a few moments with him and suggested that he notify them. Gerow's reply to the effect was that they had been adequately notified, as I recall it. I then went to see Secretary of General Staff, Col. Bedell Smith, and told him what had been done and suggested he send a message. His reply was to the effect that he refused to discuss it further.¹⁰¹

Sadtler: I never made any statement that Gen. Marshall ordered it [a Winds Code Execute] destroyed or that anyone told me that Marshall ordered it destroyed. . . . Some time during 1943 Gen. Isaac Spalding at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, told me something to the effect that J.T.B. Bissell had told him that everything pertaining to Pearl Harbor was being destroyed or had been destroyed.¹⁰²

Clarke and Gibson questioned Spalding personally about Friedman's testimony about Sadtler having said that Spalding

¹⁰⁰Ibid., p. 86.

¹⁰¹Ibid., pp. 86–87.

¹⁰²Ibid., p. 86.

said certain messages had been destroyed under orders from Marshall and Bissell,¹⁰³

Spalding: I did not tell him that in substance, answering specifically your question, but I did tell him certain things. But at no time was the name of Gen. Marshall ever brought into the conversation. . . . I wish it to appear in my testimony that it is my full belief that the Secretary of War, Mr. Stimson, and the Chief of Staff, Gen. Marshall, are not involved in any way whatsoever with the testimony which I am about to give, and it is my belief that neither one knew anything of it. . . . We [Spalding and Bissell, when at Ft. Bragg in the summer of 1943] talked about the Pearl Harbor incident. I remember expressing to him my failure to understand how Sherman Miles and the Navy could fail to discover that those Japanese vessels had left home ports. . . . I remember shooting off my mouth about Sherman Miles, for whom I didn't have a very high regard professionally . . . and Bissell said that certain messages had been received and were in the files of G-2 and he deemed it most necessary to destroy them. I got the impression that these messages were derogatory to the War Department and that he [Bissell] on his own responsibility destroyed them. I had the impression that they were secret information which it was most desirable that the president, Congress, the public, Mr. Stimson and Gen. Marshall not know about. I had a feeling that Bissell destroyed them without even Gen. Raymond Lee, the G-2 at that time, knowing they were in existence. . . . Bissell having told me that he had destroyed what I would call vital records which, if known, would be very unpleasant for the War Department. Bissell was the only man who ever told me anything that I remember. I hope it is clear in here that I wouldn't want anything I say to transgress the integrity of Mr. Stimson or George Marshall. They are two of the finest men in the world and they would hew to the line I know.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰³Ibid., p. 90.

¹⁰⁴Ibid., pp. 90–93.

Clarke and Gibson questioned Maj. Gen. Ralph C. Smith: At any time during your service in the War Department in 1941 until you left in March 1942, to your knowledge were any of the records of G-2 destroyed?

Smith: Categorically, no. . . . I am very certain that no permanent records after January 1941, perhaps, were removed or destroyed.

Gibson: At anytime did you ever receive any order from anyone after Pearl Harbor while you were in the War Department to destroy or have any records destroyed?

Smith: I did not. . . .

Gibson: As far as you know, are the records of G-2 that pertain to Pearl Harbor for 1941 and up until March 1942 complete?

Smith: To the best of knowledge they are.

Gibson: Prior to yesterday had you ever heard any comment made that if certain records in G-2 became known or were made public that it would be very damning to the Secretary of War or Chief of Staff?

Smith: No I had never heard any such comment.

Gibson: Did Col. Bissell to your knowledge, ever, destroy any records in G-2 in the Department?

Smith: He did not during my tenure of office; and I believe that if he had I would have known about it from my subordinates.

Gibson: Did Col. Bissell ever tell you that he had destroyed some records dealing with Pearl Harbor?

Smith: He did not. . . .

Clarke: Do you know whether or not the Chief of the Counter Intelligence Group, Col. Bissell, had at his disposal all of the information and intelligence which was available to the Intelligence Group?

Smith: I have a vague recollection that some point was brought up either shortly before Pearl Harbor or possibly afterward that some sources of Counter Intelligence data were in existence but not being exploited to the maximum. I think I can state as a certainty that the Counter Intelligence Branch did not receive the pouch containing the full Magic material. I do, however, have a vague recollection that the Far Eastern Branch had some contacts with the Counter Intelligence Branch on activities of Japanese agents in this country.¹⁰⁵

Brigadier Colonel John T. Bissell, named by Sadtler and Spalding as having destroyed documents, was then questioned.¹⁰⁶

Gibson: Gen. Spalding has testified that, among other things you told him that certain messages had been received, these messages pertaining to Pearl Harbor and were in the files of G-2 and that you deemed it most necessary to destroy them. Did you ever make such a statement?

Bissell: No I did not. . . .

Gibson: To your knowledge, while you were connected with G-2 were ever any records pertaining to Pearl Harbor or anything else destroyed?

Bissell: Not as far as I know.

Gibson: And once a message was okayed and sent it was kept?

¹⁰⁵Ibid., pp. 98–99.

¹⁰⁶Ibid., pp. 99–102.

Bissell: It went to the file immediately.

Gibson: And no files were ever destroyed.

Bissell: Not as far as I know. . . .

Gibson: Did you tell Gen. Spaulding [sic] at any time, in substance that you had destroyed what you would call vital records, records which if known to exist would be very unpleasant to the War Department?

Bissell: I did not.

Gibson: Did you ever tell him anything from which he might infer such?

Bissell: No.¹⁰⁷

Clarke questioned not only Friedman but also the four army officers supposedly implicated—Colonel Otis K. Sadtler, Brigadier General Isaac Spalding, Major General Ralph C. Smith, and Brigadier General John T. Bissell. Each in turn denied having actually seen a possible Winds Code Execute.

CLARKE INVESTIGATION PART II – SUMMARY

Friedman was told by Sadtler that he remembered hearing that a Winds Code execute had been received on December 4 or 5 and that it had been destroyed on GCM's orders.¹⁰⁸ Sadtler told Friedman he had heard this from Spalding.¹⁰⁹

Sadtler later contradicted this testimony. He said he had never seen a Winds Code execute himself.¹¹⁰ He later made “an

¹⁰⁷Ibid., pp. 101–02.

¹⁰⁸Ibid., pp. 79–81.

¹⁰⁹Ibid., p. 81.

¹¹⁰Ibid., p. 80.

absolute flat denial of that . . . because as far as I know that message was never in the War Department and I never made any statement that General Marshall ordered it destroyed or that anyone told me that General Marshall ordered it destroyed.”¹¹¹

Sadtler said he was told by Spalding in August 1943 that J.T.B. Bissell said everything pertaining to PH was destroyed.¹¹² Spalding then added “[A]t no time was the name of Gen. Marshall ever brought into the conversation or discussion.”¹¹³

Spalding was told by Bissell that he deemed it necessary to destroy files in G-2, implying that he had done this “on his own responsibility.”¹¹⁴ Spalding said further “I hope it is clear in here that I wouldn’t want anything I say to transgress the integrity of Mr. Stimson or George Marshall. They are two of the finest men in the world and they would hew to the line I know.”¹¹⁵

Bissell later testified that as far as he knew no messages pertaining to Pearl Harbor had been destroyed; once a message was okayed and sent, “It went into the file immediately. . . . And no files were ever destroyed.”¹¹⁶

CLARKE’S REPORT

After quoting Friedman’s statement before the Hewitt Inquiry, Clarke stated:

I find that Mr. Friedman . . . was told by Col. Sadtler at some time in 1943 that Brig. Gen. Isaac Spalding told Col. Sadtler that Brig. Gen. J.T.B. Bissell had told Gen. Spalding that

¹¹¹Ibid., p. 86.

¹¹²Ibid., p. 86.

¹¹³Ibid., p. 90.

¹¹⁴Ibid., pp. 90–93.

¹¹⁵Ibid.

¹¹⁶Ibid., pp. 101–02.

everything pertaining to Pearl Harbor was being destroyed or had been destroyed.

I find that Col. Sadtler was told by Brig. Gen. Isaac Spalding sometime in August 1943 that Brig. Gen. J. T. B. Bissell had told Gen. Spalding that certain messages, pertaining to Pearl Harbor had been received and were in the files of G-2 on 7 December 1941 and that Bissell had deemed it most necessary to destroy them.

CLARKE'S CONCLUSIONS

I find that Spalding was not told by Bissell that certain messages had been received, were in G-2's files and that Bissell deemed it necessary to destroy them.

I find that Sadtler did not tell Friedman that Spalding had told Sadtler that certain messages implementing the Winds Code message were destroyed as a result of an order of Marshall.

In the end, Clarke concluded:

I find that no written message implementing the Winds Code message was ever received by G-2 [Military Intelligence, Army], and I find that no records pertaining to Pearl Harbor have been destroyed by G-2 or by anybody connected with G-2.

He so reported to Chief of Staff Marshall.¹¹⁷

* * * * *

STIMSON ISSUES "OFFICIAL REPORT . . ." —(AUGUST 29, 1945)

As we have seen, Stimson refrained from releasing the APHB report when it was completed in October 1944. However, upon

¹¹⁷Ibid., pp. 75–76. (August 13, 1945) Clarke report (part 34, p. 76).

conclusion of Clausen's investigation Stimson promptly issued an "Official Report . . . Regarding the Pearl Harbor Disaster," dated August 29, 1945.¹¹⁸ Clausen's affidavits did not really deal with the APHB charges, but Stimson used them and other documents Clausen had assembled to overturn its findings, especially with respect to Marshall, and to reconfirm the findings of the Roberts Commission. In this report, Stimson defended Marshall and Gerow for having adequately alerted Short to the impending crisis, defended Hull, and placed the primary blame once more on Short.

Stimson found that insofar as the Army was concerned, Short bore "[t]he primary and immediate responsibility for the protection of the Island of Oahu and Pearl Harbor" and that he "was repeatedly advised of the critical events which were developing." Stimson did

not find that there was any information in the possession of the War Department and which was not made available to General Short which would have modified the essence of the above information which was sent to him or which would have affected or increased the duties of vigilance and alertness thus already imposed upon him.

His failure "adequately to alert his command to the degree of preparedness which the situation demanded . . . contributed measurably to the extent of the disaster. . . ."

This failure resulted not from indolence or indifference or willful disobedience of orders but from a vital error of judgment . . . [due to] General Short's confidence that Japan would not then attack Pearl Harbor. . . .

To sum up the situation tersely, General Short was warned by Washington that there was immediate danger both of an attack

¹¹⁸Ibid., part 35, pp. 13–19.

from without by Japan and of an attack from within by sabotage. This warning required him to be alert against both forms of danger. He chose to concentrate himself so entirely upon a defense against sabotage as to leave himself more completely exposed to an attack from without than if there had been no alert at all. . . . To such an error of judgment it is no excuse that he relied upon assurances from another service, even though he thought that that service was better informed than he was as to the disposition of the Japanese fleet.¹¹⁹

As to the APHB's conclusions concerning Washington officials, Stimson wrote,

Such duties as the War Department in Washington had in the supervision of the defense of Hawaii devolved primarily upon what was then known as the War Plans Division of the General Staff. . . . The Intelligence Section of the General Staff (G-2) also had duties of collecting and analyzing information and transmitting information to other sections of the War Department and to the theater commanders.

I find . . . that the messages sent to General Short gave him adequate information as to the state of the negotiations with the Japanese and the development of the situation. . . . Furthermore, . . . I do not think that any special and detailed warnings against sabotage should have been considered by General Short as justifying his decision that an alert against any possible enemy action was not also his duty.¹²⁰

With regard to the charges against the war plans division, Stimson believed it

made a mistake in not transmitting to General Short more information than it did. . . . [A] more efficient functioning of

¹¹⁹Ibid., pp. 14–16.

¹²⁰Ibid., p. 16.

the division would have demanded that a careful inquiry as to the meaning of General Short's message [reporting his sabotage alert] be made and no room for ambiguity permitted.

However, Stimson made excuses for the division.

It must clearly be borne in mind that in November and December 1941, the responsibilities of the War Plans Division covered many fields and many theaters. . . . Their conduct must be viewed in an entirely different light from that of the theater commander, such as General Short, who was like a sentinel on post and whose attention and vigilance must be entirely concentrated on the single position which he has been chosen to defend and whose alertness must not be allowed to be distracted by consideration of other contingencies in respect to which he is not responsible. Under all circumstances, I find nothing in the evidence as now recorded which warrants the institution of any further proceedings against any officer in the War Plans Division.¹²¹

Stimson was especially anxious to overturn the APHB's "wicked" (FDR's term) criticism of Marshall:

In my opinion, this criticism is entirely unjustified. It arises from a fundamental misconception of the duties of the Chief of Staff and of his relations with the divisions and activities of the General Staff. It is not the function of the Chief of Staff specifically to direct and personally supervise the execution in detail of the duties of the various sections of the General Staff. . . . The shortcomings I have pointed out thus cannot in any fairness be attributed to the Chief of Staff. On the contrary, throughout this matter I believe that he acted with his usual great skill, energy, and efficiency.¹²²

¹²¹Ibid., p. 18.

¹²²Ibid., pp. 18–19.

Testimony as to the delivery of MAGIC to Marshall on the evening of December 6, had been contradictory. Bratton, then with War Department's G-2, had told the APHB that he had personally delivered that evening the 13 parts of the Japanese reply not only to Hull's duty officer, but also to Miles and Marshall's secretary.¹²³ However, in his affidavit for Clausen he "corrected" his previous testimony and said he had told Dusenbury to deliver Marshall's set to his home at Fort Myer, and further that the only message he, Bratton, had delivered that night was to the duty officer for the Secretary of State.¹²⁴ Stimson ignores these contradictions and simply accepts the statement in Bratton's affidavit. In his "Official Report" Stimson wrote: "There is no dispute, however, that General Marshall did not get this information [the Japanese reply] until the morning of December 7."¹²⁵

The APHB had suggested also that if Hull had followed a different procedure with the Japanese envoys, he "might have prolonged the negotiations until such time as the Army and Navy were better prepared for hostile action." This, Stimson said, "amounts at best only to a conjecture." He considered the board's comment in this respect "uncalled for."¹²⁶

To the apparent satisfaction of the administration, the three supplemental investigations had shifted the major responsibility for the Japanese attack away from top Washington officials—Marshall, Gerow, and Hull—and back once more to Kimmel and Short, with some blame left over for Stark. The administration considered the matter closed.

¹²³Ibid., part 29, p. 2349. Bratton testimony before APHB, September 30, 1944.

¹²⁴Ibid., part 35, pp. 97–98.

¹²⁵Ibid., p. 17. Stimson's "Official Report" regarding the Pearl Harbor disaster (August 29, 1945).

¹²⁶Ibid., p. 19.

26.

Safeguarding Military Information

By March 1945 the Allies were making progress on all fronts. The Germans, besieged from the east by the Russians and from the west by Allied forces, were pulling back. The Japanese were in retreat in the Pacific and southeast Asia. After leapfrogging from one Pacific island to another, the U.S. Army under MacArthur had advanced as far as the Philippines. However, more fighting lay ahead.

The procedure established to make sure that our enemies did not learn that we were reading their codes seemed to be effective.¹ When the Pearl Harbor investigations started, Army and Navy officers were prohibited from mentioning the intercepts.² There had been one leak in the spring of 1941, eventually attributed to the State Department, which had received from the Army

¹79th Cong., 1st sess. Joint (Congressional) Committee on the Investigation of the Pearl Harbor Attack. *Pearl Harbor Attack*, 39 vols. (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1946), part 8, pp. 3681–82. (Safford testimony).

²*Ibid.*, part 35, p. 101 (Miles's affidavit for Clausen).

but had not returned a Japanese MAGIC translation.³ Then in June 1942 the *Chicago Tribune's* publication of the names of the Japanese ships at Midway indicated that we had access to secret Japanese messages.⁴ As noted, during the 1944 campaign, Marshall had succeeded in preventing Republican presidential candidate Thomas E. Dewey from speaking out on the subject of the secret Japanese intercepts.⁵ Rumors persisted, however. But there had as yet been no public disclosure that we had broken the Japanese "Purple" code. For all practical purposes, information about MAGIC had been limited to the few officials privy to the intercepts before and during the war and those involved in the investigations. And the authorities were anxious to keep it that way.⁶

SENATE BILL S.805

On March 30, 1945, Democratic Utah Senator Elbert Thomas, chairman of the Senate Committee on Military Affairs, introduced S.805 "to insure the further military security of the United States by preventing disclosures of information secured through official sources." This bill provided heavy penalties for disclosing, without proper authorization, information about U.S. or foreign codes acquired when serving in U.S. or foreign armed forces or when employed or performing services for the United States or a foreign government. Authorization to release such information acquired while working for the United States "shall be granted only in accordance with regulations prescribed by the president." Information acquired as a result of performing services for a foreign government could not be released "without joint

³Ibid., part 8, p. 3735.

⁴Ibid., pp. 3735–38.

⁵Ibid., part 3, pp. 1124–36.

⁶Ibid., part 29, p. 2413.

authorization by the Secretary of State, the Secretary of War, and the Secretary of the Navy.”⁷

Admiral Kimmel read a brief five-line notice about this bill in the *New York Herald-Tribune*, March 31, and immediately wrote his chief counsel, Charles Rugg, to investigate. Several days later Rugg finally obtained a copy of the bill and notified Kimmel and Senator Homer Ferguson of Michigan. Rugg said that “its passage would close the door to any investigation of Pearl Harbor.”⁸ Senator Thomas stated that this bill “provides for filling a gap in regard to the punishment of persons who may divulge military secrets. . . . The bill is sponsored by both the Army and the Navy. It is a measure which is necessary in peacetime, but at the present time it is extremely necessary.” Without any further discussion or debate, the bill was passed by voice vote; no roll call was taken. Kimmel was “desperate because if the House passed the bill, that was the end of all disclosures about Pearl Harbor.”⁹

Senator Ferguson had been out of the country when the bill came before the Senate on April 9. On his return to Washington he entered “a motion to reconsider the votes” by which the bill had been passed. He said it was “very important that the Senate should give further consideration to the measure, and that it should be amended.”¹⁰ Ferguson’s motion was agreed to on April 11, and S.805 was temporarily set aside.

⁷*Congressional Record*. 79th Cong., 1st sess., 1945, vol. 91, part 3, p. 3196.

⁸Husband E. Kimmel, *Admiral Kimmel's Story* (Chicago: Henry Regnery, 1955), p. 127.

⁹*Ibid.*, p. 127.

¹⁰*Congressional Record*. 79th Cong., 1st sess., 1945, vol. 91, part 3, p. 3267.

PEACETIME CENSORSHIP?

Kimmel was in Washington on April 12. He went to the *Washington Post* with the facts and his views about the bill. He also called several members of Congress.¹¹

The next morning, an editorial sparked by Kimmel's revelations, "Wraps on History," appeared in the *Post*. It stated the issue clearly: "It is regrettable to note that we can no longer depend upon the Senate to protect the Nation against executive deprivations of our liberties. The latest illustration is S.805, which would take away from the American people that very freedom of information which we are seeking to promote in other countries. The bill was passed on Monday without exciting a ripple, either inside or outside the Senate. Only one hearing was held, and that *in camera*." It was reported that Army and Navy spokesmen had told the Senate Military Affairs Committee that the bill "was merely intended to protect official information" and the Committee had accepted the bill "on that absurd justification. . . ."

The Washington Post editorialized:

On Monday no dissentient could be found in a body sworn to uphold the Constitution. Either from inertia or somnolence, either from lack of interest or just plain complaisance, the Senators approved the sayso of Chairman Thomas. . . . Yet this bill would gag anybody who would publish any information which originally took the form of a coded message. . . . And you may be sure, if this bill is enacted, almost everything that it is sought to keep from the prying eyes of the public will first be put in code. . . .

To our way of thinking, the need for scrutiny of requests from the armed services has always been present, and it has never been pointed up as it is today. With the approach of the end of the fight for liberty, we are beginning to reproselytize for it.

¹¹Kimmel, *Admiral Kimmel's Story*, p. 127.

Freedom of information, specifically, is our immediate crusade. . . . That the Senate on Monday blacked it out in the United States was the worst blackout that the Senate has sustained in our memory.¹²

ANOTHER ANALYSIS OF S.805

On April 13 the *New York Times* reported on S.805:

Fearing that a bill intended to protect military secrets, passed unanimously by the Senate Monday, might interfere with Congressional investigation of government departments and suppress legitimate public information, Senators have taken steps to halt the measure and perhaps to re-examine the War and Navy officers who sponsored the proposal.

Senator Homer Ferguson, Republican, of Michigan, has moved for reconsideration of the bill. Although he sees no sinister design in the measure, he believes that through misuse the legislation could impose a censorship on newspapers and deprive Congressional committees of many facts. . . . Disclaiming any desire to interfere with proper protection of military secrets, Senator Ferguson considers the bill so broadly drawn as possibly to suppress many political questions with which the public has a right to be informed. . . .

High War and Navy officers stood back of the bill, which it was understood today was submitted by the military authorities "in perfect good faith." In its report to the Senate the Military Affairs Committee said the bill had approval of the joint Chiefs of Staff and was deemed essential "in the interests of national defense and security."¹³

¹²*Washington Post*, April 12, 1945, p. 8.

¹³*The New York Times*, April 13, 1945, p. 30.

* * * * *

The *Times* of April 13 also reported the death of President Roosevelt, which occurred the day before, April 12. He had been at his retreat in Warm Springs, Georgia. FDR's personal physician wrote later that the president had fainted at 1:20 P.M., and died shortly thereafter, at 3:35 P.M.¹⁴

Later when S.805 came before the House committee, action was delayed sufficiently to allow for a thorough investigation. When the bill was finally brought to the floor a couple of months later, it was defeated.¹⁵

¹⁴Ross T. McIntire, *White House Physician* (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1946), pp. 241–43.

¹⁵Kimmel, *Admiral Kimmel's Story*, p. 127.

27.

Joint Congressional Committee on the Investigation of the Pearl Harbor Attack November 15, 1945–May 31, 1946: Part 1

After almost four years of fighting on land, sea, and in the air, after the detonation of two atomic bombs on Japan—one on Hiroshima (August 6) and the other on Nagasaki (August 8)—the Japanese finally admitted defeat. On August 25 Emperor Hirohito broadcast to the Japanese people that the country's forces were surrendering. August 25, 1945, was declared V-J Day. World War II had ended.

A couple of weeks later—on August 29—the new president, Harry S. Truman, who had taken office after the death of President Roosevelt on April 12, 1945, released the reports of the Army Pearl Harbor Board and Navy Court of Inquiry.¹ A veritable firestorm erupted. The earlier Roberts Commission had found

¹*New York Times*, August 30, 1945. pp. 1, 4, 5, 6, and S. 6-15.

the two Hawaiian commanders, Admiral Kimmel and General Short, guilty of “derelictions of duty” and “errors of judgment” and they had been retired from service and demoted in rank. The Army and Navy reports released by Truman effectively absolved Kimmel and Short of blame and placed much of the responsibility on four top-level Washington officials—Secretary of State Cordell Hull, Army Chief of Staff General George C. Marshall, Chief of the Army’s war plans division General Leonard T. Gerow, and Chief of Naval Operations Admiral Harold R. Stark. As the *New York Times* reported,

It was not a pretty story that President Truman released in making public War and Navy reports on the reasons why Army and Navy officials at Oahu were taken by surprise in the Japanese attack on Dec. 7, 1941.²

In spite of the volume of material released by Truman, the public still was not satisfied. There were obvious omissions. Under orders of the secretary of war and the secretary of the navy, sections of both reports had been deleted. And Top Secret portions were still being withheld. In the words of Senate Majority Leader Alben Barkley, the reports were “confusing and conflicting when compared with one another, and to some extent contain contradictions and inconsistencies.”³ Moreover, both Secretary of War Henry L. Stimson and Navy Secretary James Forrestal had, according to Senator Homer Ferguson, “issued critical opinions of the findings of their own boards.”⁴

²Ibid., p. 1.

³*Congressional Record*, September 6, 1945, reprinted in 79th Cong., 1st sess. Joint (Congressional) Committee on the Investigation of the Pearl Harbor Attack. *Pearl Harbor Attack*, 39 vols. (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1946), part 1, p. 11.

⁴Ibid, p. 16.

JOINT CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEE (JCC) ESTABLISHED

The Republicans in Congress, anxious to learn the truth, demanded a further investigation. Senator Ferguson urged the establishment of a committee to investigate the attack,⁵ and on September 6 Barkley introduced a concurrent resolution similar to Ferguson's proposal.⁶

The Senate debate was subdued and polite.⁷ It was agreed that the record so far was incomplete, confusing, and conflicting. Barkley proposed an inquiry

of such dignity and authenticity as to convince the Congress and the country and the world that no effort has been made to shield any person who may have been directly or indirectly responsible for this disaster, or to condemn unfairly or unjustly any person who was in authority, military, naval, or civilian, at the time or prior thereto.

Barkley's Concurrent Resolution 27 set up a Joint Committee on the Investigation of the Pearl Harbor Attack (Joint Congressional Committee, or JCC) with broad authority to

make a full and complete investigation of the facts relating to the events and circumstances leading up to or following the attack made by Japanese armed forces upon Pearl Harbor in the Territory of Hawaii on December 7, 1941.

⁵*The New York Times*, September 6, 1945, p. 1. See also Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 1, p. 14, which reprints Ferguson's suggestion from the *Congressional Record*, September 6, 1945.

⁶*The New York Times*, September 7, 1945, p. 7. See also Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 1, p. 13, which reprints Barkley's concurrent resolution from the *Congressional Record*, September 6, 1945.

⁷*Congressional Record*, September 6, 1945, reprinted in Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 1, pp. 10–23.

The committee was to complete its testimony in four months and report to the Senate and House “not later than January 3, 1946.” The resolution was passed unanimously by the Senate on September 6, 1945, and by the House on September 11.⁸

Ten members of Congress, all lawyers, were appointed to the committee.⁹ On the Senate side, three Democrats: Barkley of Kentucky, chairman; Walter F. George of Georgia; and Scott W. Lucas of Illinois; and two Republicans: Owen Brewster of Maine and Ferguson of Michigan. On the House side, three Democrats: Jere Cooper of Tennessee, vice Chairman; J. Bayard Clark of North Carolina and John W. Murphy of Pennsylvania; and two Republicans: Bertrand W. Gearhart of California and Frank B. Keefe of Wisconsin.

William D. Mitchell, who had served as solicitor general for four years under Calvin Coolidge and attorney general for four years under Herbert Hoover, was selected to serve as general counsel.¹⁰ Gerhard A. Gesell was named Mitchell’s chief assistant counsel, with Jule M. Hannaford and John E. Masten as assistant counsels.¹¹

Barkley stated that the JCC should conduct its investigation “without partisanship or favoritism. . . . Such an investigation should look solely to the ascertainment of the cold, unvarnished, indisputable facts so far as they are obtainable.”¹² Senator David I. Walsh of Massachusetts had praised Barkley for having “lifted this question above partisanship, and made an appeal for what the country wants—a high-minded, clean, judicial investigation

⁸Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 1, pp. 3–4.

⁹*Ibid.*, p. 4.

¹⁰*Ibid.*, part 4, p. 1587.

¹¹*Ibid.*, part 1, p. 4.

¹²*Ibid.*, p. 12.

of all the facts connected with the Pearl Harbor disaster.”¹³ Yet the congressional committee was soon embroiled in politics.

The makeup of the committee, with six Democrats and four Republicans, was stacked in favor of the administration. The Republicans maintained that their access to government records was being restricted and that the Democratic majority was trying to curb, by strict party-line vote, the scope of the inquiry. No provision was made for a staff to assist the Republican members. The Democrats claimed the Republicans were anxious to use the inquiry to smear Roosevelt, while the Republicans implied the Democrats were trying to shield the Roosevelt administration. House Majority Leader John W. McCormack accused the committee minority of “witchhunting.”¹⁴

This account of the Congressional hearings is pretty much factual and non-partisan. The events are presented more or less in the order in which the witnesses to them appeared before the Committee. Some witnesses contradicted other witnesses, some even contradicted their own earlier testimony, and the recollections of others were often confused or hazy. *Pressure may have been used to persuade some witnesses to change their stories. JCC Committee members often encountered difficulty in obtaining access to information.* Also, friends of the administration sometimes tried to sidetrack the probing into sensitive issues by disrupting the proceedings. Thus a study of the hearings alone yields a rather disjointed picture. Only after trying to reconcile the various contradictions and confusions and arranging the events revealed chronologically, as has been done in the final chapter of this book, is it possible to recognize the roles played by the several principals involved in the Pearl Harbor disaster—their actions, inactions, their negligence and dilatoriness.

¹³*Congressional Record*, September 6, 1945, reprinted in Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 1, p. 22.

¹⁴*The New York Times*, November 15, 1945, p. 3.

QUESTIONS THAT MUST BE ASKED

As the hearings progressed, much time and energy was devoted to trying to find answers to four major questions:

1. Had top Washington officials, including the president, committed this country to war in support of the British and Dutch without first obtaining congressional approval as required by the Constitution?
2. How much was known before the December 7, 1941 Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor about Japan's plans to go to war against the United States? Had Washington officials kept the field commanders adequately informed?
3. Was there pre-attack evidence to indicate a U.S. territory, possibly even Pearl Harbor, was a likely target of the Japanese? If so, were the Hawaiian commanders so advised? If not, why not?
4. Had the Pearl Harbor commanders made reasonably intelligent decisions, given the information and resources available to them?

JOINT CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEE COMMENCES

The committee opened its hearings on November 15. It was generally admitted that more intelligence was available in Washington than in Hawaii. Thus any serious attempt to account for the tremendous losses at Pearl Harbor would have to start by exploring the information available in Washington before the attack and by determining how much of it had been sent to Hawaii. The JCC obtained at the start of its hearings the secret Japanese dispatches which U.S. cryptographers had intercepted, decoded, and translated before the attack. These messages, most of them transmitted on the "Purple" code machine, which U.S.

cryptographers had replicated in August 1940, yielded valuable intelligence known as MAGIC. Exhibit 1 consisted of *diplomatic* messages sent and received by the Japanese government and its foreign establishments which had been intercepted, deciphered and translated by U.S. cryptographers between July 1 and December 8, 1941.¹⁵ Exhibit 2 contained intercepted messages concerning *military matters such as military installations, ship movements, espionage reports, etc.*, sent and received by the Japanese government and its foreign establishments in “Purple” and other codes between December 2, 1940, and December 8, 1941.¹⁶ The MAGIC information derived from these intercepts had been the basis of much pre-attack U.S. intelligence concerning the movements and intentions of the Japanese government.

U.S. AMBASSADOR JOSEPH C. GREW REPORTS PRE-ATTACK SITUATION IN TOKYO

One of the first witnesses was Joseph C. Grew, U.S. ambassador to Japan since 1932. After the attack he had been held under house arrest until June 25, 1942, when he was repatriated by the Japanese government. Grew testified it was “obvious that by November 3 the [U.S.] trade embargoes had not served to restrain the Japanese Army from its expansion. They were going right ahead.”¹⁷ In his view, “the risk and danger of war was very great and increasing.”¹⁸ Japan’s totalitarian regime’s propaganda was fostering anti-Americanism. And in Washington, the U.S.-Japanese negotiations were clearly deteriorating. Although Grew

¹⁵Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 1, pp. 1–253.

¹⁶*Ibid.*, pp. 254–316.

¹⁷*Ibid.*, part 2, p. 677.

¹⁸*Ibid.*, p. 680.

never gave up hope, by early December it was apparent that war between Japan and the United States was expected.¹⁹

ONI AND WPD JURISDICTIONAL DISPUTE DISRUPTS CUSTOMARY INTELLIGENCE DISSEMINATION

One goal of the committee in investigating “the events and circumstances leading up to and following the attack” was to determine what had been known by the top officials before the attack in Washington, where secret Japanese messages were regularly being intercepted, deciphered and translated, and how much intelligence derived from these intercepts had been relayed before December 7 to the Pearl Harbor commanders. The situation was compounded by confusion over a jurisdictional dispute between the Office of Naval Intelligence (ONI) and the Navy’s War Plans Division (WPD). When Kimmel took over the command of the Pacific Fleet in February 1941, he had asked CNO Stark to make sure that the responsibility for keeping him “fully informed with pertinent reports on subjects that should be of interest to the Fleet” be clearly determined “so that there will be no misunderstanding.”²⁰ Stark replied on March 22, that the chief of the Office of Naval Intelligence, Captain Alan G. Kirk, was “fully aware of [ONI’s] responsibility in keeping you adequately informed.”²¹

But the policy was changed. Admiral Richard K. Turner, chief of the Navy’s War Plans Division, had fought and won a battle with ONI for the exclusive right to prepare and disseminate to the fleet commanders information about potential enemy plans and operations, including intelligence obtained by intercepting and decoding Japan’s most secret diplomatic messages. As Vice

¹⁹Ibid.

²⁰Ibid., part 16, p. 2229.

²¹Ibid., part 4, p. 1835.

Admiral Theodore S. Wilkinson, who became ONI's director on October 15, 1941, explained to the JCC, ONI had been reduced by then, for all practical purposes, to a fact-gathering agency. It was no longer an analytical organization. The responsibility for analysis had been taken over, theoretically, by the Navy's War Plans Division.²² Stark told the JCC, ONI "had to give the material, all it had, to War Plans. . . . But the final estimate, which went into the war plan . . . rested with War Plans."²³ Wilkinson testified that the official regulations specified that ONI "Evaluate the information collected and disseminate *as advisable* [italics added]." Thus, ONI's "responsibility for dissemination was qualified by the words 'as advisable'."²⁴ He and Turner "clashed very definitely on that issue."²⁵ This jurisdictional dispute left a crack in the traditional channel for disseminating information to the Navy commanders in the field.

MAINTAINING THE SECRECY OF THE JAPANESE INTERCEPTS

Wilkinson testified on his understanding concerning the importance of maintaining the secrecy of MAGIC, the intelligence derived from the Japanese intercepts. He told the JCC that

under orders from Admiral Stark, I was not authorized to send to the field information concerning secret diplomatic conversations . . . because of the general security attached to the code-breaking activities. . . . I was not to put anything in

²²Ibid., pp. 1729, 1834–49.

²³Ibid., part 5, p. 2460.

²⁴Ibid., part 4, p. 1730.

²⁵Ibid., part 5, p. 2460. Congressman Keefe, committee member, summarizing to Stark his interpretation of Wilkinson's testimony.

[my fortnightly summaries], anything derived from what was known as “ultra” or “magic.”²⁶

The situation was further complicated by the fact that several top military officials in Washington believed, or at least they so testified, that Hawaii was intercepting and decoding the Japanese messages themselves and thus had access to the information Washington officials were deriving from MAGIC. General Miles, Military Intelligence (G-2), told Clausen that he believed the Navy in Hawaii was decoding and translating Japanese diplomatic and consular messages, although he later told the JCC that General Short did *not* have decoding facilities.²⁷ And Admiral Turner told the JCC that it was his “belief at that time, and it was Admiral Stark’s belief, that all of these major diplomatic messages, at least in the Pacific, were being decrypted by both Admiral Hart [Manila] and by Admiral Kimmel [Pearl Harbor].” Turner said he “did not know that Admiral Kimmel did not hold the code for those dispatches until I was so informed at the time of the Navy court of inquiry on Pearl Harbor.”²⁸

Although these top Washington officials testified that they believed Hawaii had access to the same information they had in Washington, their actions belied their words. They acted as if it was their responsibility to keep Hawaii advised. On November 27 both Army and Navy sent the Hawaiian commanders special dispatches based on MAGIC intelligence then available in Washington. The radiogram to Short read: “Negotiations with Japan appear to be terminated.”²⁹ The dispatch to the Navy started out: “This dispatch is to be considered a war warning.”³⁰ Army Chief of Staff Marshall said in his affidavit for Clausen that he understood Short was

²⁶Ibid., part 4, pp. 1731–32.

²⁷Ibid., part 2, p. 791.

²⁸Ibid., part 4, p. 1923.

²⁹Ibid., part 14, p. 1328, Army’s Dispatch #472.

³⁰Ibid., p. 1406, Navy’s November 27, 1941, “war warning” Dispatch #272337.

receiving some MAGIC information through Army facilities on Oahu.³¹ But in the very next paragraph he contradicted that understanding when he acknowledged that Short's assistant intelligence officer (G-2), Colonel George W. Bicknell, relied on Washington for information.³² And Marshall's urgent last-minute message on December 7, certainly indicated that he didn't believe his field commanders would have seen the 14-part MAGIC Japanese reply to our November 26 "ultimatum" or Tokyo's message instructing the Japanese ambassadors in Washington to make delivery of that reply at precisely 1:00 P.M., Washington time.

At the time of the attack, General Miles, head of G-2, the Army's military intelligence division, acknowledged under questioning by the JCC that

There were no steps taken to distribute these [intercepted and translated] messages to [General Short in Hawaii]. . . . That followed from the general policy laid down by the Chief of Staff that these messages and the fact of the existence of these messages or our ability to decode them should be confined to the least possible number of persons; no distribution should be made outside of Washington.³³

Miles was generally supportive of the policy not to disseminate the MAGIC intercepts to Hawaii and other U.S. outposts. However, he admitted that "the success of that Japanese attack [had] depended, in very large measure, on their catching the forces unalerted and therefore unprepared to meet that attack."³⁴

Miles said he had not mentioned MAGIC before the APHB in April 1944, when the war was still in progress, because "under no condition would I have . . . intimated in any way the existence

³¹Ibid., part 35, p. 104.

³²Ibid., pp. 104–05. Marshall affidavit for Clausen.

³³Ibid., part 2, p. 791. See also pp. 810, 811–12.

³⁴Ibid., p. 877.

of that secret without specific authority of the Secretary of War or the Chief of Staff.” He did not want to give the impression that he had been “gagged by the Chief of Staff” into trying to cover anything up; he was only acting to protect “this vital military secret that we were all guarding with the greatest of care.”³⁵ But by the time he gave his affidavit to Clausen (August 16, 1945) and before he testified at the JCC hearings, the situation had changed radically; the war with Japan was over and the strictures against mentioning MAGIC did not apply.

Miles pointed out that much of the information available in Washington “did not directly apply to the overseas departments unless and until it became more than information and entered the realms of an estimate of the situation which called for military action on the part of those high commanders, and that was a function of the command, in other words, of the Chief of Staff himself.” Miles realized, however, that the availability of intelligence in Washington which was not accessible in the field placed “a higher degree of responsibility” on Washington to see that the field commanders were adequately prepared, alerted, and instructed.³⁶

Miles said the November 27 message sent over Marshall’s signature had been “designed to alert the Hawaiian Department. That was a command action.”³⁷ Miles thought Short had not recognized the significance of Marshall’s signature.

[T]he mere fact that that message was signed by the Chief of Staff himself had a certain significance. . . . The messages commonly go out on the signature of the Adjutant General. . . . [B]y putting his name to that message, it carried to any military

³⁵Ibid., p. 801.

³⁶Ibid., p. 793.

³⁷Ibid., p. 839.

mind . . . a much greater significance than had it been signed . . .
[by] anybody else.³⁸

In Miles's opinion Short's response to Marshall's warning that he had alerted for sabotage "was a totally inadequate reply to the message it purported to reply to."³⁹ However, Miles thought further warnings to Short, though desirable, would have been "redundant. . . . You do not have to tell a commanding general but once that a danger faces him. You may, however, see fit to give him further information as to the situation he faces."⁴⁰

PEARL HARBOR NOT MENTIONED IN WASHINGTON'S PRE-ATTACK DOCUMENTS

Washington officialdom had known for some time that a break in U.S.-Japanese relations was inevitable. "We were thoroughly prepared," Miles testified, "and had been for some days to receive an unfavorable reply to the message of November 26." He said he had a "very strong" impression that he first knew that the first 13 parts of the Japanese reply to the U.S. so-called "ultimatum, were in and were translated "on the evening of December 6," certainly before he left for home that Saturday. He had called the Army courier [Colonel Bratton], who had "satisfied me that the messages were being delivered or would be delivered early the next morning when the complete message was in." But Miles saw no reason that evening for alerting or waking up Marshall or Hull.⁴¹

JCC members Clark, Murphy, and Gearhart called Miles's attention to the fact that the pre-attack evaluations issued by his

³⁸Ibid., pp. 877-78.

³⁹Ibid., pp. 879-80.

⁴⁰Ibid., pp. 900-01.

⁴¹Ibid., pp. 940-42.

own division had given no hint that an attack might be expected on Pearl Harbor.⁴² Miles responded:

We had known for many years that all three of those outposts [Philippines, Panama, and Hawaii] would probably be subject to an attack in a Japanese war. That is why we had our forces on them and why the Chief of Staff warned them when he considered the time had arrived that hostile Japanese action was possible at any moment.⁴³

Murphy was disturbed by “the inference” in Miles’s testimony that he was “probably the only person in Washington who expected the attack at Pearl Harbor.” Time after time Miles had said “how obvious it was, and how inherent it was in the situation.” Yet Murphy said he had read Miles’s reports

from cover to cover and . . . have not seen it [Pearl Harbor] mentioned once. Apparently people at Hawaii did not think it was so obvious because they were taken by surprise, and apparently the others in Washington did not think it was so obvious because they were taken by surprise.⁴⁴

Gearhart pointed out to Miles,

[T]here is plenty in all of this literature, an abundance, which points out the possibility of attack in the Philippines, in the Kra Peninsula, in Thailand, in Indochina, everywhere except on these two very great fortresses at Singapore and Hawaii. . . . If you have anything to the contrary I would like to have you point it out. . . . Why, even on the 27th, after Mr. Hull had handed his final statement to the Japanese, a letter was written by the Joint Chiefs of Staff in which they point out all of these

⁴²Ibid., pp. 875–76, 902, and 921–22.

⁴³Ibid., pp. 890–91.

⁴⁴Ibid., p. 902.

other places as possible objectives of Jap attack, and Hawaii is not mentioned even then.⁴⁵

Miles admitted that it was not until December 6 or December 7 that events finally centered his attention on “the probable Japanese attack somewhere coincident with the delivery of the Japanese reply at 1:00 that day.”⁴⁶ The first 13 parts had told them only that the Japanese reply was unfavorable. The 14th part and the message instructing the Japanese ambassadors to deliver the reply at 1:00 P.M. were intercepted Sunday morning. “When we got the fourteenth part . . . [and] when we got the 1:00 P.M. message, we saw quite a different picture.”⁴⁷ The “One P.M. Message,” he said, “meant trouble somewhere, against someone, but still not necessarily against the United States. However, we knew something at last, not where or against whom, but when.”⁴⁸ However, “1:00, as we now know, meant about 7:00, I think, in Hawaii. . . . a likely time of attack on the islands. . . . a likely time; not the only time” for an attack.⁴⁹

GENERAL GEROW (ARMY WAR PLANS)
OFFERS TO RELIEVE MARSHALL OF CULPABILITY
FOR ANY FAILURE TO ACT

The JCC had planned to interrogate persons with background information about the intercepts before questioning top-level witnesses, including Marshall. However, President Truman had just appointed Marshall ambassador to China and was anxious for him to leave promptly for his new post. But Lieutenant General Leonard T. Gerow was called ahead of Marshall as, according to

⁴⁵Ibid., pp. 921–22.

⁴⁶Ibid., p. 922.

⁴⁷Ibid., p. 942.

⁴⁸Ibid., part 3, p. 1362.

⁴⁹Ibid., part 2, p. 931.

committee counsel Mitchell, he knew certain things that “would be well to lay into the record.”⁵⁰ Gerow was a much-decorated war hero and he looked the part. Pre-Pearl Harbor he had been the Army’s chief of war plans. During the War he became commander of Army Fifth Corps, which had taken part in the D-Day landings going ashore in France on Omaha Beach. He had fought well for his country. Although not previously implicated in the Pearl Harbor disaster, Gerow was one of the four top Washington officials who had been criticized by the APHB. He was charged with having failed to keep Short adequately informed, send a clear, concise directive on November 27, 1941, recognize Short’s sabotage alert as inadequate, and implement the existing Joint Army-Navy plans.⁵¹

Gerow was asked about Short’s response to the Army dispatch of November 27 (#472). That dispatch had been prepared by Stimson, Stark, and Gerow when Marshall was out of town, but had been sent out over Marshall’s name, giving it the status of a “command action.”⁵² In view of the impending crisis, Gerow testified, it had been drafted primarily with the Philippines in mind, but essentially the same message was also sent to the other Pacific field commanders.⁵³ It read in part:

Negotiations with Japan appear to be terminated. . . . Japanese future action unpredictable but hostile action possible at any moment. If hostilities cannot . . . be avoided the United States desires that Japan commit the first overt act. This policy should not be construed as restricting you to a course of action that might jeopardize your defense.

⁵⁰Ibid., p. 863.

⁵¹Ibid., part 39, p. 264.

⁵²Ibid., part 2, p. 839.

⁵³Ibid., part 3, p. 1021.

The radiogram went on to say that the commander should “undertake such reconnaissance and other measures as [he] deem[ed] necessary.” All field commander addressees were asked to “Report measures taken.” The version sent to Short had an added phrase, cautioning him “not to alarm civil population or disclose intent.”⁵⁴

In response, Short wired that he had ordered a “sabotage alert.”⁵⁵ The details of his three possible alerts were a matter of record in Washington,⁵⁶ so Short’s “sabotage alert” gave notice to the War Department that he had bunched his planes and placed his ammunition where it was relatively inaccessible. He received no response from Washington to indicate whether his “sabotage alert” was, or was not, satisfactory. Stimson, who was responsible for sending the November 27 message over Marshall’s signature, saw Short’s answer, initialed it, and did nothing.⁵⁷ Gerow also saw Short’s reply, initialed it, and did nothing.⁵⁸ As for Marshall, there was no clear evidence that he actually saw Short’s reply; the file copy did not bear Marshall’s initials; Short’s reply had been stapled and circulated underneath a message from MacArthur, which Marshall *did* initial.⁵⁹

Gerow admitted that a follow-up inquiry to clarify Short’s response

might have been desirable. . . . [I]t would probably have developed the fact that the commanding general in Hawaii was not

⁵⁴Ibid., part 14, p. 1328.

⁵⁵Ibid., p. 1330.

⁵⁶Ibid., part 7, p. 2941.

⁵⁷Ibid., part 11, pp. 5426, 5429.

⁵⁸Ibid., part 3, pp. 1027, 1031.

⁵⁹Ibid., pp. 1028–29. See also Exhibit 46, *ibid.*, part 15, pp. 1472–75, photos of messages routed to Marshall.

at that time carrying out the directive in the message signed “Marshall”.⁶⁰

Gerow volunteered to relieve Marshall of culpability:

[I]f there was any responsibility to be attached to the War Department for any failure to send an inquiry to General Short, the responsibility must rest on War Plans Division, and I accept that responsibility as Chief of War Plans Division. . . . It was my responsibility to see that those messages were checked, and if an inquiry was necessary, the War Plans Division should have drafted such an inquiry and presented it to the Chief of Staff for approval.⁶¹

He was then asked about the Japanese “Pilot Message,” which had been available in Washington on the afternoon of December 6. The “Pilot Message” had announced that Japan’s reply to the U.S. note of November 26 was en route. Gerow was also asked about the first 13 parts of the Japanese reply, which Bratton said he delivered to Gerow on December 6.⁶² Gerow said he had “no clear recollection of where I was on the afternoon of the 6th.”⁶³ He thought he was at his office “until 6 or 7 or 8:00” and that he was “at home” in the evening “after the dinner hour.”⁶⁴ In any event, if the War Plans office was closed, it should have been possible to reach him by telephone; Gerow’s number was on record in the War Department. Or he could have been reached through the “duty officer” who “remained at his telephone” and could inform him “of any important messages that might be intended for me. . . . [I]f they had an important message to deliver to me” such as the first 13 parts of the Japanese reply, Gerow believed “Colonel

⁶⁰Ibid., part 3, p. 1031.

⁶¹Ibid., p. 1036.

⁶²Ibid., part 4, p. 1632.

⁶³Ibid., p. 1594.

⁶⁴Ibid., part 4, pp. 1632, 1594.

Bratton, who usually delivered those messages, would have telephoned me at home,” rather than going through the duty officer.

Mitchell pursued the matter. Gerow told the committee that “To the best of my knowledge and belief,” he had not received or learned of the 13-part message on the night of December 6. He did not recall having received the earlier “Pilot Message” either.⁶⁵ And he was “positive” he had never seen “that 14-part message, or any part of it, or the 1:00 P.M. message,” until he reached Marshall’s office around 11:30 on the morning of the 7th.⁶⁶

GENERAL GEORGE C. MARSHALL DOES NOT RECALL IMPORTANT DECEMBER 6–7 EVENTS

Marshall was undoubtedly the most important witness the committee could summon. He had been deeply involved in all the pre-attack developments, with the possible exception of the diplomatic phase. He was the only surviving principal in the pre-Pearl Harbor drama still in good health and able to testify. Roosevelt and Knox were dead. Hull had retired right after FDR’s election for a third term and by the fall of 1944 was in poor health and too weak to face cross-examination by the Republican members of the committee.⁶⁷ As for Stimson, “the accumulated strain of five years in Washington had begun to affect his heart.” He had resigned on his 78th birthday, September 21, 1945.⁶⁸ But Marshall could not plead infirmities. There was no way he could avoid testifying. The members of the committee had many questions. They were anxious to learn what he *could* tell them. And they were anxious to learn what he *would* tell them.

⁶⁵Ibid., p. 1595, also p. 1632.

⁶⁶Ibid., part 3, p. 1042.

⁶⁷Julius W. Pratt, *Cordell Hull* (New York: Cooper Square Publishers, 1964), vol. 2, pp. 765–66.

⁶⁸Henry L. Stimson and McGeorge Bundy, *On Active Service in Peace and War* (New York: Harper & Bros., 1947/1948), pp. 331, 656, 668.

In questioning Marshall, the committee followed its usual procedure. Its counsel led off, the Democratic members following one by one, then the Republican members.

Marshall came before the JCC on December 6. All that first day; he was examined in a friendly manner by Mitchell. Many of the general's answers were evasive. There were things he could not recall, could not remember, could not recollect. When he had appeared before the NCI in September 1944, he had not been able to recall the intercept fixing November 25, 1941, as the deadline for the Japanese ambassadors to reach a favorable conclusion in their negotiations.⁶⁹ However, when Mitchell asked Marshall if he remembered "seeing any of those [messages] in which the Japs instructed their Ambassadors here to get an affirmative agreement first by the 25th of November and later at least by the 29th" Marshall replied—his memory refreshed perhaps by Clarke's inquiry which had been instigated by Marshall—"I remember that very well, sir."⁷⁰

The next day Mitchell asked Marshall if he remembered his "movements on the evening of December 6." Marshall said he could "only account for them by sort of circumstantial evidence." He enumerated a number of places where he was not. After referring to Mrs. Marshall's engagement book, he concluded, "the probability is . . . we were home."⁷¹

Mitchell asked: "You are sure you were not at the White House that evening?" Marshall replied, "No, sir; not at all."⁷² What did that mean? That he wasn't at the White House? Or that he wasn't sure he was *not* at the White House?

⁶⁹Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 33, p. 820.

⁷⁰*Ibid.*, part 3, p. 1091.

⁷¹*Ibid.*, p. 1110.

⁷²*Ibid.*

The general was supposed to have had a duty officer at his office and an orderly at his home who knew where he was at all times. None of his duty officers or orderlies was called to testify.

Mitchell asked Marshall when he first knew about the 14-part Japanese message and the “One P.M. Message,” and “under what circumstances.” He did not answer directly.

I first was aware of this message when I reached . . . the office on the morning of Sunday, December the 7th. On that particular morning, I presumably had my breakfast at about eight, and following the routine that I had carried out on previous Sundays, I went riding at some time thereafter.

However, he said that on further consideration and discussion with others, he had come to the conclusion, “purely by induction and not by definite memory,” that that morning he must have gone out riding later than 8:00, “just what time I do not know; but between 8:00 and the time I went to the War Department I ate my breakfast, I probably looked at the Sunday papers and I went for a ride.” Marshall then discussed the “average length” of his rides, about 50 minutes, “because I rode at a pretty lively gait, at a trot and a canter and at a full run down on the experimental farm where the Pentagon now is and returned to the house, so I would say that the high probability is that the ride was an hour or less, generally or certainly not longer.”⁷³

This entire testimony related to what Marshall “presumably,” “probably,” “generally” did on a Sunday morning, not what he actually did on that specific Sunday morning, December 7, 1941. Marshall continued in the same vein, saying nothing about the Japanese intercepts he had been asked about.

On this particular Sunday morning, Bratton had been trying to locate Marshall since 9 or 9:15 A.M. with the 14th part of Japan’s reply and the “One P.M. Message.” When he called

⁷³*Ibid.*, p. 1108.

Marshall's home, an orderly told him Marshall was out riding. Bratton asked the orderly to locate Marshall and have him contact Bratton "as promptly as possible." According to Bratton, Marshall called back "sometime after 10:00."⁷⁴

Marshall's recollection was that he was either in the shower, or getting in the shower, when he heard that Bratton was trying to reach him with something important. Marshall said Bratton wanted to come out to Fort Myer, but Marshall sent word that he was going into his office and Bratton should meet him there. Marshall then finished his shower, dressed, and left for the War Department. He said his "average time of taking a shower and dressing would be about 10 minutes, possibly less." He had no recollection as to "what time I arrived at the War Department." That would be "a matter of conjecture."⁷⁵

"Anyway," Marshall continued,

shortly thereafter, if not immediately then, I was at the War Department, because it was a very quick drive, and on Sunday there was no traffic. It was a matter of about 7 minutes from my house to the Munitions building.⁷⁶

Using his own estimate (allowing ten minutes for his shower and dressing and seven minutes for the drive), he should have been able to reach his office 20 or 30 minutes after he spoke with Bratton at 10 A.M. But according to Bratton, who had been waiting for Marshall in the secretary's anteroom, Marshall didn't arrive until 11:25 A.M.⁷⁷

When Marshall arrived, Bratton immediately walked in with his papers. Marshall started reading the 14-part Japanese reply, portions of which Marshall read through twice. He told the

⁷⁴Ibid., part 9, pp. 4524–25.

⁷⁵Ibid., part 3, p. 1108.

⁷⁶Ibid., p. 1109.

⁷⁷Ibid., part 9, p. 4517.

committee, “When I reached the end of the document the next sheet was the 1:00 message of December 7.” This was “indicative” to Marshall and to “all the others who came into the room, of some very definite action at 1:00, because that 1:00 was Sunday and was in Washington and involved the Secretary of State.” Taken together, all these factors were “rather unusual.”⁷⁸

Marshall’s account of his response to the messages was similar to those of Bratton and Gerow, both of whom had testified on the basis of memoranda prepared shortly after the attack.⁷⁹ Marshall told of contacting Stark and of dispatching the last-minute warning to the field commanders in the Pacific, giving first priority to the Philippines and Panama. After Bratton had taken Marshall’s dispatch to the message center and returned, Marshall sent him back with Colonel Bundy, the officer in charge of the immediate details of all Pacific affairs, to ask when the messages would be delivered. They came back with estimates of the delivery times in various parts of the world.⁸⁰

The next information Marshall received was “the notification of the actual attack on Pearl Harbor.” He said he could not recall “whether I was at the War Department or at the house.” He said General Deane, acting secretary of the general staff at that time, had told him that he had returned to his home, but his orderly said he was at the War Department.⁸¹

Most astonishing! The Army’s chief of staff, who was directly concerned with the defense of the country and the protection of the fleet when in harbor, who had just fired off an urgent message to the field commanders, who had been concerned about the likely time when the messages would be delivered, didn’t know

⁷⁸Ibid., part 3, p. 1108.

⁷⁹Bratton testimony, APHB and below, pp. 778–85 and 802–04; Gerow testimony, above, pp. 627–31.

⁸⁰Ibid., p. 1109.

⁸¹Ibid.

where he was when he heard the news of the attack. And yet that Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor so shocked the rest of the country that almost everybody remembers vividly precisely where they were when they heard the news.

Marshall said information about the attack “then came in in fuller detail, and telephone communication was established.” He talked on the phone with Short’s chief of staff, Colonel Phillips. General Short “had gone to his command post and therefore was not able to talk to me directly.” Marshall volunteered: “*You could hear the explosions at the time.*”⁸²

JCC COUNSEL ASKS MARSHALL ABOUT HIS COMMAND STRUCTURE

Did you have your staff organized at that time so that if an especially significant or important intercept was made of a Jap message, was there anyone on duty who had authority, if they were unable to reach you, to send a warning message out?

Marshall said he didn’t “think there was a set-up for that special purpose.” The War Department “had an arrangement there whereby the officer on the receiving end . . . knew where the principal people were, where to reach them.” In his own case, Marshall said that during that period and for about a year thereafter, he

always maintained an orderly at the house at the telephone. If I left the house to go to a moving picture, which was about the only place I went, [the orderly] was there and knew where to reach me.⁸³

Mitchell then asked him,

⁸²Ibid., pp. 1109–10. Emphasis added.

⁸³Ibid., p. 1114.

If they had not been able to reach you on the morning of the 7th, or at any time when an important message came in, was there anybody but yourself that had authority to send a warning message to the outlying posts?

“Yes,” Marshall said. “The authority was vested, for instance, in the Deputy Chief of Staff [Major General William Bryden]. Or even the head of War Plans Division [Gerow].”⁸⁴

According to Army regulations No. 10-15, updated to December 7, 1941, however, this was not the precise situation. “The Deputy Chief of Staff” was the *only* officer who had the authority to act for the chief of staff in his absence. Orders could be sent to Short in Pearl Harbor by Roosevelt, Marshall, or Marshall’s deputy. Neither Stimson nor Gerow was in the line of command. That was why they had chosen to send the November 27 “war warning” over Marshall’s name.⁸⁵

Later in answer to a question from Senator Ferguson, Marshall said that Gerow did not “normally” have any right to issue orders to Short on a command basis; in peacetime it “would have required quite an assumption of authority on his part to do that without some confirmation from a senior officer.” However, Marshall said, “The president, the Secretary of War, and myself, and in my absence, the deputy” had authority to order into effect a war plan, Rainbow, or any other orders.⁸⁶

In any event, apparently no arrangement was in place for anyone to act in Marshall’s stead on that fateful morning of December 7, 1941, when he was unavailable. And the orderly, supposedly on duty at his home, failed to reach him promptly.

⁸⁴Ibid.

⁸⁵Ibid., part 14, pp. 1416–21, Exhibit 42.

⁸⁶Ibid., part 3, p. 1115.

MARSHALL INTERROGATED ABOUT DECEMBER 7 EVENTS

Mitchell asked Marshall, "Did you have any talk on the morning of the 7th with Secretary Stimson before the news of the attack came in?" Marshall didn't recall talking with Stimson that morning, couldn't recall seeing him "before lunch," although he knew Stimson "was at the State Department" that morning.⁸⁷ A little later Mitchell asked:

Do you remember whether you had been told or telephoned or informed in any way on the evening of the 6th, late in the evening, that any arrangement had been made for a meeting between Secretary Stimson and Mr. Hull on the next morning?

Marshall had "no such recollection."⁸⁸

Then how did Marshall know Stimson was at the State Department on the morning of December 7? The meeting of Stimson and Knox with Hull at the State Department had been arranged Saturday night *after* the three secretaries were informed of the first 13 parts of the Japanese reply.⁸⁹ Yet Marshall denied that he had been "informed in any way on the evening of the 6th" of the plan for that meeting. And *if* he knew of that meeting, why did he not also know about the 13-part Japanese reply that had sparked it? Marshall testified consistently that he first saw those 13 parts, together with the 14th part, only after he arrived at his office in the War Department at about 11:30 on the morning of December 7.

JCC member Cooper asked Marshall if in the weeks before the attack he had been "kept fully advised as to diplomatic

⁸⁷Ibid., p. 1115.

⁸⁸Ibid.

⁸⁹Ibid., part 33, p. 857.

developments.” Marshall said, “[S]o far as Mr. Hull personally [was] concerned,” he had been. Marshall had “a very distinct recollection” of Hull’s saying “with considerable emphasis in those last days apropos of his discussions with the Japanese envoys, ‘These fellows mean to fight and you will have to watch out’.”⁹⁰

Marshall said he had expected that the first Japanese attack on the United States “would occur in the Philippines.” He thought they would go

directly south towards Singapore, that that would be the main campaign, and the Philippines, of course, would become involved in it. . . [and he] assumed that Guam . . . and . . . Wake would fall almost immediately.⁹¹

[He] felt . . . that if the Japanese became engaged in hostilities directed toward the Malay Peninsula that our situation demanded that we take action to defend our position. That, however, was my opinion, and that would have to be determined by governmental action.⁹²

As the usual time for adjournment on Friday afternoon approached, the fifth of the six Democratic Committee members was just starting his questioning.

Murphy: Had you any warning, General, or any reason to expect on the night of December 6 or on the early morning of December 7 that there was any special urgency requiring you to be at the War Department earlier than the hour you did arrive there on the morning of December 7.

Marshall: I had no such conception or information.⁹³

⁹⁰Ibid., part 3, p. 1148.

⁹¹Ibid., p. 1149.

⁹²Ibid., p. 1338.

⁹³Ibid., p. 1163.

By this time Marshall had been on the witness stand for two full days, and the Republicans had not begun to question him. The committee regularly held Saturday hearings, so it recessed until 10 the next morning.

MARSHALL'S INTERROGATION CONTINUED

When the hearing resumed on Saturday morning the Republicans began questioning Marshall. Determined to find out if he could explain some of the mysteries surrounding the Japanese attack, they refused to yield to Democratic pressure to curtail their interrogation.

Gearhart began. He told Marshall that Gerow had "accepted full responsibility for not having acted on the inadequacy, as he called it," of Short's November 27 report that he had alerted for sabotage. Marshall had not been in the room when Gerow testified but, he said, he "admires very much his attitude." When Gearhart asked Marshall why he had not taken exception to Short's reply, the general could only say "that was my opportunity to intervene and have a further check made and I did not take it. Just why, I do not know."⁹⁴ Short had been "issued a command," Marshall said,

and directed to do something. . . . Once you issue an order, amendments or, you might say, codicils are very dangerous business when it is an operational order. . . . [I]f possible . . . you must avoid confusing the commander with a mass of data.⁹⁵

Gearhart read to Marshall the several so-called "Bomb Plot" messages concerning the location of ships in Pearl Harbor, which had been received, decoded, and translated in Washington prior to the attack. Wasn't it

⁹⁴Ibid., pp. 1172-73.

⁹⁵Ibid., pp. 1176-77.

quite apparent from the reading of those messages that were received, decoded, and placed on your desk, read or not read, that many messages directing the attention of our military and naval authorities to Hawaii had been received?

Marshall had no recollection of having read any of those messages until preparing for the JCC hearings.⁹⁶

Marshall also defended himself against the APHB's several charges:

1. *In response to the charge* that he had failed "To keep the Commanding General of the Hawaiian Department fully advised," Marshall insisted he had given Short the information he needed, as a responsible commander, to be prepared for the possibility or probability of war. The mass of data that poured into Washington, he said, would "merely impose an additional burden." It was "a matter of judgment" how much additional information should have gone to him. Marshall thought "only the December 7 message of 1:00 p.m. applied," although he admitted "offhand that the messages you just read [the ships-in-harbor bomb plot messages] . . . would have been helpful to General Short, but particularly more so to Admiral Kimmel."⁹⁷

2. *In response to the charge* that he should have gotten in touch with Short on the evening of December 6, when "the critical information indicating an almost immediate break with Japan" had come in, Marshall testified that he did not believe it had "any specific bearing one way or the other on General Short's situation and responsibility."⁹⁸ Moreover, he reiterated that he "knew nothing of the [13-part] message whatsoever" until his arrival in the War Department on the morning of December 7. He presumed "it was not thought necessary to bring that to my immediate

⁹⁶Ibid., p. 1181.

⁹⁷Ibid.

⁹⁸Ibid., p. 1182.

attention” because the first to the thirteenth part “did not include the critical statements.”⁹⁹

3. *In response to the charge* that he had failed to investigate and determine Short’s “state of readiness . . . between November 27 and December 7,” he denied that they had in Washington any “intimation that that [Hawaiian] command was not ready.” As a matter of fact, he “had no reason to believe that that command was anything other than highly efficient and alert.”¹⁰⁰

At midmorning Saturday, when Gearhart finished his questioning, Ferguson took over. As chief of the (privately paid) minority staff, I was at his elbow as usual with a collection of documents and a host of important questions to be asked.¹⁰¹ Ferguson persisted in his questioning until Marshall had to admit it was his responsibility, not Gerow’s, to see that Short was adequately alerted.

Ferguson’s pointed questioning lasted the rest of the day. Marshall finally had to admit that he was the only Army officer with authority over Short;¹⁰² that Gerow had no authority under Army regulations for sending an alert to Short;¹⁰³ that no responsible Army officer was on duty Saturday evening, December 6, or Sunday morning, December 7, who could take action before Marshall’s belated arrival at his office that morning;¹⁰⁴ that the

⁹⁹Ibid., pp. 1320–21.

¹⁰⁰Ibid., pp. 1182–83.

¹⁰¹Congress had provided no funds for a research staff to assist the Committee’s minority members. Therefore, journalist John T. Flynn, who had been interested for some time in establishing the responsibility for the Pearl Harbor disaster, had raised funds to pay for me and a staff of seven to assist the Republicans. Flynn had written and published privately two pamphlets which had created quite a sensation: “The Truth About Pearl Harbor” (first published in the *Chicago Tribune*, October 22, 1944) and “The Final Secret of Pearl Harbor” (September 1945).

¹⁰²Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 3, pp. 1183, 1188.

¹⁰³Ibid., pp. 1188, 1202.

¹⁰⁴Ibid., pp. 1114, 1184–85.

shortage of manpower in deciphering Japanese codes was not due to lack of congressional appropriations;¹⁰⁵ that we had been trying to keep secret the fact that Great Britain was informed of what we were reading in the Japanese codes before the attack;¹⁰⁶ that he, Marshall, was not aware that the sending of diplomatic intelligence to Kimmel was discontinued sometime in August 1941;¹⁰⁷ that Marshall denied knowing that the Japanese had learned we were reading their codes;¹⁰⁸ that portions of the Roberts report were withdrawn before it was made public;¹⁰⁹ that the United States initiated the Anglo-Dutch-American Agreement;¹¹⁰ that he, Stimson, and Knox had approved the agreement;¹¹¹ that it went into general effect before the attack “because it involved the policy of the main fight in the Atlantic and the defensive principle in the Pacific”;¹¹² and that prior to December 1941 officers of the United States were furnished to China for combat duty against Japan.¹¹³

Marshall also admitted that he thought

the Japanese were engaged in a campaign southward from the China Sea. . . . We had in mind the possibility of an effort on the Panama Canal. We had in mind the possibility of an effort to strike a blow at our air plants in Seattle, at our air plants in San Diego, and we had in mind the possibility of a blow in the Central Pacific, in the Hawaiian district. We thought the

¹⁰⁵*Ibid.*, pp. 1196–97.

¹⁰⁶*Ibid.*, p. 1198.

¹⁰⁷*Ibid.*, p. 1199.

¹⁰⁸*Ibid.*, p. 1203.

¹⁰⁹*Ibid.*, p. 1206.

¹¹⁰*Ibid.*, p. 1218.

¹¹¹*Ibid.*

¹¹²*Ibid.*, p. 1221.

¹¹³*Ibid.*, pp. 1229–30.

latter was the most improbable. . . . We thought it [Hawaii] was impregnable against a Japanese landing expedition.¹¹⁴

Although he had known from Admiral Richardson that the fleet would have to be built up and properly supplied before going out to sea, he didn't think anyone had ever told him, prior to December 7, that "the United States Fleet in the Pacific Ocean, was not able to take care of itself in the event of an attack."¹¹⁵

Ferguson continued to question Marshall when the committee reassembled on Monday; he questioned him all that day and Tuesday morning also. He asked Marshall about the "Pilot Message," which had been received in Washington on December 6, and how he accounted for its not being delivered to him that day. Marshall didn't answer directly. He digressed about the first 13 parts and admitted he had been in Washington that entire day. He said "there was someone on duty in the office of the Chief of Staff, there was someone on duty in the office of the War Plans Division, there was someone on duty in the office of G-2," who presumably could have received this particular message and acted. Finally, however, as Ferguson pressed him, he stated: "The point is I did not receive the [Pilot] message" that day.¹¹⁶

When the afternoon session opened, the chairman announced that Marshall had been called to the White House for a conference with President Truman about his mission to China. Marshall left the hearing room at 3:00.

¹¹⁴*Ibid.*, pp. 1170–71.

¹¹⁵*Ibid.*, p. 1163.

¹¹⁶*Ibid.*, pp. 1321–22.

HEARINGS INTERRUPTED—
A STRANGER AT THE COMMITTEE TABLE?

General Miles returned briefly to the witness stand, and Senator Ferguson, a Republican, continued the questioning. Senator Lucas, a Democrat, interrupted:

A moment ago, when I merely suggested to Senator Ferguson that he let General Miles answer the question, the gentleman on Senator Ferguson's right got a hearty chuckle out of it. I would like to know just who the gentleman is and what right he has to sit alongside of the committee table and chuckle at a member of the United States Senate. . . . I do not propose to sit around this table and permit some individual that I do not know anything about, who is constantly in this case and constantly reminding Senators of the type and kind of questions they should ask, to give a hearty chuckle to something I might suggest in connection with this hearing.¹¹⁷

Ferguson spoke up. "His name is Percy Greaves. He is with Senator Brewster and has charge of Senator Brewster's files in this case." Senator Brewster was out of town on this particular day attending his father's funeral. Ferguson had shifted into Brewster's seat and I had moved with my papers and documents from my usual place behind the committee table to a seat next to Ferguson at the committee table.

Senator Lucas had known Marshall well when he had been Judge Advocate of the Illinois National Guard in the 1930s and Marshall had been Special Instructor of the National Guard. The Democrat committee members had been disturbed for some time by the sharp and persistent interrogation of administration witnesses and Lucas was especially upset by the pointed questioning of Marshall.

¹¹⁷Ibid., p. 1372.

Senator Lucas: Wasn't he [Greaves] "the Republican National Committee research man in the campaign of 1944"?

Mr. Greaves: I was with the Republican National Committee up until the end of last year [1944].

Senator Lucas: This is a nonpartisan hearing.

Chairman Barkley: In view of that information, would it be out of place to inquire who has compensated Mr. Greaves for the services he has rendered to Senator Brewster or Senator Ferguson?

Ferguson: He is not rendering any services for me.

Lucas: Not much!

Barkley: He has been sitting by the Senator from Michigan [Ferguson] during these whole hearings and apparently prompting the Senator in the interrogatories he has addressed to the witnesses. Maybe that is not a service to the Senator from Michigan and the Senator will have to be the judge of that, but it has been a matter of common observation that that has transpired ever since we began the hearing.

Barkley said he did not object personally; he didn't care "how many assistants any member of this committee may have, or desire, or need." But he thought it was

not out of place that the committee know who it is who is compensating anybody who is assisting any Senator. . . [and that] the public would be interested in knowing whether there is any partisan compensation being paid to anybody who is employed by a member of this committee.

Ferguson said that Barkley would have to talk with Brewster about that.¹¹⁸

¹¹⁸Ibid., p. 1373 (December 11).

At the close of the session, reporters crowded around. The Washington *Times-Herald's* story, headlined "Spy' Identified at Pearl Harbor Probe," had a four-column photo of me seated at the committee table next to Ferguson with Senators Lucas and George in the background. New York's *PM* referred to me as "The mysterious 'sixth Senator,'" whose

Incognito is Punctured When He Chuckles Out of Turn.

. . . There were some lifted eyebrows at his presence at the Committee table, but his general busy-ness and the impressive aspect of the documents he lugged to and from the sessions gave him status as some sort of functionary.

The next day *PM* described a dispute between Ferguson and Barkley: "It Seems Idea Was To Get GOP's Greaves Out of the Headlines."

When Brewster returned to Capitol Hill a few days later, he told the committee that my position was "not a matter about which there need be any mystery;" he had announced my appointment at a press conference in his office some weeks ago. My duties consisted of reading and analyzing the voluminous documents, files, and exhibits presented to the committee, and searching the record for leads to persons who might be called as witnesses. Each evening I studied the background of scheduled witnesses and the materials pertinent to the next day's hearings. Then each morning before the hearings started, I briefed the minority members, suggesting possible lines of inquiry.

Brewster said he was "sorry that the committee hadn't found it practicable to allow the minority some assistance," so he had "secured Mr. Greaves." I was Brewster's assistant and was being paid by him. Brewster wanted to make it clear that I had "not had for many months any connection whatsoever with the Republican National Committee." He considered me "a very competent man. . . [He] is my assistant. . . I hope he may continue." Neither he

nor I wanted “to do anything which would in any way impair the proper conduct of this very important investigation.”¹¹⁹

In a memorandum to Brewster, I apologized to the committee members. I stated that I had “great respect for Members of both Houses of Congress” and had not intended “to insult or reflect on any Members of the United States Senate by thought, word or action.” I thought Lucas had “misconstrued an unconscious and . . . silent smile that went unnoticed by anyone else.” I also said I was “a registered Republican” but received

no compensation from Republican Party sources, and had not for many months before entering Brewster’s service. I assured Brewster that my activities for him had not been of a partisan or a political nature.¹²⁰

The incident, a one-day media sensation, disrupted the hearings only slightly. It was soon forgotten and I resumed my seat behind, not at, the committee table. The investigation continued.

BARKLEY RELEASES TOP SECRET APHB REPORT

On the morning of December 12 Washington was greeted by a story in the *Washington Times-Herald* based on the TOP SECRET Army Pearl Harbor Board Report. Barkley had released it to reporters the evening before, and they had pounced on its revelations. The *Times-Herald* story read:

Heretofore “top secret” army documents on the Pearl Harbor disaster revealed . . . that army and navy witnesses testified that Japanese war plans were known four days before the Hawaiian attack, but that the witnesses later changed their testimony.

¹¹⁹Ibid., part 4, pp. 1719–20 (December 17).

¹²⁰Ibid., p. 1720.

A cartoon by C.D. Batchelor published in the same issue portrayed Japanese Prime Minister Tojo in the garb of a town-crier marching through the streets of Washington with a sandwich board reading, "We are going to attack early in December. Please don't tell Kimmel and Short," signed "TOJO." Below the cartoon the words: "They didn't."

The TOP SECRET documents that Barkley gave the press introduced to the public still more evidence of warnings received in Washington in advance of the Japanese attack—the deadlines the Japanese had fixed for serious negotiations with the United States to end, a December 3 intercept reporting that the Japanese were destroying their codes and code machines, and the U.S. Navy's interception on December 4 of the Japanese "Winds Execute" indicating "War with England, war with America, peace with Russia."¹²¹

MARSHALL IS ASKED ABOUT "WINDS CODE" MENTIONED IN APHB REPORT

Marshall returned to the hearings after meeting with Truman. His questioning continued with Representative Keefe, a tall man with broad shoulders, a lawyer with a deep voice when he wanted to use it. He interrogated Marshall vigorously, introducing into the record a great deal of information previously missed. He did not let the general evade responsibility for the failure to respond to Short's inadequate sabotage alert, or for his unexplained unavailability during the evening of December 6 and the early morning hours of December 7.¹²²

When Marshall took the witness seat on Thursday, December 13, Senator Lucas asked about the "Winds Code," which had been mentioned in the APHB documents just released. Had

¹²¹Ibid., pp. 1443–97.

¹²²Ibid., pp. 1421–22, 1429–30.

Marshall ever seen “any message . . . implementing this winds code message?” Marshall replied: “Not to my knowledge.”¹²³

Finally, at noon, after each member had another chance to question him, the committee finished its interrogation of Marshall, released him, and he was free to fly to Chungking.¹²⁴

GENERAL MILES RECALLS THE “PILOT MESSAGE;” GENERAL MARSHALL DOES NOT

After Marshall had completed his testimony, Miles took the stand once more. Ferguson again asked him about the “Pilot Message,” Japan’s announcement that her response to the U.S. “ultimatum” was en route. This time Miles replied that “to the best of my knowledge and belief it was in the Saturday afternoon locked pouch among several other messages, which you will find were translated on that day, and that it did go to General Marshall. He does not remember seeing it.”¹²⁵ That was as far as Miles would go toward contradicting Marshall.

PEARL HARBOR HEARINGS, SCHEDULED TO LAST FOUR WEEKS, TO BE EXTENDED WITH NEW COUNSEL AND STAFF

The Congressional Committee had begun its hearings November 15. General Counsel Mitchell and his chief assistant, Gesell, had expected to do most of the selection and questioning of witnesses, with the committee members observing and asking only occasional questions. However, public interest in the investigation was intense, and the members discovered many points to probe. The Republican members especially, Mitchell said, had

¹²³Ibid., p. 1507.

¹²⁴Ibid., p. 1541.

¹²⁵Ibid., p. 1555.

engaged in “extensive examination . . . far beyond what the legal staff anticipated.”¹²⁶

Mitchell reminded the committee on December 14 that it

has been sitting regularly for a month, including all Saturdays but one. During that period only 8 witnesses have been completely examined . . . there remain at least 60 witnesses to be examined. Many of these witnesses are quite as crucial as those who have testified. At the rate of progress during the past month, it seems certain that several more months of hearings will be required. . . .

The joint resolution of the Congress under which the committee is acting requires a final report of the committee to be made not later than January 3, 1946. . . . Since the start of the hearing it has become increasingly apparent that some members of the committee have a different view than that entertained by counsel, either as to the scope of the inquiry or as to what is pertinent evidence.

As a result, the hearings had been prolonged. Therefore, it was “necessary” for Mitchell “to ask the committee to arrange for other counsel to carry on.”¹²⁷

Congress granted the committee an extension. While the committee searched for replacements for Mitchell and his staff, the hearings continued with testimony from several more top military officials.

¹²⁶*Ibid.*, part 4, p. 1586.

¹²⁷*Ibid.*, pp. 1585–86.

GENERAL GEROW (ARMY WAR PLANS)
DISCUSSES SHORT'S SABOTAGE ALERT AND
DECEMBER 6–7 EVENTS

General Gerow maintained his November 27 dispatch had given Short sufficient warning and that Short's reply—"Report department alerted to prevent sabotage. Liaison with Navy"—could have been taken "to mean that he was alerted to prevent sabotage and . . . also prepared to conduct reconnaissance and other defensive missions."¹²⁸ It could even have been "interpreted as meaning that the Commanding General, Hawaiian Department, had prepared for an attack of the kind that was actually made."¹²⁹ Hence no follow-up had been considered.

Senator Ferguson, a relentless examiner, quoted from the *Staff Officers' Field Manual*:

The responsibilities of the commander and his staff do not end with the issue of the necessary orders. They must insure receipt of the orders by the proper commanders, make certain they are understood, and enforce their effective execution.¹³⁰

He asked Gerow if Short, after having reported the measures taken and "[n]ot having heard anything for the number of days between the 28th and the 7th," wouldn't have had "a right to rely upon that fact, that [he] had understood his order, and that he had properly interpreted the order of the 27th?" Gerow replied: "I think that is correct."¹³¹

¹²⁸Ibid., part 4, p. 1638.

¹²⁹Ibid., p. 1640.

¹³⁰War Department. *Staff Officers' Field Manual: The Staff and Combat Orders*. FM 101-5. August 19, 1940, prepared under the direction of the Chief of Staff, G.C. Marshall, p. 39, paragraph 63, "Supervision of Execution."

¹³¹Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 4, p. 1647.

Gerow volunteered a description of his responsibility as chief of War Plans. It had been

to prepare [action, not information] messages and submit them to the Chief of Staff and the Secretary of War for their approval. In any emergency, if the Chief of Staff was not there, I would assume the responsibility for sending them and accept the consequences if I made a mistake.¹³²

Ferguson also questioned Gerow about crucial December 1941 messages. Gerow reaffirmed his statements to Lieutenant Colonel Clausen—he recalled neither Bratton’s recommendation that additional warnings be sent the overseas commanders because Japanese diplomats had been told to destroy their codes and code machines,¹³³ nor Sadtler’s telling him on December 5 that a “Winds Code Execute had been received.”¹³⁴ And he denied receiving the “Pilot Message” and the first 13 parts of Japan’s reply on December 6; he didn’t see them until December 7 “at 11:30 in the Chief of Staff’s office.”¹³⁵

ADMIRAL TURNER (NAVY WAR PLANS):
U.S. DEFENSE ENCOMPASSES DEFENSE OF U.K.
AGAINST JAPAN AND GERMANY

Admiral Turner, the 1941 chief of the Navy’s war plans section, first came before the JCC on December 19. He was flamboyant, something of a braggadocio, with a reputation for liking more liquor than was good for him. He had boasted before the Navy Court of Inquiry that he “had expressed the opinion previously” that the July 1941 freezing of Japanese assets in the United

¹³²*Ibid.*, p. 1653.

¹³³*Ibid.*, pp. 1627–30.

¹³⁴*Ibid.*, p. 1631.

¹³⁵*Ibid.*, pp. 1634–36

States “would very definitely bring on war with Japan.”¹³⁶ He had “expected they [the Japanese] would make some sort of an attack on Hawaii.”¹³⁷ He told the JCC he had considered a surprise attack on Pearl Harbor not simply a “possibility” but “probable.”¹³⁸ The attack, he said, had come as no surprise to him.

When stationed in Japan in 1939, Turner testified, he knew the Japanese naval attaché. Both men had come to Washington at about the same time. After Japanese Ambassador Nomura arrived in Washington in February 1941, the naval attaché arranged for Turner to meet Nomura about March first. Turner wrote a memorandum to CNO Stark about that meeting, saying he thought he should continue the talks.¹³⁹ They met several more times.

On July 21, 1941, Turner “told the Ambassador [Nomura] that I believed that Congress would declare war if they [the Japanese] attacked either the Dutch or the British in Malaya.”¹⁴⁰ According to Turner’s memorandum of that meeting, Turner had pointed out to Nomura that

it is decidedly against the military interests of the United States to permit the United Kingdom to be overcome by Germany. For this reason any action which the United States could take against Germany is necessarily one of self defense and would never be considered as aggression. Furthermore, anything that affects the future security of the United Kingdom in any part of the world, also is of interest to the United States from the defensive viewpoint.¹⁴¹

¹³⁶Ibid., part 32, p. 604.

¹³⁷Ibid., part 33, p. 878.

¹³⁸Ibid., part 4, p. 1940.

¹³⁹Ibid., p. 2041.

¹⁴⁰Ibid., p. 2042.

¹⁴¹Department of State, *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States: Japan, 1931–1941* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1943), vol. 2, p. 519.

Turner was unequivocal: Any U.S. action against Germany would be “self defense” and would never be considered “aggression”! “[T]he future security” of the United States and that of the United Kingdom were inextricably allied “from the defensive viewpoint”! Roosevelt, Hull, and Stark were all sent copies of Turner’s memorandum of that meeting. Turner told the JCC he received no indication from any of them that they disagreed or disapproved of what he had written.¹⁴²

When asked about the December 6 Japanese intercepts, Turner recalled seeing the “Pilot Message” and the first 13 parts of the Japanese reply “some time just preceding the 7th, some night, and I now believe it to have been the night of December 6, about 11:30 P.M.” He said an officer came to his house; he had been in bed but “went down and read a long dispatch in several parts” which he believed was “the dispatch in question.” When asked to whom the officer had shown these papers, the officer replied, “Admiral Wilkinson, Admiral Ingersoll, and Secretary Knox.” Thus assured that the responsible Navy officials had been advised, Turner “did nothing more about it.” He did not recall seeing the 14th part “until after the attack.”¹⁴³

At about 10:30 on Sunday morning, December 7, Stark phoned Turner at his home, asking him to come to the office. Once there, Stark asked him to draft a reply to Hart’s inquiry concerning Creighton’s report that the United States had promised armed support to the British and Dutch in the far east.¹⁴⁴ Turner had been working on that when Stark summoned him, at about 12 or 12:15, and showed him the “One P.M. Message.” Stark told

¹⁴²Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 4, p. 2041.

¹⁴³*Ibid.*, pp. 1970–71.

¹⁴⁴*Ibid.*, p. 1971, Stark testimony. See also *ibid.*, pp. 1935–16, Turner testimony concerning reply prepared December 7 for Hart, and part 10, pp. 5082–83, Creighton testimony before the Joint Committee.

Turner that Marshall had notified the army field commanders of that message, telling them to inform the naval authorities.¹⁴⁵

ADMIRAL STARK ON JOINT U.S.-BRITISH WAR PLAN AND MORNING OF DECEMBER 7

Admiral Harold R. Stark, chief of naval operations at the time of the attack, was second in line of command to the president in protecting the United States and its Navy. Stark had become CNO on August 1, 1939, just one month before Hitler's forces marched into Poland, launching what became World War II. Stark was known to his associates as "Betty," his nickname from Annapolis days.¹⁴⁶ He was genial, polite, soft-spoken, not blunt or brusque like Admiral Richardson, who had stood up boldly to FDR. But Stark was no milquetoast either. On occasion he would tell FDR frankly what he thought, as he had, for instance, when opposing the destroyer deal.

Stark appeared before the JCC on December 31, 1945. He opened his testimony by reading a statement containing substantial quotations from reports and letters to his field commanders during his term of office.¹⁴⁷ When he assumed office, Stark realized U.S. naval forces were weak, so he had immediately set about trying to obtain more ships, planes, weapons, and men. Navy budget requests were first made to the Bureau of the Budget, which makes recommendations from which the president's budget is prepared and submitted to Congress.¹⁴⁸ Stark had appeared before congressional committees to request authorization and funds, pointing out the increasing demands for men and materiel for the

¹⁴⁵Ibid., part 4, pp. 1971–72.

¹⁴⁶Ibid., part 5, p. 2172.

¹⁴⁷Ibid., pp. 2097–35.

¹⁴⁸Ibid., p. 2458.

Atlantic theater.¹⁴⁹ He had found Congress cooperative: “[O]ver the fiscal years 1934 to 1941, inclusive, those figures show that the Congress exceeded the Presidential Budget estimate . . . in the matter of appropriations.”¹⁵⁰ Stark also told of his struggle with the president in seeking approval for expanding the naval force. He had pleaded with FDR on behalf of the Pacific Fleet; it “should at least at first remain strong until we see what Japan is going to do.”¹⁵¹

Stark testified that as CNO he had developed war plans—Rainbow No. 3 “for governing naval operations in case of war with Japan, Germany, and Italy,”¹⁵² and then Rainbow No. 5, which he had helped to develop with the Army. Rainbow No. 5 was a joint basic war plan based on understandings with the British and Canadians in ABC-1—January 29–March 27, 1941.¹⁵³

Stark said his duties included “keep[ing] the fleet commanders in Atlantic, Pacific, and Asiatic waters informed of significant developments in political and military matters of concern to them.”¹⁵⁴ On April 3, 1941, Stark wrote Kimmel about the joint U.S.-British war plan that had been drawn up and on which Basic War Plan Rainbow No. 5 had been based. Both he and Marshall had approved this war plan. Stark had discussed it at length with Roosevelt, had read to him his April 3 letter to Kimmel setting forth the plan’s provisions, and had “received his [FDR’s] general assent,” and “at an appropriate time, [the plan] is expected to receive the [official] approval of the president.”¹⁵⁵ According to Rainbow No. 5, WPL-46, the U.S. Pacific Fleet was to

¹⁴⁹Ibid., pp. 2100–01.

¹⁵⁰Ibid., p. 2459.

¹⁵¹Ibid., p. 2112.

¹⁵²Ibid., p. 2102.

¹⁵³Ibid.

¹⁵⁴Ibid., pp. 2109, 2175–77.

¹⁵⁵Ibid., part 33, pp. 1357–58.

support the forces of the Associated Powers in the Far East by diverting enemy strength away from the Malay Barrier through the denial and capture of positions in the Marshalls, and through raids on enemy sea communications and positions.¹⁵⁶

On April 4 Stark reaffirmed to Kimmel FDR's approval of the U.S.-Great Britain agreement for joint military action.¹⁵⁷

Stark's prepared statement to the committee read in part: "Based on the understandings arrived at in ABC-1, the Army and Navy developed a Joint Basic War Plan, known as Rainbow No. 5, which was approved by the Secretaries of War and the Navy." Stark continued: "You will note that I have crossed out the words 'and by the president.' That is the only change made in this statement."¹⁵⁸

When Senator Ferguson asked why he had deleted those four words, Stark explained that he

had no documentary proof of it. I do know the president, except officially, approved of it,¹⁵⁹ although it shows he was not willing to do it officially until we got into the war. Nevertheless I sent that plan out on April 3. . . . I told Kimmel and told Tommy—Admiral Hart—that I had read to the president my official letter of April 3 and that the president had approved it and knew I was sending it out. Therefore, I think it is safe to say that the president certainly approved of it.¹⁶⁰

In other words, FDR had approved an agreement, well before the war started, to help the British and Dutch militarily in south-east Asia in the event of Japanese aggression, *even if the Japanese had not actually attacked the United States itself*.

¹⁵⁶Ibid., part 18, p. 2889, Exhibit 129.

¹⁵⁷Ibid., part 16, pp. 2160–61.

¹⁵⁸Ibid., part 5, p. 2102.

¹⁵⁹Ibid., part 18, pp. 2875–941, Exhibit 129.

¹⁶⁰Ibid., part 5, p. 2391.

Quoting Kimmel's June 30, 1941, report, Stark said he realized the defense forces at Pearl Harbor were "[i]nadequate . . . to provide for the safety of the Fleet in harbor."¹⁶¹ They had been further weakened in mid-1941, as had been contemplated in the Navy Basic War Plan, WPL-46, when some of the fleet's ships were transferred to the Atlantic to be used in taking the Azores. Although that plan was never carried out, the ships remained in the Atlantic and were not returned to Hawaii.¹⁶² Then just before the attack, the strength of the fleet was again reduced when 50 pursuit planes were transferred, 25 each, to Wake and Midway.¹⁶³ On November 27, the day after Hull presented the United States's note to the Japanese ambassadors, the Navy had sent the three fleet commanders—Hart, Kimmel, and King—a "war warning." Japan was "expected within the next few days" to launch "an amphibious expedition against either the Philippines, Thai or Kra peninsula or possibly Borneo."¹⁶⁴ Stark testified that he "had worked for hours" on this message, "particularly the war warning, which was all out." He "thought it would convey what I intended it should convey. I thought it was very plain and it flew all the danger signals."¹⁶⁵ Stark had cleared the message personally with the secretary of the Navy and he had "either told the president beforehand or immediately after." Stark did "know that within 24 hours, if not before . . . it had his full approval and that he gave us an O.K."¹⁶⁶

Also on November 27 the Army sent warnings to MacArthur in the Philippines and Short.¹⁶⁷ According to Stark, "[T]he outstanding things in the Army message . . . was that war might come at any moment." The message "directed Short

¹⁶¹Ibid., part 5, p. 2107.

¹⁶²Ibid. See also part 6, p. 2505, Kimmel statement to the Joint Committee.

¹⁶³Ibid., part 5, pp. 2154–71.

¹⁶⁴Ibid., part 14, p. 1406, CNO Dispatch #272337.

¹⁶⁵Ibid., part 5, p. 2447.

¹⁶⁶Ibid., p. 2151.

¹⁶⁷Ibid., part 14, pp. 1328–29.

to make a reconnaissance and I had directed Kimmel to make a defensive deployment.” Stark felt “The two [warnings] hooked up together.”¹⁶⁸

While questioning Stark, Representative Keefe said he had heard him say “repeatedly” that he

did not expect an attack at Pearl Harbor; you were surprised, the president was surprised, General Marshall was surprised, you were all surprised . . . and yet you expected Kimmel with less information than you had of the situation, even conceding this order which was given on the war warning . . . to be prepared against an attack which none of you thought would take place.

Keefe found it “difficult . . . to reconcile those two positions.”¹⁶⁹

Stark admitted he had not expected an attack on Pearl Harbor, although “we all recognized it to be a possibility.”¹⁷⁰ He “had sent to Kimmel for action a war warning signal containing a directive and containing what information we had.” It had directed Kimmel to make “a defensive deployment.” Stark had thought that with such a warning the fleet would be put “on a war footing out there so far as any surprise was concerned.”¹⁷¹

Stark’s responsibility included keeping the fleet commanders informed and assuring the safety of the Navy. Yet under questioning Stark admitted to having no recollection of having seen the Japanese Pearl Harbor bomb plot or “ships-in-harbor” messages.¹⁷² And he denied having heard that a “Winds Execute” was received before the attack.¹⁷³ Moreover, he said he had not known until the

¹⁶⁸Ibid., part 5, p. 2447.

¹⁶⁹Ibid., pp. 2447–48.

¹⁷⁰Ibid., p. 2448.

¹⁷¹Ibid., p. 2445.

¹⁷²Ibid., pp. 2173–74, 2396–400.

¹⁷³Ibid., p. 2182.

morning of December 7 about the “Pilot Message,” which had been received in Washington the afternoon of December 6. And Stark said he had not learned until the morning of December 7 of the first 13 parts of the 14-part Japanese reply, which had been intercepted and decoded the previous afternoon and evening.¹⁷⁴ He did not remember when he had received the complete 14-part reply. He maintained only that he first saw it “after I got in the office” on the morning of December 7, just what time he could not recall.¹⁷⁵

Stark said he believed he was at home the evening of the 6th; if he was out, a servant, if not a duty officer, was on hand to take messages. He did not think anyone had called him.¹⁷⁶ He also maintained that he had gone as usual to his office that Sunday morning:

I usually got down to the office Sunday mornings about 10:30 and I just assumed that I had gotten there somewhere around 10:30 or 11:00. I was lazy on Sunday mornings unless there was some special reason for getting up early. I usually took a walk about the grounds and greenhouses at the Chief of Naval Operations’ quarters and didn’t hurry about getting down and my usual time, as I recall, was about 10:30 or 11. What time it was on this particular Sunday morning I couldn’t go beyond that.¹⁷⁷

This testimony contradicted other witnesses, and Stark knew it. Wilkinson was one who testified that Stark was in his office considerably earlier than 10:30—about 9:15, he said—when he arrived with part 14 of the Japanese reply. After delivering that

¹⁷⁴*Ibid.*, pp. 2183, 2187.

¹⁷⁵*Ibid.*, p. 2187.

¹⁷⁶*Ibid.*, pp. 2187, 2291, 2335.

¹⁷⁷*Ibid.*, pp. 2183, 2335.

message, Wilkinson said, he left, only to return at 10:30 or 10:40 with the “One P.M. Message.”¹⁷⁸

Stark did not remember the delivery of the “One P.M. Message” and had “no recollection” as to when he received it.

My remembrance, as I said, was 10:40. When you say “at least 10:30,” I think you will find testimony to that effect by a witness, and if he states that, and I think he probably has good supporting data, I accept it, that it was delivered to my office and then after that was given, by whomever he gave it, to me.¹⁷⁹

Captain Arthur H. McCollum also said Stark must have arrived in his office considerably earlier than usual that Sunday morning. McCollum said he and Wilkinson had gone together to Stark’s office when they learned that he “had arrived in the Navy Department,” probably about 9 or 9:15. Stark was alone when McCollum and Wilkinson entered but, according to McCollum, various other officers soon arrived—Ingersoll, Brainard, Noyes, Turner, and possibly Schuirmann. McCollum said, “There was considerable going in and out at that time.”¹⁸⁰ JCC Chief Assistant Counsel Gesell commented that one witness had said “there were 15 officers in there.”¹⁸¹ Stark’s office was apparently a busy place that Sunday morning.

Stark’s acknowledged recollection of that Sunday morning began only with his talk at 11:30 A.M. with Marshall about the “One P.M. Message” and the decision to send a last-minute message to the field commanders. However, Stark was “certain nobody mentioned Honolulu with reference to a daylight attack.”

¹⁷⁸Ibid., part 4, pp. 1766–68.

¹⁷⁹Ibid., part 5, pp. 2184–85.

¹⁸⁰Ibid., part 36, p. 26.

¹⁸¹Ibid., part 5, p. 2185.

He was “positive of that.”¹⁸² He was questioned about the “One p.m. Message” by JCC Counsel Mitchell.

Mitchell: Well, this was what we lawyers call a last clear chance. These people were not ready at Pearl Harbor; the Jap Fleet was piling in; here was a chance to get a message to them that might have saved them; it reached your hands, we will say, at 10:40; the chance wasn’t taken. Does that sum up the situation as you see it? . . .

Stark: I gather from your question you are now pointing that dispatch directly at Pearl Harbor. It didn’t mention Pearl Harbor. It gave no inference with regard to Pearl Harbor any more than it did the Philippines or the Netherlands East Indies. . . . In the light of hindsight, if we had read into that message that it meant an attack at that hour, and had sent it out, of course, it would have been helpful. I wish such an inference could have been drawn.

Mitchell: The fixing of an exact hour to deliver the diplomatic message and rout out the Secretary of State on a Sunday at 1:00 p.m., wasn’t it obvious that there was some special significance, having in mind the history of the Japs striking first and declaring war afterwards?

Stark: If so, Mr. Mitchell, I would like to say that so far as I know the Secretary of War didn’t read that inference into it, the Secretary of State didn’t read that inference into it, the Secretary of the Navy didn’t read that inference into it, General Marshall and his staff didn’t read that inference into it, and nobody mentioned it to me.

Mitchell: Is it fair to say that if Marshall hadn’t spotted that message and started to send word out to Pearl Harbor that you probably wouldn’t have sent anything?

¹⁸²Ibid., p. 2185.

Stark: I don't know that I would. I think that might be a fair deduction.¹⁸³

FIRST POST-ATTACK INVESTIGATION (DECEMBER 1941)

Secretary of the Navy Frank Knox had flown to Pearl Harbor almost immediately after the Japanese attack in order to investigate the extent of the damage. He had written a report. No copies of that report had been released and it had received practically no publicity at the time. However, during the JCC hearings I, as chief of the committee's minority staff, located a copy. On January 4, 1946, toward the end of Stark's testimony, Ferguson asked him to read Knox's report into the record.¹⁸⁴ Knox had made three significant points:

1. Neither Short nor Kimmel, at the time of the attack, had any knowledge of the plain intimations of some surprise move, made clear in Washington, through the interception of Japanese instructions to Nomura . . . by the insistence upon the precise time of Nomura's reply to Hull, at one o'clock on Sunday.¹⁸⁵
2. Three waves of enemy air force swept over Pearl Harbor during the assault. Because of the element of surprise, the first wave, which lasted from 7:55 to 8:30 A.M., was "substantially unopposed" and wreaked considerable havoc. Yet, Navy anti-aircraft guns began firing in only about four minutes after the attack started. The second wave over the harbor [9:-9:30 A.M.] was resisted with far greater fire power and a number of enemy planes were shot down. The third attack over the harbor [from about 11:30 to 1:00 P.M.] was met by so intensive a barrage from the ships that it was driven off without getting the attack

¹⁸³Ibid., pp. 2185-86.

¹⁸⁴Ibid., pp. 2338-45.

¹⁸⁵Ibid., p. 2338.

home, no effective hits being made in the harbor by this last assault.¹⁸⁶

3. The Army's lack of "the best means of defense against air attack . . . fighter planes . . . [was] due to the diversion of this type [of aircraft] before the outbreak of the war, to the British, the Chinese, the Dutch and the Russians."¹⁸⁷

Stark said he hadn't seen the Knox report before, but expressed no particular surprise at its revelations.¹⁸⁸ He said "there is very little in that report that he [Knox] didn't tell a considerable number of us in his office."¹⁸⁹ It may be, as Stark said, that the Knox report was no revelation to him. But he made no mention of two of the three aspects that most impressed the committee members: the fact that Kimmel and Short had received little intelligence from Washington, and that one major reason for the shortage of reconnaissance planes in Hawaii was the specified diversion of fighter planes to the British, the Chinese, the Dutch and the Russians.

* * * * *

Stark was the last witness to testify before Mitchell and his legal staff left the committee. A week's recess was called so the new staff—Seth W. Richardson, general counsel; Samuel H. Kaufman, associate general counsel; John E. Masten, Edward P. Morgan, and Logan J. Lane—could become familiar with the

¹⁸⁶Ibid., p. 2340. Testimony concerning the timing of the three waves of Japanese attack vary according to the different vantages of the several witnesses. For instance, see *ibid.*, part 1, pp. 43, 47, and 48, account of Admiral T.B. Inglis; part 24, p. 1569, account of Kimmel; and part 22, pp. 87–88, account of Short at the Roberts Commission.

¹⁸⁷Ibid., part 5, p. 2342.

¹⁸⁸Ibid., p. 2337.

¹⁸⁹Ibid., p. 2352.

record. The hearings resumed January 15, 1946.¹⁹⁰ Several important witnesses still remained to be heard—notably Short and Kimmel, Safford, and the Army and Navy couriers Kramer and Bratton, respectively.

¹⁹⁰*Ibid.*, p. 2493.

28.

Joint Congressional Committee on the Investigation of the Pearl Harbor Attack November 15, 1945–May 31, 1946: Part 2

SAFFORD ON THE TRAIL OF THE “EAST WINDS EXECUTE”

Outside the doors of the Committee’s hearing room, Captain L.F. Safford continued to pursue the fate of the missing Pearl Harbor documents. Safford played a crucial role in the several investigations. It was Safford who first called Kimmel’s attention to the fact that Washington had received information through Japanese MAGIC intercepts, information that had not been shared with the Pearl Harbor commanders. It was Safford who discovered that the intercepts were missing. It was Safford who finally located most of them and had them copied and replaced in the files where they belonged. However, he was never

able to locate one particular intercept that he considered crucial. This was the “Winds Code Execute,” with the coded weather words “East Wind Rain,” announcing that the United States would be involved in Japan’s intended aggression from the very beginning.

Safford described to the Congressional Committee in considerable detail the procedure which had been followed to prevent knowledge of MAGIC and especially of the “Winds Code Execute” from becoming known. A copy of this winds execute message should have been in the files of Safford’s division, in the locked safe of then Commander, now Captain, Kramer. The personal or immediate custodian was Lieutenant Commander Harrison, U.S. Naval Reserve. Safford explained that the only people who had access to Captain Kramer’s safe were those on duty under Captain Kramer. Everything was normally cleared through Commander Harrison. There were not more than ten people at the most—translators and the yeomen on duty in Kramer’s section, the head of the section, Safford, or the officer who relieved Safford; or it is possible that the Director of Naval Intelligence might have called for files at any time. Any higher authority would have been given the files without question if he had requested it.¹

Safford: To the best of my knowledge the combination to the safe was held by Kramer and Harrison alone. There was a copy of the combination in a sealed envelope in my safe. There was another copy of the combination in a sealed envelope in the safe of the Aide to the Chief of Naval Operations. That was required for all safes in naval operations, so in case of casualty to the man who regularly opened the safe the safe could be opened when we had to. . . . I know of no occasion when we

¹79th Cong., 1st sess. Joint (Congressional) Committee on the Investigation of the Pearl Harbor Attack. *Pearl Harbor Attack*, 39 vols. (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1946), part 8, pp. 3675–76.

ever had to open those sealed envelopes, and enter the safe. I might add, whenever an officer was relieved, we changed the combination on his safe and substituted the new cards, and that was the only time we ever had to get into those envelopes.²

Safford had appeared as a witness before the Hart inquiry, the Navy Court of Inquiry, the Army Pearl Harbor Board, and the Hewitt inquiry. He expected to be called again to testify if Congress should decide to investigate further after the war ended. Therefore, as arrangements were being made to set up the congressional committee in the fall of 1945, he continued his search for the missing “Winds Execute,” which he was convinced had been received.

Because of the erratic performance of radio waves and atmospheric disturbances, Safford knew that the best chance of intercepting the Tokyo broadcasts at the scheduled times in November-December 1941 would have been on the east coast of the United States. His recollection was that the “Winds Execute” had been picked up on December 4, at Station “M” of the communication intelligence group (ComInt) in Cheltenham, Maryland, and then transmitted by telewriter to Safford’s office, OP-20-G, in Washington, D.C.³

As Safford went through the files, he ran across the initials “RT” on some of the Cheltenham intercepts. Every code clerk had his own personal “sign,” initials by which the messages he intercepted could be identified. Safford discovered that “RT” was the “sign” of Chief Warrant Officer Ralph T. Briggs, who had been stationed in Cheltenham on December 4, 1941, and who, in 1945, was back in Washington at one of the offices of Naval

²Ibid.

³This account of Safford’s contact with Briggs is based primarily on Bettina Greaves’s interview of Briggs in Las Vegas, Nevada, August 14, 1988, type-script in the author’s files.

Security's group command headquarters. Safford phoned Briggs and asked him to come to his office.

Even though the war was over and the JCC was revealing a great deal about MAGIC, Briggs was still security conscious. He knew that the press was trying to discredit Safford as the one person who continued to insist that the "Winds Code Execute" had been received *before* the Japanese attack and that it had indicated war with the United States and Great Britain. None of the persons who, Safford claimed, had seen the message on December 4 or 5 had come forward to support his position.

Because of security considerations, Briggs was reluctant to talk. However, when Safford showed him some of the information he had found, Briggs "began to feel that this man knew what he was talking about." He realized Safford desperately needed support. Briggs wanted to help. The two men met several times. Briggs told Safford he had picked up the "Winds Code Execute" in Morse code.⁴ Safford asked Briggs if he would be willing to testify before the JCC. "Yes," he replied, "I'd be glad to."

Some time after that meeting, Captain John S. Harper, the commanding officer of the Naval Security station to which Briggs was then assigned, summoned Briggs to his office. Briggs described Captain Harper later as "very much chain-of-command oriented, strictly a line officer." He wanted strict decorum, regulation uniform at all times, none of this running round in public with hats off as men did in the Army and Air Force. He was "a gung-ho officer in all respects."

Harper confronted Briggs.

"I understand that you have been seeing Captain Safford."

"That's right."

⁴Captain L.F. Safford, *Cryptolog*, 4:2, December 7, 1982.

“On what authority?” Harper asked. “I’m the commanding officer of this station. Yet, I had no knowledge of that meeting. Why didn’t you inform me?”

“Why, I didn’t know you needed to know, Captain.”

Harper continued: “It is my understanding that he has asked you to testify.”

“Yes, that’s right.”

“Well, for your information,” Harper said, “you are not to testify. I can’t give you the reasons at this time, but some day you’ll understand why. . . . I know you must be interested in helping Captain Safford but at this point in time too much damage has already been done. Much too much has been revealed. I want you to understand that you are *not* to testify and that’s it! I don’t want you to meet with Captain Safford anymore. Do you understand?”

Briggs was shocked, shaken up. But he obeyed Harper’s orders; he felt he had to. He assumed Safford must have contacted somebody on the committee, suggested Briggs as a potential witness, and told where he could be located. When Briggs got back to his office, he phoned Safford. At first, Safford greeted his announcement with stunned silence. Then he said, “Well, I’m sorry to hear that.”⁵

However, Briggs had supplied Safford with the confirmation he had been seeking for so long; the Japanese had actually implemented before the attack the false weather report “East Wind Rain,” indicating trouble of some sort, possibly war, with the United States as well as with England. But Safford realized that he wouldn’t be able to use Briggs’s name.

⁵Quotations as reported by Briggs in Bettina Bien Greaves’s 1988 interview.

* * * * *

When the committee reconvened on January 14, 1946, there were still several important witnesses to be heard—notably Short and Kimmel, Safford, and the Army and Navy couriers Kramer and Bratton, respectively.

ADMIRAL HUSBAND E. KIMMEL—
UPON APPOINTMENT AS CINC BEGINS
READYING FLEET FOR WAR

Kimmel was the lead-off witness after the new legal staff took over. He began by reading a prepared statement to the committee. He said he realized the fleet was vulnerable at Pearl Harbor, but he had accepted the decision as “an historical fact.”⁶

The fleet was not then ready for war. So, Kimmel said, he set out through “an intensive training program to make it ready.”⁷ As noted, there were shortages in Hawaii of planes, especially for reconnaissance and long-range attack, shortages also of plane crews and of anti-aircraft guns.⁸ Kimmel visited Washington in June 1941 and discussed the matter with Stark. He also had some conversations on the subject with the president, who was “fully cognizant” of the problem.⁹ By that time the fleet had been substantially weakened by the shift to the Atlantic of a large contingent of ships, about one quarter of the fleet. Kimmel told the committee he “felt that a strong Pacific Fleet was a real deterrent to Japan,” but that “a weaker [fleet] might be an invitation” to attack.¹⁰ According to his statement, Kimmel had argued

⁶Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 6, p. 2498.

⁷Ibid., p. 2499.

⁸Ibid., pp. 2720, 2722.

⁹Ibid., p. 2719.

¹⁰Ibid., p. 2565. See also part 16, pp. 2248–49, Kimmel letter to Stark, September 12, 1941.

vehemently against still further transfers, and in that he had prevailed.¹¹

Kimmel's dilemma, given the situation, had been to decide how best to employ the fleet's limited ships, planes, anti-aircraft guns, ammunition, other equipment and supplies, as well as his men so as to fulfill his several responsibilities. Under questioning by the committee's legal staff Kimmel again reviewed the situation that faced him as commander of the Pacific Fleet—not only the shortages of men and supplies but also the conflicting and confusing intelligence he had received, the need to develop a trained force of fighting men, and the difficulty of reconciling Washington's recommendations for still further reductions in fleet strength with his instructions to prepare for offensive action as called for under the war plan, WPL-46.

Kimmel said he had written CNO Stark and Chief of the Bureau of Navigation Nimitz again and again of the dangerous conditions created by the shortage of qualified aviators and "the continued detachment of qualified officers and enlisted men" needed if the fleet were "to reach the high state of efficiency demanded by a campaign." He could not spare "any considerable number of qualified officers from the Fleet without assuming an enormous risk."¹² Every action has its cost, of course. The transfer of ships to the Atlantic in mid-1941 reduced the strength of the Pacific Fleet. Passing 26 B-17s, the planes most suitable for reconnaissance,¹³ through Hawaii on their way to the Philippines, outfitting them with crews, guns and ammunition, did not improve Pearl Harbor's reconnaissance capabilities; at times it even reduced them as, Short testified later, Hawaii had had to relinquish some of its own B-17s for the benefit of the Philippines.¹⁴ Nimitz had

¹¹Ibid., part 6, p. 2505.

¹²Ibid., p. 2499, Kimmel letter to Nimitz, February 16, 1941.

¹³Ibid., p. 2731.

¹⁴Ibid., part 7, pp. 2970, 3203.

warned Kimmel (March 3, 1941) that the enactment of lend-lease would make the supply situation still worse; it would bring about an “enormous—almost astronomical”—demand for ordnance supplies for the British Navy and Allies.¹⁵ As a matter of fact, 1,900 planes were sent abroad from February 1 to December 1, 1941 (about 1,750 of them going to the British), and 1,900 anti-aircraft guns were distributed under lend-lease (some 1,500 of them going to the British). That meant 1,900 fewer planes and 1,900 fewer anti-aircraft guns available to improve Pearl Harbor’s defenses.¹⁶

KIMMEL’S DEARTH OF INFORMATION

Kimmel may have found it difficult to obtain clear instructions and to procure the men and materiel needed to build the fleet to fighting strength, but probably his chief complaint was lack of information. In his dual capacity as “the commander in chief of the United States Fleet and the commander in chief of the Pacific Fleet,” he said he felt he was “entitled to every scrap of information they had in Washington.” It need not have been supplied in full, he said; it could have been sent in summarized form. But he felt he was entitled to “all the essential information which had to do with the Pacific situation.”¹⁷ According to Kimmel, he had received during July 1941 at least seven dispatches quoting intercepted Japanese messages. As a matter of fact, he had been given the impression that they *were* sending him all the important information available. Yet little or none of the information gleaned from later intercepts was furnished Kimmel.¹⁸

¹⁵Ibid., part 6 pp. 2499–500, Nimitz March 3, 1941, letter to Kimmel.

¹⁶Ibid., part 10, pp. 4873–75, War Department February 14, 1946 memorandum furnished the Joint Congressional Committee at request of Seth W. Richardson, general counsel.

¹⁷Ibid., part 6, p. 2628.

¹⁸Ibid., p. 2540.

Kimmel had “tried to impress on the Navy Department” that what he “needed out there was information . . . information upon which to base my actions.” He had recognized “the vulnerability of the fleet largely due to the fact that we had only one base [at Pearl Harbor] and to the limitations of fuel and other things.” Further, he had “hoped and believed that the information would come . . . in time to at least alleviate the situation.” Having pointed out the problem, he said, he “accepted the risks.”¹⁹

Later when questioning Kimmel, Representative Gearhart agreed that, rather than being a deterrent, keeping the fleet at Pearl Harbor had actually proved to be “a direct invitation to the Japanese Government to come there and put our fleet out of commission.” If it had been stationed on the west coast, as Richardson had recommended, the added distance would have made a Japanese attack more difficult. Moreover, the west-coast location, with a land mass on one side, would have simplified the task of reconnaissance; U.S. air patrols would have had to survey only a radius of 180°, not 360° as in Hawaii.²⁰

After receiving the November 27 “war warning” and the November 29 notice describing the practical end of U.S.-Japanese negotiations, Kimmel said he received no further news from Washington on the relations between the two countries and was

left to read public [newspaper] accounts of further conversations between the State Department and the Japanese emissaries in Washington which [in contradiction of the Washington messages] indicated that negotiations had been resumed.²¹

He also said that between November 27 and the attack, there was in Washington “a rising intensity in the crisis in Japanese-

¹⁹Ibid., pp. 2718–19.

²⁰Ibid., pp. 2848–49.

²¹Ibid., p. 2548.

United States relations apparent in the intercepted dispatches.”²² He itemized some of the dispatches he had not seen at the time but had since learned about. For instance, there was the intercept concerning the “concealed Japanese plans which automatically went into effect on November 29.”²³ The Navy Department had also known, Kimmel said, of the false weather broadcast, “East Wind Rain,” indicating a break in Japanese-U.S. relations.²⁴ He cited several intercepts that had been picked up, decoded, and translated during this period asking the Japanese consulate in Hawaii for information on “the berthings of ships in Pearl Harbor.”²⁵ These intercepts, Kimmel said, were only some of the significant indications of crisis that had been available in Washington between November 27 and December 7.

When questioning Kimmel, Gearhart quoted a two-part Tokyo-Berlin message of November 30 that had been intercepted, decrypted, and translated, and that had been available in Washington on December 1. In that message Japan reassured Germany that “the Imperial Government adamantly stuck to the Tri-Partite Alliance as the cornerstone of its national policy.” The United States had taken the stand, Tokyo told Berlin in part one of this dispatch, that

As long as the Empire of Japan was in alliance with Germany and Italy, there could be no maintenance of friendly relations between Japan and the United States. . . . [I]t has become gradually more and more clear that the Imperial Government could no longer continue negotiations with the United States. It became clear, too, that a continuation of negotiations would inevitably be detrimental to our cause.

²²Ibid.

²³Ibid., p. 2547.

²⁴Ibid., p. 2549.

²⁵Ibid., p. 2547.

In part two of this dispatch, Tokyo told Berlin that one particular clause in the note the United States had handed the Japanese ambassadors on November 26 was especially “insulting.” That clause meant in effect that “in case the United States enters the European war at any time the Japanese Empire will not be allowed to give assistance to Germany and Italy” in accord with their Tri-Partite Alliance.

This clause alone, let alone others, makes it impossible to find any basis in the American proposal for negotiations. What is more, before the United States brought forth this plan, they conferred with England, Australia, the Netherlands, and China—they did so repeatedly. Therefore, it is clear that the United States is now in collusion with those nations and has decided to regard Japan, along with Germany and Italy, as an enemy.²⁶

Kimmel said the Navy Department had realized that “the high point in the crisis in Japanese-American affairs would be reached when the Japanese reply to the American note of November 26 was received and the Department had been looking for it ever since that date.”²⁷

KIMMEL’S INSTRUCTIONS: CARRY OUT WAR PLAN 46

Stark’s November 27 “war warning” had advised Kimmel that

an aggressive move by Japan is expected within the next few days. 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

²⁶Ibid., pp. 2854–55. See also *ibid.*, part 12, pp. 205–06, Japanese Message #986.

²⁷Ibid., part 6, p. 2549.

possibly Borneo. Execute an appropriate defensive deployment preparatory to carrying out the tasks assigned in WPL46.²⁸

Washington's attention was apparently focused on southeast Asia, and Kimmel's attention was also directed there by this "war warning."

Kimmel testified that also on November 27, the Navy Department "suggested that I send from the immediate vicinity of Pearl Harbor [to Wake and Midway] the carriers of the fleet which constituted the fleet's main striking defense against an air attack." That same day, he said, the war and navy departments

suggested that we send from the island of Oahu, 50 percent of the Army's resources in pursuit planes. . . . In these circumstances no reasonable man in my position would consider that the "war warning" was intended to suggest the likelihood of an attack in the Hawaiian area.²⁹

Kimmel found his pre-attack instructions most confusing, presenting him with a "Do-Don't" situation. The November 29 Navy message had told him that "the United States desires that Japan commit the first overt act. . . . [U]ndertake such reconnaissance and other measures as you deem necessary but these measures should be carried out so as not repeat not to alarm civil population or disclose intent. . . . Undertake no offensive action until Japan has committed an overt act."³⁰ Army Message #472 of November 27 had given similar instructions to Short.³¹

Kimmel explained:

²⁸Ibid., part 14, p. 1406, Navy Department Dispatch 272337.

²⁹Ibid., part 6, p. 2520.

³⁰Ibid., part 14, p. 1407, CNO Message #290110, dated November 29, drafted November 28, 1941.

³¹Ibid., p. 1328, Army Message #472, November 27, 1941.

The Pacific Fleet was based in an area containing over 130,000 Japanese, any one of whom could watch its movements. You can appreciate the psychological handicaps orders of this kind placed upon us. In effect, I was told:

- Do take precautions.
- Do not alarm civilians.
- Do take a preparatory deployment.
- Do not disclose intent.
- Do take a defensive deployment.
- Do not commit the first overt act.

One last feature of the so-called “war warning” dispatch remains to be noted. This is the directive with which it closed:

Execute an appropriate defensive deployment preparatory to carry[ing] out the tasks assigned in WPL-46.

Under WPL-46, the first task of the Pacific Fleet was to support the forces of the Associated Powers (Britain, the Netherlands, and the United States) in the Far East by diverting enemy strength away from the Malay barrier.³²

The “Malay Barrier” was defined in WPL-46 as “the Malay Peninsula, Sumatra, Java, and the chain of islands extending in an easterly direction from Java to Bathurst Island, Australia;”³³ it encompassed Borneo, New Guinea, the Kra Peninsula, the Kra Isthmus, which was a Malay State, and also British Singapore.³⁴

According to Kimmel,

The Navy Department emphasized this instruction [to divert enemy strength away from the Malay Barrier] by repeating it on November 29. The dispatch of that date directed:

³²Ibid., part 6, p. 2525.

³³Ibid., part 18, pp. 2877–941, Exhibit No. 129, Navy Basic War Plan—Rainbow No. 5 (WPL-46). See especially *ibid.*, p. 2909.

³⁴Ibid., part 6, p. 2864.

Be prepared to carry out the tasks assigned in WPL-46 so far as they apply to Japan in case hostilities occur.

Thus in two separate dispatches I was ordered by the Navy Department to have the Pacific Fleet ready to move against the Marshalls upon the expected outbreak of war in the Far East.

This was a determinative factor in the most difficult and vital decisions I had to make thereafter. There was not a hint in these two dispatches of any danger in the Hawaiian area.³⁵

On the one hand, Kimmel had been instructed to “Undertake no offensive action until Japan has committed an overt act,” that is to sit and wait. And on the other hand he had been ordered to continue preparing to go on the offensive against the Japanese in the Marshall Islands—as called for in the war plan.

UNITED STATES-BRITISH MILITARY AGREEMENT?

In view of this country’s policy of cooperating with the British, it was imperative that the field commanders be advised of any U.S. agreements or commitments that would involve them and the military forces under them. During the months preceding the attack, Kimmel had questioned Stark repeatedly as to what the United States would do and what Kimmel’s responsibilities as commander-in-chief of the Pacific Fleet would be if the Japanese attacked the British and Dutch in southeast Asia without striking U.S. territory. To help him make his own judgments, he pressed Stark to keep him posted as to diplomatic and military affairs affecting the situation.

On May 26, 1941, Kimmel wrote Stark:

Full and authoritative knowledge of current policies and objectives, even though necessarily late at times, would enable the

³⁵Ibid., pp. 2525–26.

Commander-in-Chief, Pacific Fleet to modify, adapt, or even re-orient his possible courses of action to conform to current concepts.

He asked that he “be immediately informed of all important developments as they occur and by the quickest secure means available.”³⁶

During the summer of 1941 after Germany, Britain’s enemy, had attacked the U.S.S.R., which then became Britain’s new ally, the concern became whether or not Japan, Germany’s ally under the Tri-Partite Alliance, might attack Russia’s maritime provinces on the Asiatic coast west of Japan, just north of Korea. Kimmel continued to press Stark for information.

On July 26 Kimmel asked specifically about “the U.S. attitude towards Russian participation in the war.” What role if any would the Pacific Fleet have to play

between the U.S. and Russia if and when we become active participants. . . . (1) Will England declare war on Japan if Japanese attack Maritime Provinces? (2) If answer to (1) is in the affirmative, will we actively assist, as tentatively provided in case of attack on N.E.I. [Netherlands East Indies] or [British] Singapore? (3) If answer to (2) is in the affirmative, are plans being prepared for joint action, mutual support, etc.?³⁷

In October Kimmel learned from a traveler who had visited “Singapore, Manila, Java, Dutch East Indies, Australia and New Zealand” that “if Japan attacks Russia the British Empire will declare war on Japan. . . . [T]he Dutch East Indies would follow Great Britain.” On October 29, Kimmel asked Stark, “If they do embark on such an adventure and Britain and the Dutch East Indies declare war on Japan, what will we do?”³⁸

³⁶Ibid., part 16, p. 2238, Kimmel letter to Stark, May 26, 1941.

³⁷Ibid., pp. 2239–42.

³⁸Ibid., p. 2251.

On November 7, Stark wrote Kimmel: “Things seem to be moving steadily towards a crisis in the Pacific. Just when it will break, no one can tell.” Stark’s “principal reaction” was that “it continually gets ‘wors(er) and wors(er)’! A month may see, literally, most anything.”³⁹

On November 14, Stark sent Kimmel a copy of the November 5 memorandum he and Marshall had sent the president.⁴⁰ In that memorandum, Stark and Marshall had written:

The only current plans for war against Japan in the Far East are to conduct defensive war, in cooperation with the British and Dutch, for the defense of the Philippines and the British and Dutch East Indies. . . . War between the United States and Japan should be avoided while building up defensive forces in the Far East, until such time as Japan attacks or directly threatens territories *whose security to the United States is of very great importance*.⁴¹

The closest thing to a reply that Kimmel received to his several requests for information as to how the United States would respond if the British and Dutch were attacked was Stark’s post-script to a November 25, 1941, letter: “Neither [FDR nor Hull] would be surprised over a Japanese surprise attack. From many angles an attack on the Philippines would be the most embarrassing thing that could happen to us.” Some think such an attack “likely,” Stark said, but he did not “give it the weight” others did. He “generally held that it was not time for the Japanese to proceed against Russia. . . . [Rather he looked] for an advance into Thailand, Indo-China, Burma Road area as the most likely.” He said he wouldn’t

³⁹Ibid., part 33, p. 1360.

⁴⁰Ibid., part 16, pp. 2220–21. Stark November 14, 1941, letter, enclosing copy of Marshall/Stark November 5, 1941, “Memorandum for the President” (part 14, pp. 1061–62).

⁴¹Ibid., pp. 2222–23, italics added.

go into the pros or cons of what the United States may do. I will be damned if I know. I wish I did. The only thing I do know is that we may do most anything and that's the only thing I know to be prepared for; or we may do nothing—I think it is more likely to be “anything.”⁴²

Later when Gearhart questioned Kimmel, he supported Kimmel's reasoning that Washington expected the Japanese to move against the Philippines and/or southeast Asia, thousands of miles west of Hawaii. Gearhart considered this consistent with the jurisprudential interpretation “*ejusdem generis* rule,” namely that “A general statement followed by a specific limitation, always limits the interpretation in the courts to the things of the same character of the specific things mentioned.”⁴³ In other words, the general statement in the November 27 “war warning” to the effect that “an aggressive move by Japan is expected within the next few days” was limited by the specific statement that followed indicating “an amphibious expedition against either the Philippines Thai or Kra peninsula or possibly Borneo.”⁴⁴

KIMMEL HAD BEEN TOLD LITTLE OR NOTHING RE U.S.-BRITISH MILITARY AGREEMENTS AND JAPANESE THREAT IN SOUTHEAST PACIFIC

The U.S. Pacific Fleet's task under the war plan was to support the forces of the “Associated Powers,” i.e., the United States, the British Commonwealth, and their allies, “in the Far East by diverting enemy strength away from the Malay Barrier,”⁴⁵—the

⁴²Ibid., part 16, pp. 2224–25.

⁴³Ibid., part 6, p. 2858.

⁴⁴Ibid., p. 2857. Gearhart quotes from the Navy's November 27 “war warning” (Ibid., part 14, p. 1406), NCO #272337.

⁴⁵Ibid., part 18, pp. 2875–2941, Exhibit 129, Navy Basic War Plan—Rainbow No. 5 (WPL-46). For U.S. Pacific Fleet's task, see chapter II. Section 1, Task “a.”

imaginary line connecting the Malay Peninsula, via Sumatra, Java, and the various islands to the east extending to Bathurst Island, just off the north-central coast of Australia. When Ferguson's turn came to question Kimmel, the senator devoted most of the time to trying to find out whether information available in Washington had been relayed to him, what the United States' interest in the Malay Barrier was, and what commitments, if any, the United States may have made to the British and Dutch.

When Ferguson questioned Kimmel he summarized Turner's earlier JCC testimony on the situation in the western Pacific. Turner (Navy War Plans) had said that he

believed that we would be attacked, definitely . . . [i]n the Philippines and if we were attacked in the Philippines I knew it would be war. I thought it would be war if we were not attacked, I thought it would be war if they attacked the British and the Dutch, but there would have been some delays possibly.

Ferguson said,

In other words, if they [the Japanese] attacked the British and the Dutch alone you *thought* it meant war and [you made] a distinction that if they attacked the Dutch, the British, and the Americans at the Philippines it *did* mean war.

Turner had agreed with Ferguson's summary.⁴⁶

Ferguson: [W]ere you aware that Admiral Turner had informed the Japanese Ambassador . . . July 23 or 24, that the United States would not tolerate, in view of its policy of aiding Britain and its interpretation of self-defense, a Japanese threat to the Malay Barrier?

⁴⁶Ibid., part 4, p. 2044, italics added.

Kimmel: I did not know that he had made any such statements.⁴⁷

Ferguson: Now if you would have had that information in relation to Admiral Turner's conversation . . . never disputed as far as Turner was concerned and he was never called on the carpet, or it was never taken up with him that he was wrong . . . if you had known of that would you then have known the policy of America in case of an attack upon the Malay Barrier?

Kimmel: It would have been most helpful to me and if I had known all the circumstances and the fact that that was the policy of the Government; yes, it would have helped immensely.⁴⁸

Ferguson: Well, were you ever told that Admiral Stark was called to the White House by the president on July 24 and that then he heard a statement by the president to Japan to the effect . . . that if Japan attempted to get Dutch oil by force, the British and Dutch would fight and there would then result a most serious situation between the United States and Japan?

Kimmel: I don't remember ever having been informed of that conversation. . . . No, sir.⁴⁹

Ferguson: Well, were you advised that responsible leadership was intercepting secret Japanese messages wherein the Japanese Ambassador was advising his Government that it must expect armed opposition from Great Britain and the United States should Japan move against the Malay Barrier?

Kimmel: I was never informed of that.⁵⁰

⁴⁷Ibid., part 6, p. 2866.

⁴⁸Ibid., p. 2867; see Turner testimony re his July 21, 1941 conversation with Nomura, *ibid.*, part 4, pp. 2041–42.

⁴⁹Ibid., part 6, p. 2867. See also Department of State, *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States: Japan, 1931–1941* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1943), vol. 2, pp. 527–28.

⁵⁰Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 6, p. 2868.

Ferguson: Well, were you aware from your own judgment, like Admiral Stark and Admiral Turner have stated here, that Anglo-Dutch-American embargoes on Japan oil supplies, regardless of their justification for such embargoes, constituted an actual and a logical cause of war with Japan?

Kimmel: Well, I thought that the embargoes would irritate Japan considerably and I knew about the embargoes.

Ferguson: Well, did you think it would irritate them enough, as has been stated by Admiral Stark, that we should have anticipated war over that?

Kimmel: Not necessarily; no.⁵¹

Ferguson: Well, now, were you advised that on August 17, when the president returned from the Atlantic conference [with Churchill], that the president called the Japanese Ambassador to the White House and told him in diplomatic language, and it was rather blunt and in writing, that a Japanese threat or show of force against the Malay Barrier or any movement in the Pacific would compel the United States immediately to take any and all steps necessary to protect our rights?

Kimmel: No, sir, I did not know about that.⁵²

Ferguson: Now, did that task [diverting enemy strength away from the Malay Barrier as prescribed in the U.S. war plan] depend upon your first knowing that America was in the war by virtue of an attack or declaration of war?

Kimmel: It did. I had no authority to act until I received definite word from my Government. . . . Had the Japanese made an attack on the Kra Peninsula, had they made an attack on Java,

⁵¹Ibid.

⁵²Ibid., p. 2867. See also Department of State, *Japan, 1931–1941*, “Oral Statement Handed by President Roosevelt to the Japanese Ambassador (Nomura) on August 17, 1941,” pp. 556–57.

I would have been unable to do anything until I got orders to move.⁵³

On September 11, 1941, President Roosevelt had issued a “shoot-on-sight order” to U.S. Navy ships aimed at German ships and submarines operating within areas in the Atlantic considered “vital to American defense.” Kimmel noted that similar orders had been issued the Southeast Pacific Force “for *surface* raiders east of 100° west,” that is, about 700 miles off the western coast of South America. Kimmel wrote Stark on September 12 asking whether this “shoot-on-sight order” applied also to the rest of the Pacific.⁵⁴

The threat of Japanese action, Kimmel wrote,

coupled with current rumors of U.S.-Japanese rapprochement [sic] and the absence of any specific reference to the Pacific in the president’s speech, leaves me in some doubt as to just what my situation out here is.

Kimmel asked Stark specifically,

What orders to shoot should be issued for areas other than Atlantic and Southeast Pacific sub-areas? This is particularly pertinent to our present escorts for ships proceeding to the Far East. So far, my orders to them have been to protect their convoy from interference; to avoid use of force if possible, but to use it if necessary. These orders, at least by implication, preclude taking the offensive. Shouldn’t I now change them to direct offensive measures against German and Italian raiders?

⁵³Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 6, p. 2866.

⁵⁴*Ibid.*, part 16, pp. 2248–49, Kimmel September 12, 1941, letter to Stark.

Because of the delicate nature of our present Pacific relations, Kimmel felt Stark was “the only one who can answer this question.”⁵⁵

Kimmel had also asked “what to do about submarine contacts off Pearl Harbor and the vicinity.” His orders at that time were “to trail all contacts, but not to bomb unless you are in the defensive sea area. Should we now bomb contacts, without waiting to be attacked?”⁵⁶

In his letter Kimmel expressed fear that FDR’s emphasis on the Atlantic might lead to “a possible further weakening of this Fleet. A strong Pacific Fleet is unquestionably a deterrent to Japan—a weaker one may be an invitation” to attack. Before the JCC Kimmel testified that he believed the maintenance of the “status quo” in the Pacific was

almost entirely a matter of the strength of this Fleet. It must [not] be reduced, and, in the event of actual hostilities, must be increased if we are to undertake a bold offensive. . . . Until we can keep a force here strong enough to meet the Japanese Fleet we are not secure in the Pacific—and the Pacific is still very much a part of the world situation.⁵⁷

Ferguson asked Kimmel whether he had known that the Japanese ambassador to the United States, the Japanese foreign minister, and Japanese press had indicated that they expected the United States to proceed in the Pacific as it had in the Atlantic with a “shoot-on-sight” order. Kimmel said he had never heard anything to that effect. As a matter of fact, because of the correspondence he had had to the effect that we “did not want to tackle two wars at once,” he had gotten the impression that the

⁵⁵Ibid. See also part 6, p. 2861, Kimmel testimony.

⁵⁶Ibid., part 16, pp. 2248–49, Kimmel letter to Stark.

⁵⁷Ibid., part 6, pp. 2823–24. See also part 16, pp. 2248–49, Kimmel letter to Stark.

government wanted to confine the war to the Atlantic; “we did not want to go into the Pacific.” He thought the United States was doing all it could to keep out of war in the Pacific. Prior to December 7 he had not believed “that war was imminent. . . . or that we were in any way forcing the war.” So he had not considered that “the Japanese would expect us to take any such action in the Pacific as had been taken in the Atlantic.”⁵⁸

On September 23, 1941, Stark replied to Kimmel. For the present, he wrote, “the president has issued shooting orders only for the Atlantic and Southeast Pacific sub-area. The situation in the Pacific generally,” Stark said, “is far different from what it is in the Atlantic.” Kimmel’s “existing orders to escorts are appropriate under the present situation. They are also in accordance with Art. 723 U.S. Navy Regulations: no orders should be given to shoot at the Present Time, other than those clearly set forth in this article. . . . Art.723, U.S.N.R. reads as follows:

The use of force against a foreign and friendly state or against anyone within the territories thereof, is illegal.

The right of self-preservation, however, is a right which belongs to States as well as to individuals, and in the case of States it includes the protection of the State, its honor, and its possessions, and the lives and property of its citizens against arbitrary violence, actual or impending.

Stark talked with Hull before sending this letter and added a postscript. Hull asked that the letter be held “very secret.” Stark summed up Hull’s comments by saying “*that conversations with the Japs have practically reached an impasse,*” and Stark could see no chance for a “settlement and peace in the Far East until and

⁵⁸Ibid., part 6, pp. 2881–82.

unless there is some agreement between Japan and China—and just now that seems remote.”⁵⁹

By this time, the Japanese were “rapidly completing withdrawal from world shipping routes.”⁶⁰ The United States also issued orders to ships to avoid areas where they might encounter Japanese ships. On October 16, 1941, all U.S. merchant ships,⁶¹ and on October 17, 1941, all U.S.-flag shipping⁶² were directed to keep to the southward through the Torres Straits between the northern coast of Australia and the southern shores of the island of New Guinea, and to keep “well clear of Orange [Japanese] mandates taking maximum advantage of Dutch and Australian patrolled areas.” By October 23, ships carrying U.S. Army and Navy troops and military cargo were being escorted both ways between Honolulu and Manila.⁶³

On November 5, 1941, Marshall and Stark had sent a joint memorandum to the president. There they admitted that the U.S. Fleet in the Pacific was then “inferior to the Japanese Fleet and cannot undertake an unlimited strategic offensive in the Western Pacific.” To do so

it would have to be strengthened by withdrawing practically all naval vessels from the Atlantic except those assigned to local defense forces. . . . The result of withdrawals from the Atlantic of Naval and merchant strength might well cause the United Kingdom to lose the Battle of the Atlantic in the near future. . . . The only current plans for war against Japan in the Far East are to conduct defensive war, in cooperation with the

⁵⁹Ibid., part 16, pp. 2212–13, Stark’s September 23, 1941, letter to Kimmel.

⁶⁰Ibid., part 14, p. 1401, OPNAV August 14, 1941, Dispatch #142155 to CINCAF, CINCPAC, CINCLANT.

⁶¹Ibid., part 14, p. 1402, CNO October 16, 1941, Dispatch #162300.

⁶²Ibid., p. 1403, OPNAV October 17, 1941, Message #162258 to the Philippines, CINCAF COM.12.

⁶³Ibid., p. 1403, OPNAV October 23, 1941 Message #222250 to commanders of Pearl Harbor, Manila, and San Francisco Naval Districts.

British and Dutch, for the defense of the Philippines and the British and Dutch East Indies. The Philippines are now being reinforced.

Marshall and Stark reaffirmed that the “basic military policies and strategy agreed to in the United States-British Staff Conversations remain sound. The primary objective of the two nations is the defeat of Germany.”

In this memorandum Marshall and Stark urged that war between the United States and Japan “should be avoided while building up defensive forces in the Far East, until such time as Japan attacks or directly threatens territories whose security to the United States is of very great importance.” Stark and Marshall closed with a clear and unmistakable joint recommendation: “That no ultimatum be delivered to Japan.”⁶⁴

On November 18 Kimmel was advised that “[u]ntil international conditions on and subsequent to 25 Nov. become defined and clarified . . . any further direct or great circle routing between Hawaii and Philippines should not repeat not be used.” And he was authorized to place a Dutch ship, *Bloemfontein*, in a convoy with American-flag vessels.⁶⁵

Ferguson: Do you know why they used the date there “subsequent to November 25”? . . . Did you ever know that we had a message that we intercepted from the Japs showing that the dead line [sic] date [for the Japanese ambassadors to complete their negotiations with the United States] was the 25th of November?

⁶⁴Ibid., part 16, pp. 2222–23, Marshall/Stark November 5, 1941, memorandum to FDR. Copy sent Kimmel with Stark’s letter of November 14, 1941 (Ibid., part 16, pp. 2220–21; see also pp. 2222–23).

⁶⁵Ibid., part 14, p. 1404, OPNAV November 18, 1941 Message #181705.

Kimmel: No, sir, I never had anything like that. . . . I do not know what November 25 meant, but I was concerned . . . with the orders I received to put the *Bloemfontein* in the convoy with American-flag vessels. . . .

Ferguson: Do you think the fact that we put that ship into our convoy would indicate that we were taking parallel action? Did you take it as such?

Kimmel: My memory is not entirely clear, but I think we had some matériel, or personnel, or something on this ship that we wanted to get through, on the *Bloemfontein*. . . . I do not recall . . . just what it was. On one of these Dutch ships that we used, we had some fliers that were going out to China.⁶⁶

Ferguson: Well, now, what kind of an order do you interpret that [to put a Dutch ship in an American convoy] to be?

Kimmel: The way I interpret that order is that you would go in betwixt an attacking force and a Netherlands ship and if they shot at you. . . . Why, I would probably shoot back.

Ferguson: Well, then, that would create at least an incident, would it not, an international incident?

Kimmel: Yes, sir, it probably would.

Ferguson: And there would be little use then of talking about the first overt act, wouldn't there?

Kimmel: Well, the Japs would have shot first.

Ferguson: I see. Even though you would have run between the mark that [they were] shooting at and that wasn't our mark, that did not belong to this country, you would consider under those circumstances that the Jap shot first?

⁶⁶Ibid., part 6, p. 2878.

Kimmel: I would have to know all the circumstances first.⁶⁷

Ferguson then asked Kimmel if he had ever “been advised what the task of the Pacific Fleet should be in the event of an outbreak of war in the Pacific which did not involve a Japanese attack directly on American possessions.”⁶⁸ This was precisely what Kimmel had been trying to find out for some time—without success.

Ferguson: Well, were you fully aware on November the 27th that the Japanese had concentrated for an attack upon the Malay barrier?

Kimmel: I was so informed. . . .

Ferguson: Well, were you aware that such an attack, even the obvious preparation for it, was a direct defiance of the formal and explicit warning against such movement given by the United States [August 17, after the FDR-Churchill meeting at Argentia]?

Kimmel: I did not know of the formal and explicit warning given by the United States.⁶⁹

Ferguson: You were advised by Admiral Stark [Stark letter of November 25] after he had a conference at the White House that he was damned if he knew what the United States was going to do should Japan attack the Malay Barrier without at the same time attacking possessions of the United States. . . . Now, between the date of that letter and its receipt you had been instructed, had you not, to prepare to attack the Marshalls after Japan had committed an overt act against the United States. . . . Now, in the manner of ordinary naval strategy, would the Japanese expect an attack by the Pacific Fleet on

⁶⁷Ibid., pp. 2877–78.

⁶⁸Ibid., p. 2877. Kimmel testimony.

⁶⁹Ibid., p. 2868.

the Marshalls in the event the United States should implement its direct and specific warning to oppose a Japanese movement against the Malay Barrier?

Kimmel: Yes, I think they probably would expect attacks on the Marshalls.⁷⁰

Ferguson: Did you know then that the presence of this Japanese force before the approaches to Singapore required the responsible leadership in Washington to act immediately or to back down from the former position it had taken with Japan as of Sunday, August the 17th, 1941?

Kimmel: No, sir; I did not.

Ferguson: Well, if you had known that, would this fact that they were moving toward the Kra Peninsula [have] made a difference with your action? . . . Well, . . . you had nothing before you, had you, that the United States Government intended to back down from any stand or any policy that it had?

Kimmel: No, sir; I did not.

Ferguson: Well, then, if the policy was such that we should have anticipated that if they attacked the Kra Peninsula it would mean war with America, should we not have then at the same time anticipated a co-attack on America?

Kimmel: That would appear to be reasonable; yes, sir.

Ferguson: Well, do you know why no one seems to have anticipated that if they attacked the Kra Peninsula they would not also attack America at the same time?

Kimmel: No, sir, I do not.

⁷⁰Ibid., pp. 2869–70. For Stark's November 25, 1941, letter, see part 16, pp. 2223–25.

Ferguson: Well, at any time after November the 25th, 1941, did the chief of naval operations, that is Admiral Stark, advise you that instead of being damned if he knew what the United States was going to do in the event that Japan attacked the Malay barrier after by-passing American positions, he did know what the United States was going to do? You see, he wrote you that letter on the 25th.

Kimmel: If he had informed me that he knew what the United States was going to do and what they were going to do, it would have been of great assistance to me.⁷¹

Ferguson: Did you know that the president by direct order [OPNAV message December 2, 7 p.m. Washington time, to CINCAF, Hart, CinC, Asiatic Fleet, Philippines⁷²] had ordered three ships to go into the Gulf of Siam or off the Coast of China to watch for this [Japanese convoy] movement into the Kra Peninsula?

Kimmel: No, sir; I did not.⁷³

Kimmel said he had known “that the commander in chief of the Asiatic [Fleet] had been ordered to send some planes over to scout,” but he had not known about the ships. However, Kimmel thought that was “a perfectly natural thing” to do if “we wanted to know what the Japanese were doing; . . . whether they would come to the Philippines or not.”

Ferguson pointed out that the stations the three small vessels were to assume, as specified in the message were located well to the west of the Philippines, almost directly in the projected paths of the southbound Japanese convoys sighted by our overflights. According to the message, they were “to observe and report by radio Japanese movements in west China Sea and Gulf of Siam.”

⁷¹Ibid., part 6, p. 2874.

⁷²Ibid., part 14, p. 1407, OPNAV Message #012356 to CINCAF.

⁷³Ibid., p. 2872.

How would this tell us, Ferguson wanted to know, whether or not the Japanese were coming to the Philippines?

Ferguson pointed out also that the message specified that these three small ships were to comply with “Minimum requirements to establish identity as U.S. men-of-war.” The president had even given exact instructions what that meant: “command by a naval officer and to mount a small gun and 1 machine gun would suffice.”

Ferguson: Now, if you had known of this message of the president, from OPNAV to CINCAF . . . would that have indicated to you an answer to that question as to what we were going to do in case of an attack upon the Malay Peninsula?

Kimmel: It would have been useful information. It would have still been short of any authoritative statement of what our intentions were.⁷⁴

After receiving on December 3 Stark’s November 25 letter concerning the possibility of a Japanese surprise attack—on the Philippines—or what was more likely, a Japanese advance against the Thailand-Indochina-Burma-Road area,⁷⁵ Kimmel had certainly not visualized U.S. naval action in the Pacific like that in the Atlantic. However, in his testimony Kimmel had to admit that, judging from the intercepts Ferguson was showing him, that Japan might well have expected the United States to follow its Atlantic strategy if the Japanese got into a war with England.⁷⁶

⁷⁴Ibid., part 6, pp. 2872–73. See also part 5, pp. 2190–91 and 2416–17, Stark testimony re FDR’s role in ordering the dispatch of the three small vessels and the effort to coordinate with the British and Dutch the search to determine where the Japanese were aiming—toward the Kra Peninsula or the Dutch East Indies.

⁷⁵Ibid., part 16, pp. 2223–25.

⁷⁶Ibid., part 6, p. 2882.

Ferguson called Kimmel's attention to a State Department, Far Eastern affairs division, document of December 4, 1941, which told of the British attempt to make arrangements with the Japanese government to withdraw or exchange British and Japanese officials and nationals in the territory of the other in the event of British-Japanese hostilities.⁷⁷ One sentence in this document concerned whether the United States should not also, "while we are not at war" with Japan, try to make a similar agreement with the Japanese. Ferguson, reading:

Such attempt might, at this time, be advisable also in that it would be definite indication to the Japanese Government of the firmness of the American position in the present crisis and would be one means of impressing upon the Japanese Government the seriousness with which we view the present situation.

Ferguson: Now, that being true, that coercion there would indicate to the Japanese government that we were acting with Britain . . . shouldn't we have anticipated that if they attacked one they would attack both?

Kimmel: I think that is reasonable; yes, sir.

Ferguson: All right. Now we go to the end [of the document] and it is signed by "M.M.H." who, I understand, is Maxwell M. Hamilton [chief, division of Far Eastern affairs] . . . and they are speaking now about getting [American] nationals out of Japanese territory in China before the declaration of war, before the shooting starts, and I will read:

As the making of such an approach would be interpreted by the American public as a definite indication that this government expects war between Japan and the United States, the Secretary may wish to speak to the president in regard to the

⁷⁷*Ibid.*, part 15, pp. 1741–43, Exhibit 74A.

advisability of this Government's making such an approach at this time.

Ferguson (continuing): Now, that is dated on December the 4th, 1941. . . . Now, from all that you have learned, wherein the messages were intercepted, and was known in Washington, have you any doubt that war was imminent and that we knew we were going to war?

Kimmel: I have no doubt, sir.

Ferguson: Well, then, did you get this message . . . [indicating] that we did not want the American public to know that we were going to war?

Kimmel: I received no such message; no, sir. . . .

Ferguson: Well, you were told . . . you were to do nothing that would arouse the population of Hawaii to indicate that we were going to war?

Kimmel: That was contained in messages which came to me; yes, sir.⁷⁸

Ferguson: Now, would it be correct to say that your first and your chief objective in the event of an American-Japanese war was an attack upon the Marshall Islands to divert the Japanese from the Malayan barrier which comprised vital possessions of the Dutch and the British, who would be our allies?

Kimmel: Yes, sir. . . . That was if and when we got into the war.

Ferguson: Well, now, would the attack on the Marshalls accomplish the chief purpose of the American war plan that you then had, if that attack occurred after Singapore had fallen to the Japanese?

⁷⁸Ibid., part 6, pp. 2875–76. Readings from State Department December 4, 1941, document, part 15, pp. 1741–43, Exhibit 74A.

Kimmel: That would have been a little late. . . .

Ferguson: That would have also been late after the Japanese had gone into Borneo and Java, would it not?

Kimmel: Yes, sir.

Ferguson: Well, now, was the Marshall operation and its value contingent upon it being undertaken before the Japanese had breached the Malay Barrier?

Kimmel: Well, certainly before they had had a chance to take those land areas which comprise the Malay Barrier. It had to draw the forces away in time, before they had conquered that country and before they had gone down there really.

Ferguson: Well, now, is that why you were interested in the movement and why the United States was interested in the movement south? . . . And did you also want to know what you were to do in case you were sure that they were going south?

Kimmel: Yes, sir.

Ferguson: And did you ever find that out prior to the attack on the 7th?

Kimmel: What I was to do? . . . No, sir; not definitely.

Ferguson: Well, now you come back to those words "Not definitely." Did you ever find any information on it?

Kimmel: No. . . . I wanted to know what we were to do. I did not find out.⁷⁹

Ferguson then showed Kimmel the message from U.S. Ambassador John G. Winant in London announcing the presence of two Japanese convoys of about 60 ships off Cambodia

⁷⁹Ibid., part 6, pp. 2864–65.

Point. This dispatch had been received in the State Department on December 6 at 10:40 A.M.⁸⁰ Ferguson asked Kimmel if anyone in Washington had advised him on December 6 “that a Japanese invasion fleet of sixty-some vessels had been sighted and was within a day or 14 hours . . . of striking distance of the approaches to Singapore . . . the so-called Winant message.” Kimmel said he didn’t think he had received that message, although he had received similar information on December 6, through a copy of a message from Hart to OPNAV in Washington. That message pointed out that a 25-ship convoy with cruiser and destroyer escorts had been sighted heading west toward Kohtron [Koh Rong?] on the west coast of Indochina, not very far from the Thai border. Because of what the Navy Department had told Kimmel, he thought the Japanese were probably “concentrating their forces over there to go into Thai.” Thirty additional ships and one large cruiser had been spotted by Hart’s scouting force in Camranh Bay on the east coast of Indochina.⁸¹

Ferguson wanted to know from Kimmel

why in the world would they send you that message? That was another power. We were a separate and distinct nation. . . . America is an independent and sovereign power. Why were we concerned if we did not have a war plan in relation to that attack? . . . I realize . . . you were trying to find out what we were going to do? . . . And you told us now that you never did find out. . . . You were positive about that, that you never got an answer as to what we were to do.

⁸⁰Ibid., part 14, p. 1246, Exhibit No. 21, December 6, 1941, telegram from London to State Department.

⁸¹Ibid., part 6, p. 2871.

Kimmel: The last answer I had on that subject before the attack was . . . Admiral Stark's letter of November 25, which I received on December 3.⁸²

Ferguson then asked Kimmel if he had known that Hart in the Philippines had gotten word from Singapore on December 6 to the effect that the British had "received assurance of American armed support" under several eventualities—if the Japanese attacked them; if the Japanese attacked the Dutch; or if the Japanese attacked Siam or the Isthmus of Kra and the British and Dutch went to their defense. Obviously this would mean that the United States's Asiatic Fleet would be asked to assist the British in Singapore.⁸³ Hart had been sending out "flying missions" to observe the movements of the Japanese convoys. He had conferred in Manila with British Admiral Thomas S.V. Phillips on how best to coordinate U.S. and British efforts and had reported to Washington their arrangements for cooperating.⁸⁴ However, the news from Singapore that the British had "received assurance of American armed support" was a surprise to Hart. He wired Washington for instructions.⁸⁵ Turner prepared a reply for Hart. "It was still in the process of drafting at the time of the attack," Turner said. He believed that it "was prepared in the forenoon of the 7th."⁸⁶

Ferguson: So someone knew here in Washington before the attack came what was to be sent to Admiral Hart in reply to his inquiry, whereas you had made a similar inquiry and, as I understand it, you had no information sent to you, that you

⁸²Ibid., pp. 2871–72. See part 16, pp. 2223–25, Stark's November 25 letter.

⁸³Ibid., part 10, pp. 5082–83, December 5, 1941, telegram from John M. Creighton, (ALUSNA) naval attaché in Singapore, to Hart.

⁸⁴Ibid., part 4, pp. 1933–35, Hart-Phillips five-part report, December 7, Philippine time, i.e., December 6 in Washington.

⁸⁵Ibid., part 14, p. 1412, CINCAF telegram 070645.

⁸⁶Ibid., part 4, pp. 1935–36, Turner testimony.

received, or sent to you that you did not receive, prior to the attack. . . . At least, Admiral, you didn't know of this reply to Admiral Hart?

Kimmel: My recollection is that I didn't know anything about that until after the attack.⁸⁷

DECEMBER 7TH LAST-MINUTE MESSAGE DIDN'T REACH KIMMEL UNTIL AFTER THE ATTACK

The "One P.M. Message" had been intercepted and was available in Washington between 7:00 and 9:00 A.M. (1:30–3:30 A.M. in Hawaii). Yet it was not until almost noon that Marshall drafted and sent his last-minute message advising Kimmel and Short of the deadline. For security reasons it was not transmitted by scrambler phone, the fastest means then available, lest it be intercepted by the Japanese. It did not reach Kimmel or Short until hours after the attack. Ferguson referred to this message when questioning Kimmel.

Ferguson: [H]ow could the fact that General Marshall or Admiral Stark would have alerted you on Sunday morning, say between 7:00 and 9:00 [Washington time], that that message was received, how could the intercepting of that message by the Japs have changed the situation? . . . [S]uppose the Japanese fleet had learned at 7:00 in the morning, that is 7:00 our time, on Sunday, which was . . . 5-1/2 hours before their ships came in, their airplanes came into Hawaii? . . . Suppose that they had flashed to that fleet the fact that the Hawaiian Islands were fully alerted and knew that there was something going to happen and our ships would have gone out, how would that have interfered with the Japs other than probably to have stopped them coming in?

⁸⁷Ibid., part 6, p. 2883.

Kimmel: I don't understand how it would have interfered in the slightest degree. . . . I cannot understand why I did not get . . . that information.⁸⁸

On January 21, 1946, after testifying for six days, Admiral Kimmel was excused by the committee. Kimmel agreed with Vice Chairman Cooper that he had been given a "full, ample, and complete opportunity . . . to present my side of the matter."⁸⁹

GENERAL WALTER C. SHORT: THE ATTACK SURPRISED PEARL HARBOR—ALSO WASHINGTON

Finally on January 22, General Short was given an opportunity to tell his story. At the time of the attack, Short had been commanding general, Hawaiian department. Like Kimmel, he had appeared before the Roberts Commission and had to appear there alone, without counsel. Also like Kimmel, he had not been permitted to hear or cross-examine other commission witnesses.⁹⁰ Short had not even been allowed to hear or cross-examine witnesses before the Army Pearl Harbor Board (APHB), as Kimmel had before the Navy Court of Inquiry (NCI), the Navy's counterpart. And he was not allowed to see the Japanese MAGIC intercepts, copies of which the APHB obtained on October 6, 1944, at the very end of its hearings.⁹¹ Short's military counsel, Brigadier General Thomas H. Green, was eventually allowed to see them, although not to comment on them to Short; Green's role was limited to giving Short advice.⁹² The APHB did furnish Short

⁸⁸Ibid., p. 2876.

⁸⁹Ibid., p. 2915.

⁹⁰Ibid., part 7, p. 2921, Short testimony.

⁹¹Ibid., part 28, pp. 946–47.

⁹²Ibid., part 7, p. 3155, Short testimony. See also part 29, pp. 2435–38.

with a copy of its hearings, except for the TOP SECRET parts concerning MAGIC.⁹³

Short was not a West Pointer; he had gone into the Army after graduating from the University of Illinois in 1901. He served in the Philippines and Alaska. From March 1916 to February 1917 he was in Mexico with the Pershing expedition, and he served in France and Germany for two years during World War I. Back in the States, he held various positions—on the Army general staff and at Forts Leavenworth and Benning. He also held several command positions, organizing and commanding Army brigades, divisions, and corps, and directing soldiers and National Guard troops in maneuvers. When he took over as commanding general of the Hawaiian department on February 7, 1941, he was promoted to lieutenant general. He served until after the December 7 attack, when he was relieved of his command (December 17). When he retired on February 28, 1942, he was reduced to a major general.⁹⁴

Like Kimmel, Short began his testimony before the JCC with a lengthy prepared statement. His remarks paralleled Kimmel's to some extent in that he testified that he had received neither the equipment he had requested nor the information to which he, as commanding general, felt he was entitled.

Short said he had had only a brief conference with Marshall before he assumed command of the Hawaiian department. Marshall had not then told him of any of "the probable dangers in the Hawaiian Department" although he had written him "a long letter on the day that I assumed command detailing his idea of my mission."⁹⁵ Marshall wrote on February 7, 1941:

⁹³Ibid., part 7, pp. 2921–22, Short testimony.

⁹⁴Ibid., pp. 2966–67, Short testimony.

⁹⁵Ibid., p. 2967.

The fullest protection for the Fleet is *the* rather than *a* major consideration for us, there can be little question about that. . . . Please keep clearly in mind in all your negotiations that our mission is to protect the base and the Naval concentrations

at Hawaii.⁹⁶ In this letter, Marshall also discussed the personal characteristics of Kimmel, who was then taking over command of the fleet.⁹⁷

Short's primary responsibility had been different from Kimmel's. Kimmel's task had been to prepare the fleet for *offensive* action. Short's principal task, he testified, was *defensive*,

to defend the Island of Oahu from surface attacks, air attacks, sabotage, internal disorders such as uprisings, with particular attention to the defense of Pearl Harbor and of the fleet when in harbor,

always of course with the support and assistance of the Navy.⁹⁸

During his tour of duty in Hawaii, he and Marshall exchanged letters (26 pages in the printed hearings), cables, telegrams, and radiograms (eight pages).⁹⁹ Their correspondence was relatively brief, compared with that of Kimmel and Stark during the same period—113 pages of letters in the printed hearings and 14 pages of cables, telegrams, and radiograms.¹⁰⁰ In his communications Short reported shortages of men,¹⁰¹ planes, B-17s, interceptors,

⁹⁶Ibid., part 15, pp. 1601–02, Exhibit 53, Marshall's February 7, 1941, letter to Short on his assumption of command. See also part 7, p. 3083, Short testimony.

⁹⁷Ibid., part 15, p. 1601.

⁹⁸Ibid., part 7, p. 2970.

⁹⁹Ibid., part 14, pp. 1326–34, Exhibit 32; part 15, pp. 1600–26, Exhibit 53.

¹⁰⁰Ibid., part 14, pp. 1395–1409, Exhibit 37; part 16, pp. 2144–57, Exhibit 106.

¹⁰¹Ibid., part 7, p. 2925. Short statement.

fighters, torpedo bombers, anti-aircraft guns, machine guns,¹⁰² and radar equipment.¹⁰³ Marshall's letters dealt primarily with military "housekeeping" details—the construction of airfields, roads, trails, a recreation camp, anti-aircraft artillery, the aircraft warning service (radar), preparations for air and ground defense, etc; they contained little information concerning the international situation. It was the War Department's responsibility to keep Short informed, and he said he did receive department messages from time to time.¹⁰⁴ But those messages were often conflicting and confusing, especially compared with those sent to Kimmel by the Navy during this period and then relayed by Kimmel to Short.¹⁰⁵ One charge made against Short was that the attack had taken him by surprise because he had not been prepared. He pointed out that even the officials in Washington who had had access to the Japanese intercepts had not expected the attack; rather they had expected the Japanese to aim at the British and Dutch in the southwest Pacific. When the news reached Washington, top officials from FDR, Hull, and Stimson on down all expressed surprise.

Army Judge Advocate General (JAG) Myron C. Cramer was forced to admit that Short had not been alone in failing to anticipate an attack. His

nonfeasance or omissions were based on an estimate of the situation which, although proved faulty by subsequent events, was . . . made or concurred in by all those officers in Hawaii best qualified to form a sound military opinion. That estimate was that an attack by air was in the highest degree improbable.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰²Ibid., p. 2963. Short statement.

¹⁰³Ibid., pp. 2969–70, 3157–58. Short testimony.

¹⁰⁴Ibid., pp. 2958, 2971.

¹⁰⁵Ibid., pp. 2931–35, 2945–46. Short testimony.

¹⁰⁶Ibid., part 18, p. 3205, January 27, 1942, memorandum to Marshall.

Short quoted Cramer's November 25, 1944, comments on the APHB report:

[S]ince the War Plans Division had received substantial information from the Intelligence Section, G-2, the Board argues that had this additional information been transmitted to Short it might have convinced him not only that war was imminent but that there was a real possibility of a surprise air attack on Hawaii.¹⁰⁷

The JAG went on to blame Gerow for "Failure to appreciate the significance" of the intercept messages which were available in Washington and for "a lack of the type of skill in anticipating and preparing against eventualities which we have a right to expect in an officer at the head of the War Plans Division."¹⁰⁸

From time to time G-2 issued special estimates of the military situation. The Far Eastern parts of these estimates were always prepared initially by Bratton in the Far Eastern section of the military intelligence service. Information from the service's other geographic sections was incorporated and discussed. Then the estimate was presented to General Miles, chief of military intelligence service, for approval or revision.¹⁰⁹

On November 29 the intelligence branch prepared such an estimate (I.B.159), which the whole division, including Miles himself, considered "perhaps the most important we had ever gotten out," not so much because of

the danger that we saw from Japan, although danger in that field was pretty thoroughly discussed, but primarily because

¹⁰⁷Ibid., part 39, p. 265, memorandum.

¹⁰⁸Ibid., also part 7, p. 2961.

¹⁰⁹Ibid., part 34, p. 45, testimony of Brigadier General Hayes A. Kroner, chief, intelligence branch, G-2, before Clarke Inquiry.

Gen. Miles wished to focus War Department thought on the defeat that could be administered to the Nazi powers.¹¹⁰

This estimate, Short testified, contained no mention of “Japan’s potential capability against Pearl Harbor” because neither General Hayes A. Kroner, chief of the intelligence branch, G-2, “who [according to Short] was responsible for maintaining information and for the preparation of estimates as to probable action,”¹¹¹ nor others in his branch “had any information which would lead [them] to believe that they [the Japanese] were capable of or planned” such an attack.¹¹² Apparently the Army’s military intelligence service (G-2) did not expect an attack on Hawaii any more than had the top Washington officials. In other words, Pearl Harbor was omitted from G-2’s estimates not because it was too “obvious” to mention, as Miles testified before the committee,¹¹³ but because, even with all the information it had, it did not believe Japan was capable of making such an attack.

Kroner, who had helped prepare this estimate, remembered it distinctly because “when the word came through the radio on that fateful Sunday, December 7, that Japan had attacked Pearl Harbor, I was sitting in my office in the Munitions Building reading from this paper.” He felt “that Japan’s potential capability against Pearl Harbor was left from this estimate because neither Col. Betts nor I had any information which would lead us to believe that they were capable of or planned” such an attack.¹¹⁴

The imminence of crisis was becoming apparent in Washington. Yet the War Department, Short said, failed to relay that sense of urgency to him. And he had received no intimation

¹¹⁰Ibid., pp. 47–48, testimony of General Kroner.

¹¹¹Ibid., part 7, pp. 2988–89.

¹¹²Ibid., p. 2989.

¹¹³Ibid., part 2, pp. 902–03.

¹¹⁴Ibid., part 7, p. 2989. Short testimony. See also part 34, pp. 47–48, Kroner testimony at Clarke.

from Washington that Hawaii might be attacked. He explained that he had been led to think that the Japanese were not going to attack Hawaii in that he had received no warning such as had been sent his predecessor in June 1940. At that time, Short explained in a statement, Marshall alerted then-Commander General Herron of a *possible* “trans-Pacific raid” scare.¹¹⁵ Herron had then taken all necessary precautions. After a month Marshall authorized Herron to relax the alert provisions except insofar as they pertained to sabotage and the maintenance of readiness.¹¹⁶ Short said he had expected that “if the Chief of Staff once again had information causing him to expect a ‘trans-Pacific raid’ against Oahu, he would follow the course he had previously set as an example.”¹¹⁷

SHORT’S ATTENTION DIRECTED WESTWARD

It was obvious that Japan’s forces were heading south around Indochina and toward southeast Asia—Singapore, Malaya, and the Dutch East Indies. The information sent Short by the War Department, he said, had always pointed in that direction, toward “an attack to the Southwest Pacific, and including the Netherlands East Indies.”¹¹⁸

Short had been told that the Philippines might be threatened. He knew the United States was doing its best to build up its Philippine defenses. B-17s were being flown there from the States via Hawaii. The planes were being outfitted in Hawaii, and crews were being trained there. Then guns and crews, he said, were being sent in the B-17s on their way to the Philippines.¹¹⁹ At times, some of Hawaii’s own Army B-17s had even been flown

¹¹⁵Ibid., part 7, p. 2930.

¹¹⁶Ibid., part 15, pp. 1593–1600, Exhibit 52, especially pp. 1597–58.

¹¹⁷Ibid., part 7, p. 2930.

¹¹⁸Ibid., p. 3176.

¹¹⁹Ibid., p. 3217.

out there, thus depleting the Army's fleet of planes in Hawaii. "We had 21 B-17's at one time," Short said,

and 9 of those were sent to the Philippines and we were down to 12, and had to rob 6 of those of parts to keep the others going through. . . . They were ferrying in the last few months everything to the Philippines they could.

Still other types of planes "were shipped through [to the Philippines] on transports."¹²⁰ But it was not only planes that were being sent out there. Short said that

a few days before December 7, I had a wire from the War Department asking me if I would be willing to ship forty-eight 75-millimeter guns and 120 30-caliber machine guns to the Philippines.

Short had agreed. The War Department said the planes and guns would be replaced very soon.¹²¹

He quoted the few telegrams or cable "warnings" he had received from Washington after assuming command.¹²² A War Department dispatch on July 8 advised him that

deduction from information from numerous sources is that Japanese Govt has determined upon its future policy . . . one of watchful waiting involving probable aggressive action against maritime provinces of Russia. . . . Opinion is that Jap activity in the south will be for the present confined to seizure and development of naval army and air bases in Indo China, although an advance against the British and Dutch cannot be entirely ruled out.¹²³

¹²⁰Ibid., p. 3203.

¹²¹Ibid., p. 3204.

¹²²Ibid., pp. 2931–35; part 14, pp. 1326–34, Exhibit No. 32.

¹²³Ibid., part 14, p. 1326, War Department radio, July 8, 1941. This telegram, as transcribed in Roberts Commission Report (ibid., part 24, p. 2164, Exhibit

Short thought that July 8 message, “when they were pointing out action of the Japanese against Russia, was a rather definite prediction, and was the only prediction that the War Department ever made direct to me.”¹²⁴ Short said that “at no time after July 8 did I ever have an Army message that indicated any probable line of action by the Japanese.”¹²⁵

He said he was advised on October 16, through a Navy message to Kimmel, that “hostilities between Japan and Russia are a strong possibility. Since the U.S. and Britain are held responsible by Japan for her present desperate situation there is also a possibility that Japan may attack these two powers.”¹²⁶ On October 20 Short had a message from the War Department that appeared to conflict. “Tension between United States and Japan remains strained,” it said, but according to the War Department’s estimate of the Japanese situation, “no repeat no abrupt change in Japanese foreign policy appears imminent.”¹²⁷

Short also testified that on October 17 one of Short’s intelligence officers, Lieutenant Colonel George W. Bicknell, had prepared a report on the situation. “Following the principles of defeating one opponent at a time,” he had written,

it is believed that Japan, if faced with certain British military resistance to her plans, will unhesitatingly attack the British; and do so without a simultaneous attack on American possessions, because of no known binding agreement between the British and Americans for joint military action against Japan,

36), varies slightly in punctuation, etc., and is dated July 7 (not July 8), 1941.

¹²⁴Ibid., part 7, p. 3180.

¹²⁵Ibid., p. 3072.

¹²⁶Ibid., p. 2933. See part 14, p. 1327, October 16, 1941, Navy Message 162203.

¹²⁷Ibid., part 7, p. 2933. See part 14, p. 1327, War Department October 20, 1941, message. This telegram as transcribed in Roberts Commission Report (part 24, p. 2164, Exhibit 36) is dated October 18 (not 20), 1941.

and that the American public is not yet fully prepared to support such action. However,

Bicknell continued, "it must be evident to the Japanese that in case of such an attack on the British, they would most certainly have to fight the United States within a relatively short time."¹²⁸

"What do you understand by 'binding agreement?'" Ferguson asked. "To be binding," Short said, "it should be approved by the Congress." He thought Bicknell "might have meant simply any agreement that had been made and approved by the president, and not made public, something that the president expected to set forth in the Senate."¹²⁹

Ferguson recalled that "we weren't consulted on the question of the shooting orders in the Atlantic. . . . Congress didn't say anything about that."¹³⁰ Short said he knew that the Navy Basic War Plan, Rainbow No. 5, had been "drawn up with the idea apparently that when it went into effect we would be allied with Britain and the Dutch."¹³¹ However, Short said he "felt at that time that the American public would not have been willing to have an agreement ratified that we would go to war to defend the Netherlands East Indies or Singapore."¹³²

On November 24 he said he received, through Kimmel, a Navy Department message stating that "a surprise aggressive movement in any direction including attack on Philippines or Guam is a possibility."¹³³

Then on November 27 Short said he received War Department radiogram No. 472 notifying him that "Negotiations with the

¹²⁸Ibid., part 7, p. 3173.

¹²⁹Ibid., p. 3174.

¹³⁰Ibid., p. 3180.

¹³¹Ibid., p. 3175.

¹³²Ibid., p. 3174.

¹³³Ibid., part 7, p. 2934; part 14, p. 1328, November 24, 1941, Navy Message 242005.

Japanese appear to be terminated to all practical purposes. . . . Japanese future action unpredictable but hostile action possible at any moment.” Short was told that “If hostilities cannot comma repeat cannot comma be avoided the United States desires that Japan commit the first overt act.” Short was “to undertake such reconnaissance and other measures as you deem necessary . . . so as not comma repeat not comma to alarm the civil population or disclose intent.”¹³⁴ In response, he alerted for sabotage and so notified Washington. Otherwise he received no Army warning of likely Japanese action or message giving diplomatic or military background that would have enabled him to judge the situation in the Pacific for himself.

SHORT NOT ADVISED OF AVAILABLE EVIDENCE OF IMMINENT CRISIS

Short said he was convinced that the

War Department was aware of the fact that I did not have this information [regarding the mounting U.S.-Japanese crisis] and had already decided that I should not get this information. . . . A definite decision had been made by the War Department that neither the Japanese intercepts nor the substance of them should be given to the commanding general in Hawaii.¹³⁵

He quoted Miles’s testimony before the committee: “There were no steps taken to distribute these messages to that General [Short].” This decision was in line with

the general policy laid down by the Chief of Staff that these messages and the fact of the existence of these messages or our ability to decode them should be confined to the least possible

¹³⁴Ibid., part 7, p. 2935; part 14, p. 1328, November 27, 1941, Army Message 472.

¹³⁵Ibid., part 7 pp. 2953–54. See also part 29, p. 2403.

number of persons; no distribution should be made outside of Washington.¹³⁶

Not only was Short denied the intelligence derived from MAGIC, but the information he did receive was confusing. "Navy messages were habitually rather more aggressive than the Army," Short said.

On October 16 [Kimmel] had a [Navy Department] message in which they said Japan would attack. On October 20 I had one from the War Department saying they didn't expect any [attack]. My message said nothing about a war warning and [Kimmel's] did.

Short thought "the Navy messages were inclined to be more positive, possibly . . . more alarming, in the context" than the Army's.¹³⁷

The War Department had sent Short no information concerning any U.S. military commitments arising out of the United States-British Staff Conversations and the Joint Canada-United States Defense Plan, which might have led him to expect U.S. involvement in the Far East. If he had known that Singapore had been alerted and that the Governor of the Netherlands East Indies had ordered "comprehensive mobilization of his armed forces," Short testified, he would have realized that "they considered war very imminent out there. . . . It would have meant possible hostilities on Hawaii, but not necessarily an attack."¹³⁸

He was asked about two December 3 Navy messages sent to Kimmel. One had announced that Japanese diplomatic and consular posts at Hong Kong, Singapore, Batavia, Manila, Washington, and London had been instructed to destroy codes,

¹³⁶*Ibid.*, part 7, p. 2954. See also part 2, p. 791, Miles testimony.

¹³⁷*Ibid.*, part 7, p. 2983. See part 14, p. 1327, Navy October 16, 1941, Message 162203, and War Department October 20, 1941, Message 1234P.

¹³⁸*Ibid.*, part 7, p. 3176.

ciphers, and secret documents.¹³⁹ The other reported that Tokyo had ordered London, Hong Kong, Singapore, and Manila each to destroy its “Purple” machine; the Batavia machine, it said, had already been returned to Tokyo.¹⁴⁰ Short denied having known about either message.¹⁴¹

Like Kimmel, Short did not expect a break in U.S.-Japanese relations as long as the representatives of the two nations were still talking in Washington. Neither man knew, as Washington officials had learned from the intercepts, that the Japanese considered the negotiations “*de facto* ruptured” and that the Japanese ambassadors were only keeping up the pretense of negotiating. From what Kimmel and Short could glean from newspaper accounts, the negotiations were continuing, supposedly in good faith.

Short, again like Kimmel, had been led to believe that an attack on Pearl Harbor, although possible, was not probable. In view of Hawaii’s large population of Japanese aliens, sabotage and subversion seemed much more likely than an attack from outside. He reiterated that messages from the War Department (see above) had led him to the view that the “prime desire” of the U.S. government was “to avoid war and to not let any international incident happen in Hawaii that might bring on war.”¹⁴²

Short’s task, as he interpreted No. 472, was to guard against “hostile action” in the form of sabotage and subversion. Thus Short had responded by reporting that he had alerted for sabotage. Several other messages from Washington at about the same time also advised him to guard against sabotage, reassuring him in his decision. Hearing nothing further from Washington during the nine days between his November 27 sabotage alert report

¹³⁹Ibid., part 14, p. 1407, OPNAV #031850.

¹⁴⁰Ibid., p. 1408, OPNAV #031855.

¹⁴¹Ibid., part 7, p. 3105.

¹⁴²Ibid., pp. 2978–79.

and the attack, he could only assume that his action had been appropriate.

Short mentioned two messages in particular that had been available in Washington and that would have been “more important than those that were sent” to Pearl Harbor—the ships-in-harbor bombing-plan intercepts and the December 7 “One P.M. Message.”¹⁴³ He said that had that message been relayed immediately by scrambler phone—both he and Marshall had such phones and it took only about ten or 15 minutes to get a message through—it would have reached him four hours before, instead of seven hours after, the attack.¹⁴⁴

Short said Marshall’s last-minute message, concerning the “One P.M. Message,” was marked:

Delay in deciphering due to not being marked “Priority” in Washington. . . . If this message had been sent by scrambler telephone there would have been time to warm up the planes and put them in the air. . . . The fact that the War Department sent this message by radio in code instead of telephoning it in the clear . . . indicates that the War Department, even as late as 6:48 A.M., December 7th, Honolulu time, did not consider an attack on Honolulu as likely enough to warrant drastic action to prepare the islands for the sneak attack.¹⁴⁵

Short quoted the War Department’s *Field Service Manual* on the importance of “adequate and timely military intelligence” to enable the commander “to draw logical conclusions concerning enemy lines of action. Military intelligence is thus an essential factor in the estimate of the situation and in the conduct of subsequent operations.”¹⁴⁶ Asked if he was complaining because he

¹⁴³Ibid., part 12, pp. 261–63, 248.

¹⁴⁴Ibid., part 7, pp. 3220, 3041.

¹⁴⁵Ibid., pp. 2940, 3220–322.

¹⁴⁶Ibid., p. 2961. See War Department, FM 100-5. *Field Service Regulations: Operations*, May 22, 1941, p. 40, paragraph 194.

had made an error and Washington hadn't corrected him, Short replied: "[I]f you are not furnished information you in all probability will make an erroneous estimate."¹⁴⁷ Also in the War Department's *Field Service Regulations*:

The best information will be of no use if it arrives too late at the headquarters for which it is intended. . . . Important and urgent information . . . is sent by the most rapid means available to all headquarters affected, without regard to the usual military channels.¹⁴⁸

Committee Chairman Barkley was skeptical that more information would have enabled Short to judge the situation any better than he had.

Barkley: Everybody in Washington, all the high officers in Washington—Navy, Army, Intelligence, War Plans, General Staff—all saw these intercepted messages. . . . They all have testified that, notwithstanding those messages, they did not really expect an attack at Pearl Harbor and were surprised when it came. Do you think that if you . . . or if the admiral . . . or both of you together had gotten them, you would have reached any different conclusion from that reached by everybody in Washington?

Short: I think there was a possibility because Pearl Harbor meant a little more to us. We were a little closer to the situation and . . . would have been inclined to look at that Pearl Harbor information a little more closely. We might not have made the correct decision, but I believe there was more chance that either we or someone on our staffs would have had the idea. . . .

¹⁴⁷Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 7, p. 2986.

¹⁴⁸War Department, FM 100-5. *Field Service Regulations: Operations*, May 22, 1941, pp. 46-47, paragraphs 227 and 228.

Barkley: If that is true, why did you rely for the action you took upon some definite instruction from Washington instead of exercising greater judgment and discretion in doing what you could do with what you had?

Short: Because they were my only sources of information. I had no source of information outside Hawaii, except the War Department. . . . [T]he War Department had many sources of information. They had military attaches. They got reports from the State Department and the Commerce Department. They had a certain number of agents scattered around in the Far East. If they were in a position to get information that I had no access to at all, I had every reason to believe that their judgment would be better than my just . . . reading the newspapers.¹⁴⁹

SHORT DEFENDS ARMY'S EFFORTS DURING ATTACK

Immediately after the attack, Short said he made several reports by telephone to Washington. Then he sent a radiogram giving a succinct account of the event from the Army's viewpoint:

Japanese enemy dive bombers estimated number sixty attacked Hickam Field Wheeler Field Pearl Harbor at eight am Stop Extensive damage to at least three hangars Wheeler Field three hangars Hickam Field and to planes caught on the ground Stop Details not yet known Stop Raid lasted over one hour Stop Unconfirmed report that the ships in Pearl Harbor badly damaged Stop Marine air field EWA also badly damaged Stop Details later.¹⁵⁰

Before the last raid was completed, Short said, a total of 14 U.S. planes got in the air. "They shot down 10 enemy planes." Senator Lucas was impressed: "So it is a pretty safe assumption

¹⁴⁹Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 7, pp. 3012–13.

¹⁵⁰*Ibid.*, p. 3096.

that if the planes had been warmed up and ready to go that, considering what you did with the 14 planes . . . the damage would have been minimized considerably?”

Short: No question about that. I think our pilots showed that they were superior to the Japanese pilots in individual combat that day.¹⁵¹

When Navy Secretary Knox visited Pearl Harbor immediately after the attack, Short said,

He went completely through my field headquarters and spent, I would say, probably 2 hours, in which we had officers detailed from every section to explain everything that had happened. He got a very complete picture not only of our headquarters but how we were functioning and exactly what happened, and at the end of the time he was so impressed with our headquarters that he directed the Navy to make arrangements to move over into an underground headquarters right alongside of us.¹⁵²

Representative Keefe said to Short, summarizing:

[A]s commander at Pearl Harbor prior to December 7, 1941, and subsequent to your appointment to that important position, you did everything within your power to provide the physical things necessary to provide for the defense of the Hawaiian Islands.

Yet, Keefe said, Short had testified “as to many items of physical property, such as guns, installations, radar equipment, air strips, buildings, and so on,” that he had not received “but a small part of the material that you had requested prior to December 7, 1941.” But according to Marshall’s testimony,

¹⁵¹Ibid., pp. 3068, 3069–70.

¹⁵²Ibid., p. 3165.

the material which you did have at Pearl Harbor on December 7, if alerted and effectively used, would have given a good account of itself and perhaps enabled you to repel the attack, or to severely minimize the damage that was caused. Do you agree with that?

Short said he “could have given a better account” of himself if he had had more equipment. For example, the “best anti-aircraft defense against low-flying planes,” the armaments that had done the most damage in the attack, were .50 caliber machine guns. At the time of the attack, he had had only 109, although the program at that time had called for 345. The number of .50 caliber machine guns in Hawaii had actually been increased by December 1, 1942, to 793, showing how many the War Department considered necessary. “[A]nd keep in mind that that date is after the Japanese had been seriously defeated at Midway.”

Keefe pressed on. “The fact of the matter is, is it not, that except for the possibility of getting a few more guns into action and possibly minimizing, to a small extent, the damage that was done . . . this attack would have come in by surprise, isn’t that true?”

Short: With the information . . . we had from Washington, it was bound to be a surprise.”¹⁵³

SHORT CLAIMS HIS RETIREMENT
HANDLED BY GENERAL STAFF, MADE HIM
A SCAPEGOAT; HE DEFENDS HIMSELF AGAINST
ROBERTS COMMISSION CHARGES

After the attack, Short had been relieved of his command. According to him, Marshall’s testimony “conveyed the idea” that

¹⁵³Ibid., p. 3210.

Short's retirement "had been handled entirely by the Secretary of War [Stimson] and that he [Marshall] had had nothing to do with it, in fact he was not cognizant of what was being done." However, that apparently was not the case; the correspondence, Short said, "did not agree with that."¹⁵⁴

Ferguson quoted from Short's prepared statement to the effect that he did not feel he had been "treated fairly, or with justice by the War Department." In that statement, he said he thought he had been "singled out as an example, as the scapegoat for the disaster."¹⁵⁵

Ferguson: I wish you would be specific and tell me whom you had in mind [by saying] the War Department?

Short: I had in mind the General Staff in particular [headed by Marshall], because they were primarily responsible for the policies pursued by the War Department. . . . General Gerow as head of the War Plans Division had the direct responsibility for keeping me informed. General Miles, the head of G-2, had a very direct responsibility.

Ferguson: What about the Secretary of War? . . .

Short: . . . I would not have expected him to be as fully aware of the significance of technical things. I would expect him to be fully aware of any policy.

Ferguson: Now, when you use the word "scapegoat," will you give us the meaning that you want to convey to us in that word?

Short: It seems to me that may be a slang expression, but it is a word in very common usage, and I meant just exactly what the common usage meant, that it was someone that they saddled

¹⁵⁴Ibid., part 7, p. 3170.

¹⁵⁵Ibid., p. 2964.

the blame on to get it off of themselves. . . . That is exactly what I want to convey.¹⁵⁶

The same two basic accusations made against Kimmel by the Roberts Commission had also been made against Short: “dereliction of duty” and “errors of judgment.” Under date of April 20, 1942, the War Department formalized the Roberts Commission accusations against Short into 11 specific charges, each of which was considered a violation of the 96th Article of War.¹⁵⁷ When Ferguson questioned Short, he pleaded “not guilty” to each of the 11 charges.¹⁵⁸ He explained that his actions in every case had been limited by equipment shortages and shaped by the limited information supplied him. He had done the best he could, he said, given the resources and information available.

1. *Failure to provide an adequate inshore aerial patrol.*

“Not guilty,” Short said. He “did have an adequate patrol. The air people were satisfied and had full control. . . . [I]t was not designed for air defense.” He was using all the equipment he had.

2. *Failure to provide adequate antiaircraft defenses.*

Not guilty. We would have had an adequate antiaircraft defense if the War Department had given us the equipment and had given us the information which indicated imminent attack. Or, if they had replied to my [sabotage alert] report and indicated any desired modification.

¹⁵⁶Ibid., p. 3169.

¹⁵⁷Ibid., part 18, pp. 3211–15, F. Granville Munson, Colonel, J.A.G.D., April 20, 1942, memorandum for judge advocate general.

¹⁵⁸Ibid., part 7, pp. 3191–95.

3. *Failure to set up an Interceptor (radar) Command.*

Not guilty. We were training personnel as fast as we could to operate an effective interceptor command, and it was set up and operating as effectively as it could.

Short told of considerable delay encountered not only in getting the needed equipment, but also in obtaining Department of Interior permission to erect the radar towers on national park land.¹⁵⁹

4. *Failure to provide a proper aircraft warning service.*

Not guilty. We were training our personnel as fast as we could to set up an effective aircraft-warning service. It was in operation.¹⁶⁰

5. *Failure to provide for the transmission of appropriate warnings to interested agencies.*

Not guilty. We were restricted by direct order from Marshall, from transmitting the November 27 warning to any other than the minimum essential officers. . . . If I had set up an aircraft-warning service and gotten it to everybody we would have had to give it to all the enlisted men.

6. *Failure to establish a proper system of defense by cooperation and coordination with the Navy.*

Not guilty. We had full, complete plans for defense by cooperation with the Navy, which had been approved by General Marshall and Admiral Stark. . . . It would have been carried out 100 percent if they would have given us the information they had.

¹⁵⁹Ibid., pp. 3157–58.

¹⁶⁰Ibid., p. 3192. See also pp. 3057–58, 3182–84.

7. Failure to issue adequate orders to his subordinates as to their duties in case of sudden attack.

Not guilty. I could not tell “subordinates” to expect a sudden attack which neither I nor the War Department nor anyone else expected. Our information regarding impending hostile action was, by direction of the chief of staff, limited to the minimum essential officers. Our standard operating procedure of 5 November 1941 prescribed fully the duties of all personnel in event of any sudden attack.

As to the civilians,

We had a number of alerts and blackouts. We had had definite training of the surgical teams and of the first-aid people and of the ambulance corps. . . . And I think that the civilian agencies that had to act not only knew but they performed their duties extremely well on December 7.

8. Failure to take adequate measures to protect the Fleet and Naval Base at Pearl Harbor.

Not guilty. I took every measure I thought necessary to protect the fleet and naval base against sabotage. I so reported to the War Department. Marshall testified that I was reasonable in assuming that I was doing exactly what he wanted, because otherwise he would have notified me that he wanted more measures taken.

9. Failure to have his airplanes dispersed in anticipation of a hostile attack, after having been warned of the danger thereof.

Not guilty. I was never warned of any imminent danger of an air attack. The planes were therefore grouped for more adequate protection against hostile action in the form of sabotage.

10. Failure to have his airplanes in a state of readiness for an attack.

Not guilty. My aircraft were not in a state of readiness for a surprise attack, but were protected against sabotage as directed by the War Department in the sabotage-alert messages of 27th, of 28th November 1941, and as reported to the War Department by me. If they had been equipped with ammunition, grouped as they were, and a sabotage attack had been made, there would have been much more damage by exploding ammunition.

11. *Failure to provide for the protection of military personnel, their families, etc., and of civilian employees on various reservations.*

We made a quite elaborate plan for evacuating the families of civilians on the military reservation. We asked the War Department for money to establish a camp some 4 miles east of Schofield. I wrote a personal letter to the Chief of Staff and told him that we were asking for the money to establish these camps on the basis of recreation camps. . . . [B]ut our real purpose was to get ready for a possible attack. . . . He answered my letter and stated that guns were needed worse for other purposes.

Thus Short pleaded “not guilty” to number 11 also.¹⁶¹

* * * * *

As the committee wound up its questioning of Short, Barkley asked him if he wished to make any further statement. Short said,

As a matter of the interests of the country and as a loyal soldier, I maintained a steadfast silence for 4 years and I bore the load of public censure during this time and I would have continued to bear it so long as I thought the question of national security was involved. However, the war is now ended.

¹⁶¹Ibid, pp. 3194–95.

He said he was “very appreciative of the opportunity [I have been given] to make a full and frank statement of my point of view.” Short thanked the committee members for their attitude and assured them that he had “tried to give them fully and frankly all the information” he could on the subject.¹⁶²

¹⁶²Ibid., p. 3231.

29.

Joint Congressional Committee on the Investigation of the Pearl Harbor Attack November 15, 1945–May 31, 1946: Part 3

The Joint Congressional Committee still had many potential witnesses on its list whose testimony was expected to prove important. Among these were Admiral R.E. Ingersoll, Assistant Chief of Naval Operations, as well as several men who had been closely concerned with MAGIC—Captain L.F. Safford, who had been in charge of the security section of Naval Communications; Captain A.D. Kramer, Navy translator and courier; and Colonel Rufus S. Bratton, Army courier. The JCC members did not find it easy to learn how much was known in Washington before the attack about the imminence of war, when it was known, and how much information was relayed to the Pearl Harbor commanders.

TOP WASHINGTON OFFICIALS CONFER DAILY ON IMPENDING CRISIS

When testifying before the Hart and Navy Court Inquiries, Assistant Chief of Naval Operations Ingersoll had admitted having seen the “Winds Execute” before December 7, 1941.¹ However, in his JCC testimony he belittled its importance as a war warning:

[T]he wording in that winds message did not say that we are going to be in a state of war or that hostilities now exist. It referred to a rupture of diplomatic negotiations or that the situation between the countries was becoming critical. . . . If you rupture diplomatic negotiations you do not necessarily have to burn your codes. The diplomats go home and they can pack up their codes . . . and take them home.

Ingersoll considered the destruction of the code dispatches much more important.

[T]hey not only told their diplomats in Washington and London to burn their codes but they told their consuls in Manila, in Hong Kong, Singapore, and Batavia to burn their codes. And that did not mean a rupture of diplomatic negotiations, it meant war, and that information was sent out to the fleets as soon as we got it.²

[W]hen we received the original message which set up the winds code that became important then because that would be the first indication that we would get of when the Japanese thought they would rupture negotiations or be at war if a broader interpretation were placed on it. . . . [B]ut once we had

¹79th Cong., 1st sess. Joint (Congressional) Committee on the Investigation of the Pearl Harbor Attack. *Pearl Harbor Attack*, 39 vols. (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1946), part 9, pp. 4223–24, portions of Hart and NCI testimony reproduced.

²*Ibid.*, p. 4226.

learned that they were destroying their codes then the winds message lost its importance. . . . [T]he fact that the consulates were included cinched it in my opinion that it was war and not a rupture of diplomatic negotiations or diplomatic relations.³

Ingersoll did not recall having seen any of the several “ships-in-harbor” intercepts, not even the one that divided Pearl Harbor into five areas “to report each shifting and visit of ships from one area to another.” If he had, he “would have wanted to know why they were interested in the actual location of a ship within a harbor as distinguished from whether or not the ship just happened to be in port.” If he had seen that dispatch, his suspicion would have been aroused. He thought “Admiral Kimmel should have been informed.”⁴

Ingersoll had known of the November 29 deadline set by the Japanese, after which things were automatically going to happen. It was well known that Japanese troops could reach several potential targets in southeast Asia in a very short time: China, Indochina, Formosa. The situation was reviewed almost daily, he said, at conferences in the office of Navy Secretary Knox. Yet day after day went by after the November 29 deadline without a Japanese strike.

Ingersoll: There was a conference in Mr. Knox’ office every morning in which the Director of Naval Intelligence presented the whole situation . . . and the possibilities were discussed . . . by the Director of War Plans, Admiral Turner. . . . The situation was reviewed every morning.

Gearhart: Were there in those meetings after the 29th discussions of why that had occurred, after we had read the Jap intercept that after the 29th things were going to happen

³Ibid., pp. 4232–33.

⁴Ibid., pp. 4236–37.

automatically? . . . Did anybody in those meetings raise the question that possibly the Japanese were sailing to a distant point of attack?

Ingersoll: No: none that I recall. . . . The question of an attack on Pearl Harbor, of course, was always considered as a possibility. . . . [T]he places in the Far East were the only places of which we had definite information towards which the Japanese were moving.⁵ . . . I did not think that the Japanese would risk an air attack on Pearl Harbor. . . . [O]ur estimate was that the Japanese would not do that, that they were fully occupied with what they were doing at that time, and that the risks were too great.⁶

In view of our knowledge of Japanese military movements and our close political ties with the British and Dutch, Representative Gearhart and Senator Ferguson tried to determine what the United States would have done had the Japanese struck British and/or Dutch positions and not U.S. territory.

Ferguson: Did you know what our policy was prior to Pearl Harbor . . . if there was an attack on the Malay Peninsula, what the position would be of the United States of America, as far as the Navy or the Army were concerned?

Ingersoll: As far as the Navy and Army were concerned, what we would do was contained in our war plans. . . . I do not think there was anybody in the Navy Department who knew what would happen if Japan went into the Malay Peninsula, or into Siam, or Thailand. . . . The position of the Navy would have been the position taken by the United States Government, and what the president would have recommended to the Congress

⁵Ibid., pp. 4235–36.

⁶Ibid., pp. 4237, 4239.

about declaring war. The Navy's position would have been exactly the position of the United States.⁷

Ingersoll did not believe the United States would go to war in the Pacific "without any recommendation to the Congress," as they had in the Atlantic. That was "not a legal war. . . . [T]he Germans were still here in Washington and they had not declared war on us for all that we had been doing to them in the Atlantic."⁸ The next day Ingersoll half-apologized for this remark. He had

almost humorously called the war in the Atlantic as illegal. It was more in the nature of irregular. . . . In the Atlantic we were doing some things which only a belligerent does. There had been no declaration of war. We had done a great many things that under international law, as it was understood before the last war, were unneutral. . . . It was apparently to her [Germany's] advantage to have us as a nonbelligerent rather than as a full belligerent.⁹

PRESIDENT ORDERS "DEFENSIVE INFORMATION PATROL" IN SOUTH CHINA SEA

The U.S. government was receiving information on Japanese ship movements in the southwest Pacific and China Sea from our daily overflights as well as from reports from the British. Yet at about 7 P.M. on December 1, the "president direct[ed]" Admiral Thomas Hart, commander-in-chief of the Asiatic Fleet in Manila, to charter "3 small vessels to form a 'defensive information patrol'."¹⁰ The three small ships were to be manned by a U.S. naval officer and equipped with one small gun and a machine

⁷Ibid., p. 4246.

⁸Ibid., pp. 4246–47.

⁹Ibid., p. 4249.

¹⁰Ibid., part 14, p. 1407, OPNAV Dispatch #012356.

gun, the “[m]inimum requirements to establish identity as U.S. men-of-war.” They were to be stationed in the paths of known Japanese ship movements: (1) between Hainan Island (China) and Hue on the east coast of Indochina, now Vietnam; (2) east of the Indochina coast between Camranh Bay and Cape St. Jacques; and (3) off Pointe de Camau on the southern tip of Indochina. All three vessels were “to observe and report by radio Japanese movements in west China Sea and Gulf of Siam.”

Ferguson wanted to know why Stark had ordered three small vessels to watch for Japanese movements on British possessions. Ingersoll replied simply the dispatch had said,

“president directs.” . . . That was our reason for doing it. Admiral Stark was told by the president to do it. . . . Admiral Hart was already conducting reconnaissance off that coast by planes from Manila. . . . I am sure Admiral Stark would not have done this unless he had been told. . . . We did not initiate this movement, sir, and we were getting . . . sufficient information from Admiral Hart by the searches which his planes were making.¹¹

¹¹Ibid., part 9, pp. 4252–53. Of these three small vessels, only one got to sea before the Japanese attack. The *Isabel* left Manila on December 3, with orders to proceed to Camranh Bay on the Indochina coast, ostensibly to search for a lost Navy PBY plane. On the 5th, about 22 miles from the Indochina coast, she was sighted by a Japanese Navy plane, and ordered to return to Manila, where she arrived on December 8 (Kent Tolley, *Cruise of the Lanikai* [Annapolis, Md.: Naval Institute, 1973], pp. 269–70). The second ship, the *Lanikai*, skippered by then Lieutenant Kent Tolley, was preparing to leave Manila when the attack came. She patrolled the coast of the Philippines for a couple of weeks, finally departing Manila on December 26, and after some adventures reached Australia (ibid., p.120). The third small ship selected, the *Molly Moore*, was never commissioned; when the attack came, her mission became “superfluous” (ibid., p. 272). Author’s note: Apparently Hart looked on the mission of these three small vessels as “mission impossible.” When ordering the *Lanikai* to the coast of Indochina (ibid., p. 19), Hart said he had felt he was sending its skipper “on what looked like a one way mission.” Tolley thought FDR may have been offering these small ships and the men aboard “to bait an incident, a casus belli” (ibid., p. 279). Hart wanted to know why the president had sent

Had the president “personally” given him, Stark, the order to send the dispatch concerning these vessels? Stark said he had discussed with the president

where this [Japanese] expedition going south was likely to hit. His [the president’s] thought was the Kra Peninsula. . . . The Philippines was a possibility and . . . the East Indies, and just where it would go we did not know and these three small vessels were to assist in that determination. . . . [Y]ou will see where the president put them they were well placed to get information either positive or negative and it was for that reason and for the reasons as stated in the dispatch, to get information, that he directed that be done. . . . He says “to form a defensive information patrol; to accomplish a purpose which is to observe and report by radio Japanese movements in the West China Sea and Gulf of Siam,” and then he himself designated where those vessels were to be placed and they were well placed for the purposes for which he wanted them. . . . I simply think that he thought that was additional precautions. He was intensely interested in every move at that time, as we all were.¹²

Of course, one cannot know what FDR had in mind in issuing this directive; it may have been out of concern for his commitments to the British and Dutch; he may have been trying to do what Stimson had suggested at FDR’s “War Cabinet” meeting, November 25, to “maneuver them [the Japanese] into the position of firing the first shot without allowing too much danger to ourselves.”¹³ Few would be killed or wounded by a shot fired on such a minimally-equipped “U.S. man-of-war.” Yet it might be incident enough to call for U.S. military intervention against the Japanese.

the message ordering these vessels to sea; he felt the order might have been a reflection on his overflight reports. (PLG 1962 interview of Hart.)

¹²Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 5, pp. 2190–91.

¹³*Ibid.*, part 11, p. 5433, Stimson’s diary entry of November 25, 1941.

MAINTAINING THE SECRECY OF THE JAPANESE INTERCEPTS AND MAGIC

It was apparent throughout the several investigations that special effort had been made to keep information about the “Purple” machines and the MAGIC intercepts secret. Quite understandably, extreme caution was necessary before the war to prevent any security leak. And during the war, when the intercepts were still yielding intelligence valuable in the struggle against the Japanese, it was necessary to continue to maintain tight security. However, the determination to maintain silence persisted—even after August 1945, when Japan surrendered, and even after President Truman, who had taken office on the death of FDR, had revealed the existence of MAGIC by releasing to the public the SECRET 1944 reports of the Navy Court of Inquiry and the Army Pearl Harbor Board.¹⁴ When finally, in December 1945, the restrictions against revealing MAGIC were further relaxed to permit witnesses before the JCC “to testify and give information regarding cryptanalytic activities which had to do with the investigation of the Pearl Harbor incident,”¹⁵ many witnesses revised their stories.

Safford, Bratton, and Kramer had been intimately involved in handling the Japanese intercepts and each had been questioned at length during previous investigations while the war continued. Each had then faced the same dilemma—how to respond to pressures placed on them by wartime patriotism and loyalty to their superior officers, and how to testify under oath to the truth as they saw it without revealing military secrets. Then when questioned during the JCC hearings after the war and after restrictions had been relaxed, they had to decide whether to modify or to

¹⁴*Ibid.*, part 8, pp. 3736–40.

¹⁵*Ibid.*, Report, p. 498.

defend their previous testimony. As we shall see, each responded differently.

CAPTAIN L.F. SAFFORD, NAVAL COMMUNICATIONS
SECURITY, DISCOVERS KIMMEL HAD NOT
BEEN SENT MAGIC

In 1941 Safford had been in charge of the security section of Naval Communications. He testified that after the attack, he, like millions of other Americans, blamed Kimmel for the terrible losses at Pearl Harbor. He assumed Kimmel had been sent information derived from MAGIC. Safford was bitter; he could not understand why Kimmel had not been ready for the attack. Safford said he thought that if Kimmel had received the “Winds Execute,” which Safford had seen on December 4, Kimmel surely would have recognized its significance and would have “been completely ready for the attack on Pearl Harbor, in fact with his fleet at sea, and Pearl Harbor just an empty nest.”¹⁶

After Safford read the Roberts Commission report, he expected to be called “as a witness for the prosecution” against Kimmel. So he began to review the pre-attack record.¹⁷ To his dismay, Safford discovered that important information derived from the MAGIC intercepts decoded before the attack, had *not* gone to Kimmel. By mid-January 1944, Safford realized that the Navy Department had not sent out the war warning prepared by Captain McCollum, which Safford had read in Admiral Noyes’s office on the afternoon of December 4, 1941. His sense of justice was aroused; Kimmel had been unfairly accused. Safford then shifted from siding with the “prosecution” to siding with the

¹⁶Ibid., part 8, p. 3859.

¹⁷Ibid., pp. 3715, 3877.

“defense.”¹⁸ At that point, Safford set the wheels in motion that led in time to revealing “Purple” and MAGIC information.¹⁹

On February 21, 1944, Safford called on retired Kimmel in New York.²⁰ From notes and memory, Safford related to Kimmel information that had been available before the attack in Washington, information which would have been invaluable to the Pearl Harbor commanders. Safford’s revelations were Kimmel’s first intimation that, in spite of his requests to be kept fully informed, Washington had not sent him pre-attack U.S.-Japanese information relevant to his situation as U.S. Fleet commander-in-chief. When Safford returned to Washington and attempted to document his assertions to Kimmel, however, he found to his amazement that pre-attack MAGIC intercepts, which were supposed to have been permanently retained in locked Navy files, were missing.

When Safford came before the JCC (February 1–5, 1946), he had already appeared, while the war was still going on, before the Hart inquiry, the APHB, the NCI, and the Hewitt inquiry.²¹ Both the APHB and NCI had been authorized by Congress to conduct thorough investigations and to handle super-secret materials. Safford had told them the truth about MAGIC and “Purple” as best he could, and he continued to stick to his story when appearing at the JCC.

Safford described to the Congressional Committee in considerable detail the procedure which had been followed to prevent knowledge of MAGIC and especially the “Winds Code Execute” from becoming known. The personal or immediate custodian was Lieutenant Commander Harrison, U.S. Naval Reserve. Safford explained that the only people who had access to then

¹⁸Ibid., p. 3715.

¹⁹Ibid., pp. 3857–59.

²⁰Ibid., p. 3751.

²¹Ibid., part 8, pp. 3555–813, 3842–93.

Commander, now Captain, Kramer's safe were those on duty under Captain Kramer. Everything was normally cleared through Commander Harrison. There were not more than ten people at the most— translators and the yeomen on duty in Kramer's section, the head of the section, Safford, or the officer who relieved Safford; or the Director of Naval Intelligence might possibly have called for files at any time. Any higher authority would have been given the files without question if he had requested them.²² A copy of the winds execute message should have been in the files of Safford's division, in the locked safe of Captain Kramer.

Safford: To the best of my knowledge the combination to the safe was held by Kramer and Harrison alone. There was a copy of the combination in a sealed envelope in my safe. There was another copy of the combination in a sealed envelope in the safe of the Aide to the Chief of Naval Operations. That was required for all safes in naval operations, so in case of casualty to the man who regularly opened the safe the safe could be opened when we had to. . . . I know of no occasion when we ever had to open those sealed envelopes, and enter the safe. I might add, whenever an officer was relieved, we changed the combination on his safe and substituted the new cards, and that was the only time we ever had to get into those envelopes.²³

Finally in 1944, Safford succeeded in locating a single set of most of the missing intercepts, had copies made, and placed in the files where they belonged.²⁴ However, one message, Japan's "Wind's Execute" which Safford considered especially crucial, was not found.

²²Ibid., part 8, pp. 3675–76.

²³Ibid.

²⁴Safford's conversations with the author. See also chapter 21, pp. 432–33.

SAFFORD CLAIMED “WINDS EXECUTE” WAS RECEIVED BEFORE DECEMBER 7. IF SO, WAS THAT SIGNIFICANT?

Washington officials were well aware of the impending crisis, Safford said. On December 3 the U.S. military attaché in the American embassy in Tokyo had been ordered to destroy his ciphers and codes.²⁵ On December 4, Greenwich time (December 3, Washington time), the U.S. naval attaché in Tokyo was ordered to do the same.²⁶ Also on December 4 the U.S. consular agents in the Far East had been told to destroy their codes.²⁷

When Safford knew he would be called to testify before the Congressional Committee, he prepared a written statement. It was primarily about the “Winds Code” setup. On November 26 and 28 Washington had learned from Tokyo Circulars 2353 and 2354 that Japan planned to broadcast in the course of a routine news program a false weather message with a hidden meaning.²⁸ If the Japanese embassies and consulates worldwide had to destroy their codes and code machines and could no longer decipher encoded messages, this so-called “Winds Code” setup would enable Tokyo to communicate secretly with her overseas officials and to advise them when events leading to war would “automatically begin to happen.”²⁹

Safford’s prepared statement started: “There was a Winds Message. It meant War—and we knew it meant War.”³⁰ By “we”

²⁵Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 14, p. 1409, Secret radiogram No.40, December 3, 1941. See also part 2, p. 841, Miles testimony.

²⁶*Ibid.*, part 8, p. 3782; part 14, p. 1408, Message #040330.

²⁷*Ibid.*, part 8, p. 3770; part 14, p. 1408, Message #040343 to CO MARDETs, Peiping and Tientsin.

²⁸*Ibid.*, part 12, Exhibit 1, p. 154, Japanese Circular #2353, translated November 28, 1941, and p. 155, Japanese Circular #2354, translated November 26, 1941.

²⁹*Ibid.*, part 8, p. 3580.

³⁰*Ibid.*, p. 3579.

Safford meant those who had been working on MAGIC and with whom he had been in close contact, such as Kramer, McCollum, Wilkinson, and Noyes.³¹ Safford considered that message clear evidence of the imminence of war. Thus he was “puzzled” when Washington officials did not send out any truly urgent warnings.³² In Safford’s words, the “Winds Execute” was “the unheeded warning of war.”³³ As soon as these Japanese “Winds Code” setup messages were intercepted, Admiral Wilkinson, director of Naval Intelligence, directed Safford through Admiral Noyes, director of Naval Communications, to alert all intercept stations capable of monitoring Japanese news broadcasts to listen for such a false weather announcement. Safford described for the committee the preparations he had made for intercepting this message.³⁴

Safford not only considered the “Winds Code” setup extremely important,³⁵ But he believed that the eagerness of senior U.S. officers to have Japanese news programs followed closely on the chance of intercepting such a false weather broadcast was evidence that they shared his view that it concerned something much more important than merely a break in diplomatic negotiations, that receipt of a “Winds Execute” would even portend the actual outbreak of war. U.S. government officials realized that if the Japanese implemented their “Winds Code” and actually sent such a false weather message, it would have had still further significance as a definite portence of conflict. Safford considered the implementation of the “Winds Code” “the most important message we had up to the time of the pilot message on December

³¹Ibid., p. 3704.

³²Ibid., p. 3655.

³³Ibid.

³⁴Ibid., p. 3584.

³⁵Ibid., pp. 3678, 3683, 3796–97.

6,” announcing that the Japanese reply to our note of November 26 was on its way.³⁶

The significance of the “Winds Execute,” if received, was reinforced by intelligence available from other sources: (1) the Japanese cable designating November 29 the deadline for terminating U.S.-Japanese negotiations, after which “things are automatically going to happen;”³⁷ (2) the instructions to overseas Japanese nationals to destroy their codes.³⁸ The “Winds Execute” gained further significance because of its indication that Japan wanted to reach its nationals all over the world after their codes were destroyed,³⁹ because of the positive evidence it would give that Japan definitely intended to act—soon,⁴⁰ and that war was about to start against the country or countries indicated—England? Russia? United States? According to Safford, any country, or countries, named in a “Winds Execute” would actually be involved in the war from the very beginning, and not just as a spectator.⁴¹ Thus the interception of a “Winds Execute” would provide us with an announcement of “the intentions and decision of the Japanese Government.”⁴² In Safford’s words, it would be “a short range forecast” of war.⁴³

Safford testified that a “Winds Execute” was actually intercepted in Morse code,⁴⁴ and that Navy courier Kramer had

³⁶Ibid., p. 3640.

³⁷Ibid., p. 3770; part 12, p. 165, Tokyo Message #812.

³⁸Ibid., part 8, p. 3770; part 12, various Tokyo Messages, pp. 209, 215, 216, 231.

³⁹Ibid., part 8, p. 3770.

⁴⁰Ibid., pp. 3711, 3770.

⁴¹Ibid., p. 3663.

⁴²Ibid., p. 3664.

⁴³Ibid., p. 3663.

⁴⁴Ibid., p. 3579, Safford statement, and pp. 3642, 3708, 3769, 3843, 3848, Safford testimony.

delivered it to him in his office on the morning of December 4, 1941, typed on yellow teletype paper.⁴⁵ It had indicated war with England and with the United States. Kramer had underscored the three code words in the message and had written below in pencil or colored crayon a rough translation:

War with England (including NEI, etc.)

War with the U.S.

Peace with Russia.

“This is it!” Kramer said as he handed the paper to Safford. This meant that Japan would soon be at war, not only with Great Britain but also with the United States. “This was the broadcast we had strained every nerve to intercept,” Safford said.

This was the feather in our cap. This was the tip-off which would prevent the U.S. Pacific Fleet being surprised at Pearl Harbor the way the Russians had been surprised at Port Arthur. This was what the Navy Communication Intelligence had been preparing for since its establishment in 1924—*War with Japan!*⁴⁶

Safford had immediately sent the “Winds Execute” by special messenger to Noyes, Naval Communications. If the messenger could not find Noyes in a reasonable time, he was to let Safford know. In a few minutes, Safford received word that the message had been delivered.⁴⁷

Representative Clark wanted to know if Safford had “immediately put it in the process of handling and distribution and disposal just as in the case of all other magic?” Safford said he had. He had checked Kramer’s folder of intercepts before Kramer had set out to make his daily routine deliveries of MAGIC intercepts

⁴⁵Ibid., part 8, pp. 3580, 3586.

⁴⁶Ibid., p. 3586.

⁴⁷Ibid.

about noon that day, December 4; the “Winds Execute” had been included.⁴⁸ So presumably it was delivered that day to the usual recipients. Not only that, Safford said, but “in addition, it was telephoned around to various people by Admiral Noyes and so far as I know that was the first time that had ever been done.”⁴⁹

About an hour later, Noyes called Safford on the inter-phone. He did not mention the “Winds Execute” specifically, but told Safford that “we had better tell Guam to destroy all their excess codes and ciphers.”⁵⁰ Safford then went to Noyes’s office—that was at about 3:00 P.M.—and there Noyes showed him a several-page message prepared in McCollum’s Far Eastern Section of Naval Intelligence.⁵¹ The final paragraph of McCollum’s long message, Safford testified, closely followed the “Winds Execute” giving “every indication . . . that Captain McCollum had read the winds message, had appreciated its importance, and was trying to get an urgent war warning out to the Pacific Fleet.”⁵²

Safford recalled that according to McCollum’s message: “Japan was about to declare war on the United States, about to declare war on England, including the Netherlands East Indies, and so forth, and would maintain peace with Russia.” The last sentence “added the forecast or evaluation ‘war is imminent’.”⁵³ After the discussion of McCollum’s message, Safford saw Wilkinson leave Noyes’s office with it in his hand, saying, “I am going to send this message if I can get the front office to release

⁴⁸Ibid., p. 3690.

⁴⁹Ibid., pp. 3587, 3683.

⁵⁰Ibid., pp. 3587, 3690.

⁵¹Ibid., pp. 3667, 3761, 3811, 3812.

⁵²Ibid., p. 3667.

⁵³Ibid., pp. 3796, 3811–12.

it.”⁵⁴ Safford learned much later that the McCollum message had not been sent.⁵⁵

SAFFORD RESPONDS TO “WINDS EXECUTE” AS CHIEF, NAVAL COMMUNICATIONS SECURITY

Being in charge of the security section of Naval Communications, Safford’s jurisdiction and responsibilities were limited to maintaining the security of communications; he was not permitted to send evaluations or orders to men in the field.⁵⁶ Any messages he sent had to deal specifically with maintaining document security. In fulfillment of this obligation and as a result of the receipt of the “Winds Execute,” he filed four messages for transmittal between 3:00 and 3:20 P.M. on the afternoon of December 4. He instructed the naval attachés at Tokyo, Peiping, Bangkok, and Shanghai “to destroy all secret and confidential files except those essential for current purposes.”⁵⁷ Similar instructions were sent to the commander-in-chief Asiatic Fleet in Manila.⁵⁸

Safford also sent a PRIORITY message to Guam and Samoa at 8 P.M. ordering a change in codes from their then-current code RIP 65 to a new code, RIP 66.⁵⁹ This order was promptly received in Guam. Seventeen minutes later, a SECRET message was released by Ingersoll to Guam, DEFERRED precedence to allow time for the new code, RIP 66, to be implemented, asking Guam to

⁵⁴Ibid., p. 3812.

⁵⁵Ibid., pp. 3701, 3715, 3812, 3878. See also pp. 3761–62, Safford’s January 22, 1944, letter to Kramer.

⁵⁶Ibid., p. 3781.

⁵⁷Ibid., pp. 3810, 3844; part 29, p. 2397, OpNav. No. 042019, with an information copy to the commander-in-chief Asiatic Fleet (Hart) but not to the C-in-C of the Pacific Fleet (Kimmel).

⁵⁸Ibid., part 29, p. 2397, #042018. No information copy was sent to Kimmel.

⁵⁹Ibid., p. 2397, #042000.

destroy all secret and confidential publications. . . . retaining minimum cryptographic channels necessary for essential communications. . . . Be prepared to destroy instantly in event of emergency all classified matter you retain.⁶⁰

Then in the attempt to warn Wake, Safford prepared a strong message that read in part: "In view of imminence of war destroy all registered publications on Wake Island except this system and current editions of aircraft code and direction finder code."⁶¹ Ingersoll refused to send this strongly worded message as drafted by Safford. He released instead an "ambiguous" message with Wake's name deleted from the text.⁶² Moreover, it was held up until December 6, when it "was sent deferred precedence which meant delivery [in Pearl Harbor for relay to Wake] by 9:00 on Monday morning, December 8, 1941." Safford didn't know when it got to Pearl Harbor but, he said,

no action was taken on it until long after the attack on Pearl Harbor; and then, because we had sent an ambiguous message, the fleet communication officer sent another ambiguous message. The net result was that when Wake was captured, I believe the 24th of December, some of the cryptographic aids fell into Japanese hands, and it was reported at the time by Commandant 14th Naval District, and later on some of the alphabet strips were captured at Kiska in some of the abandoned Japanese dugouts.⁶³

Given the limitations of their responsibilities and the Navy's restrictions on their duties, Safford and McCollum did all they

⁶⁰Ibid., part 8, p. 3845; part 14, p. 1408, #042017; part 29, p. 2398, #042017. Safford testimony at APHB; part 33, pp. 1178–79. #042017, NCI Exhibit 21. Information copy to commander-in-chief, Pacific Fleet.

⁶¹Ibid., part 29, p. 2399.

⁶²Ibid., part 14, p. 1408; part 29, p. 2399.

⁶³Ibid., part 29, p. 2399.

could to notify the field commanders.⁶⁴ But their intended warnings were watered down, their urgency reduced by being sent deferred priority, or withheld. The “Winds Execute” seemed to be virtually ignored. Safford could not understand why anyone would “want to fail to make use of a wind execute message that meant war.”⁶⁵

RECEIPT OF “WINDS EXECUTE” CONTESTED BY OTHER WITNESSES

Most of the questions addressed to Safford by members of the JCC concerned the “Winds Code” and its implementation. Had we, or hadn’t we, intercepted a “Winds Execute” before the attack on Pearl Harbor, as Safford maintained? Once the Navy intercepted and translated Japan’s “Winds Code” setup on November 28, its code clerks had been alerted to listen to Japanese news broadcasts. Safford insisted their efforts succeeded and that the broadcast in which the crucial false weather message was embedded was intercepted on December 4. Yet few people professed to believe him. They preferred to believe that the Japanese government really hadn’t implemented the setup before the attack at all and that therefore we couldn’t have intercepted a “Winds Execute.” The situation was complicated by the fact that Safford could find no copy of it in the Navy Department’s files. “[T]hose files could not be located,” he said. All documentary evidence concerning the receipt of a “Winds Execute,” together with all information relating to the instructions to watch for it, which had been sent to Cheltenham, Maryland, the station Safford claimed had intercepted it,⁶⁶ had vanished.

⁶⁴*Ibid.*, p. 3668.

⁶⁵*Ibid.*, p. 3655.

⁶⁶*Ibid.*, pp. 3756–58. Regulations required the receiving stations, including Cheltenham, to retain one copy of every intercept only until notified that the other two copies forwarded to the Navy Department had been received. Then

Until the August 1945 release to the press of the SECRET Army and Navy Pearl Harbor reports, the public had heard little or nothing about “Winds Code.” Safford gave Hart a list of “15 reliable witnesses” he believed had seen the “Winds Execute.”⁶⁷ In a May 14, 1945, memorandum to Lieutenant Commander John F. Sonnett, assistant attorney general in the Navy who had served as counsel to the Hewitt investigation, Safford listed 26 officers who he believed had known of its interception on December 4, 1941.⁶⁸ But when questioned, they denied it. Most of the people who had been in a position before the attack to know of the “Winds Execute,” if it had existed, swore they had never seen it.⁶⁹ In spite of their testimony, Safford believed that McCollum, Wilkinson, Hewitt, and Noyes, among others, knew it had been intercepted.

By the time Safford appeared before the committee, he could not name a single person whom he could confidently expect to corroborate the pre-attack receipt of the message; he “would rather not attempt to estimate what any other witness is going to say on the stand.”⁷⁰ Ferguson then cited three or four persons involved in the Pearl Harbor investigations other than Safford who admitted to having seen a “Winds Execute” prior to the attack. He quoted specifically from the testimony of Assistant Chief of Naval Operations Admiral Ingersoll before the Hart Inquiry and the Naval Court of Inquiry⁷¹—Safford said this “was

the receiving stations were free to destroy their copies if they wished. Or they could retain them temporarily for reference.

⁶⁷Ibid., p. 3727.

⁶⁸Ibid., p. 3611; part 18, p. 3347, Exhibit 151.

⁶⁹Ibid., part 8, pp. 3759–60.

⁷⁰Ibid., p. 3727.

⁷¹Ibid., pp. 3788–90, Ingersoll testimony before the Hart Inquiry. Concerning others who admitted having seen a “Winds execute” prior to the attack, Ferguson cited an affidavit by a Colonel Moses W. Pettigrew referring to an “implementation message” which he had seen “on or about the 5th of December 1941.”

the first time that I did not know that I was standing alone against the world in my testimony.”⁷²

SEEKING CORROBORATION OF HIS MEMORY SAFFORD WRITES KRAMER ON DUTY IN THE PACIFIC

Safford knew that Kramer was familiar with the “Winds Execute.” After all, it was Kramer who had translated the crucial passages and handed the teletyped intercept to Safford on the morning of December 4. Then a week or so later Kramer and Safford together had gone over “a special folder of messages leading up to Pearl Harbor” that Kramer was assembling for Acting Navy Secretary Forrestal, in Secretary Knox’s absence from the country—in Hawaii, then a territory, not yet a state—to investigate the attack. Safford believed a copy of the “Winds Execute” was included in that special folder.⁷³

Safford had discussed the “Winds” intercept with Kramer in the spring of 1943, before Kramer left for Pearl Harbor and active duty in the Pacific. At that time Kramer’s memory, Safford said, coincided with his own. They had not then looked for it, for they had both expected to “find everything pertaining to that winds message in the files.”⁷⁴ In any event, the “Winds Execute” was not then in controversy.⁷⁵

Ferguson also quoted from NCI Top Secret testimony by Admiral Turner to the effect that he had learned on December 6 that “The Winds message came in” and that it meant “at least a break in diplomatic relations and probably war.” Also a Lt. Col. Kendall J. Fielder who had testified before the Roberts Commission to “three signal words . . . as an indication that the code had been followed and that the attack was planned” (*ibid.*, part 8, pp. 3792–94).

⁷²*Ibid.*, p. 3793.

⁷³*Ibid.*, p. 3689.

⁷⁴*Ibid.*, pp. 3693, 3697.

⁷⁵*Ibid.*, pp. 3731, 3774–76.

After that, Safford had had no occasion to talk to anyone about the “Winds Execute” until late 1943, when he had been “ordered by the Director of Naval Communications to prepare a history of radio intelligence up to and including the attack on Pearl Harbor.”⁷⁶ He then began researching the pre-Pearl Harbor record, including of course the “Winds Code” setup and the “Winds Execute.” At that point Safford started asking anyone he encountered “who had been on duty in the War and Navy Departments, prior to Pearl Harbor, and might have been expected to have first hand knowledge of the winds message,” what they could remember about events of that period. That was when Safford learned from Commander Wesley A. Wright,⁷⁷ who had had it from McCollum, that McCollum’s long warning message of December 4 had not been sent.⁷⁸ He also discovered then that many intercept files were missing.⁷⁹

In his research of pre-Pearl Harbor radio intelligence, Safford testified, he wanted the benefit of Kramer’s recollections. So on December 22, 1943, he wrote Kramer, then in the Pacific.⁸⁰ He asked Kramer primarily about his December 6–7, 1941, deliveries of the Japanese 14-part reply to Washington’s top officials. The war was still in progress, so Safford phrased his questions “very carefully, in the event that my letter might fall into unauthorized hands.” He wrote: “We can’t find the original ‘Weather Report’ . . . and its translation. What became of it?”⁸¹ When Kramer

⁷⁶Ibid., pp. 3602, 3693.

⁷⁷Commander Wesley A. Wright. As of December 7, 1941, Wright was Assistant Communications Officer, in Pearl Harbor on the Staff of C-in-C. See Hewitt Inquiry, Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 36, p. 261.

⁷⁸Ibid., part 8, p. 3701, Safford January 22, 1944, letter to Kramer.

⁷⁹Ibid., p. 3706.

⁸⁰Ibid., p. 3691.

⁸¹Ibid., p. 3698.

replied, December 28, 1943,⁸² he answered the questions about the December 6–7 deliveries, but had misunderstood Safford’s question about the “Weather Report.”⁸³

Safford wrote a second letter January 22, 1944, asking many more questions about the “Winds Execute.”⁸⁴ This time he assigned code numbers to persons, dates, messages, places, etc., so that Kramer could answer Safford’s questions by citing numbers.⁸⁵ He also asked for Kramer’s comment on Safford’s suspicions since November 15, 1943, which he said had been confirmed December 2, 1943, and absolutely proved January 18, 1944, that Kimmel, long considered a scapegoat, was actually the “victim of a frame-up.” Safford said he had “overwhelming proof of the guilt” of OpNav and the general staff.⁸⁶

Kramer did not reply to Safford’s second letter. When Kramer later turned the correspondence over to the JCC, Safford’s remarks about a frame-up, OpNav, and the general staff returned to haunt him.

WHY WAS SAFFORD PRESSURED TO CHANGE HIS TESTIMONY ABOUT THE “WINDS EXECUTE”?

Safford knew that when Kramer testified before the NCI in Pearl Harbor during the summer of 1944, he had described in some detail the interception of the “Winds Execute” and his role in its translation and disposition.⁸⁷ Safford fully expected Kramer to acknowledge that a “Winds Execute” had been received before December 7. In fact, Safford said also that Kramer had told him,

⁸²Ibid., pp. 3699–700. Kramer to Safford, December 28, 1943.

⁸³Ibid.

⁸⁴Ibid., pp. 3700–04. Safford to Kramer, January 22, 1944.

⁸⁵Ibid.

⁸⁶Ibid., p. 3700.

⁸⁷Ibid., pp. 3804–05, 3806–07.

even after the start of the JCC hearings as recently as “[j]ust before Christmas” 1945, that he remembered the “Winds Execute.”⁸⁸

Over and over again the JCC members asked Safford about the “Winds Code” setup and whether a “Winds Execute” had actually been received before the attack. Why was no one other than Safford willing to testify to having seen the “Winds Execute” before December 7?

Safford: In 1945, there was a determined effort made to have me reverse my testimony before previous investigations and to say I had never seen the winds message.⁸⁹

Relentless effort was made to persuade him that he must be mistaken, that there had never been a “Winds Execute.” Lieutenant Commander John Sonnett, special representative of the secretary of the Navy and legal adviser to Admiral Hewitt, interviewed Safford several times. Sonnett had told Safford repeatedly that he thought his memory was playing him tricks, that he might be “suffering from hallucinations.” Sonnett told Safford he should

change [his] testimony to permit reconciling all previous discrepancies. . . . In some cases the idea was stated outright, in some cases it was implied, and in other cases it was unexpressed but obviously the end in view.⁹⁰

In all his experience as a commissioned officer of the Navy, Safford said, he had “never seen anything like it.” The whole procedure struck Safford as “quite unusual,” and he had prepared a memorandum on the subject “while the events were still fresh in

⁸⁸Ibid., p. 3710.

⁸⁹Ibid., p. 3606.

⁹⁰Ibid., pp. 3608–09, From Safford July 14, 1945, “Memorandum of Conversations in Connection With Admiral Hewitt’s Investigation of the Pearl Harbor Disaster.”

my memory.”⁹¹ Safford believed Sonnett had “employed similar tactics on other witnesses whose testimony had favored Admiral Kimmel, particularly Rochefort and Kramer.”⁹² When Sonnett testified before the JCC later, he denied that he had tried to influence Safford in any way.⁹³

Many witnesses mentioned a “false winds message” that was at one time believed authentic.

Richardson: Did it ever occur to you, that that [the false winds message] was the only message that ever came in there on the 4th, and that you were mistaken?

Safford: This is only about the 20th time such suggestion has been made to me, but I saw the winds message myself.⁹⁴

To Safford it began to look like a conspiracy. A message had been intercepted—he was sure of that—the so-called “Winds Execute,” that he considered “a short range forecast” of war, positive evidence that the United States would be involved from the very beginning in the war that was looming with Japan. Yet the Washington officials who, according to Safford, had received the message had really done nothing to warn the field commanders about it. McCollum’s long warning message had not been sent. What seemed like an orchestrated attempt had been made to persuade anyone who might have seen, or who had ever admitted seeing, the “Winds Execute” before the attack to deny it. One person after another named by Safford as possible witnesses, including those who had admitted during earlier investigations that they had seen it before the attack, changed their stories, decided they had been mistaken, or denied that they had seen it at all. Safford

⁹¹Ibid., p. 3607.

⁹²Ibid., p. 3610.

⁹³Ibid., part 10, pp. 5009–12.

⁹⁴Ibid., part 8, p. 3645.

himself, who refused to change his story, was vilified. Blame for the surprise attack had been levied by the Roberts Commission and by public opinion against the two Pearl Harbor commanders. And then there was the disappearance, not only of the “Winds Execute” message itself, which should have been retained in the files, but also any reference to the instructions to Cheltenham station concerning its interception.⁹⁵ Moreover, other crucial pre-attack MAGIC intercepts had turned up missing as well.⁹⁶

Representative John W. Murphy questioned Safford about his remarks in his letter to Kramer, to the effect that “No one in OpNav can be trusted” and that Kimmel “was victim of a frame-up.”

Murphy: Tell us who was in Opnav who could not be trusted. . . . Please give us some names. . . . Who were you saying could not be trusted? Names please. Who could not be trusted? . . . Names, please. I am still waiting. Waiting. Will you please give us the names as to who could not be trusted in Opnav? Please, sir. . . .

Safford: I prefer not to answer.⁹⁷

Murphy also asked Safford whom he was accusing of framing Kimmel and Short. Framing somebody, Murphy said, was “one of the meanest and lowest crimes.” When pressed to say whether he “felt that the General Staff of the United States Army under General Marshall, and the General Staff of the Navy under Admiral Stark had framed Kimmel and Short,” Safford replied, “I felt that way.”⁹⁸

⁹⁵Ibid., part 8, p. 3652, Safford testimony.

⁹⁶Ibid., p. 3686.

⁹⁷Ibid., pp. 3721–22.

⁹⁸Ibid., pp. 3723–24.

Senator Scott W. Lucas also questioned Safford ruthlessly about his letter to Kramer. He asked especially why the men whose names Safford had mentioned, “loyal and patriotic Americans” all, would want to secrete or destroy or disturb an important message of this kind. Safford finally said that he really had “no proper basis for suspicion” against Stark and Marshall. He had “no suspicion directed against any individual who can be named.” But the fact remained. “Official records have disappeared from the files of the Navy Department, and that is a suspicious circumstance. I have no idea how they disappeared. It is a fact that they are not present and cannot be accounted for.” However, Safford said he had “no suspicion against any individual.” He could name nobody.⁹⁹

Representative J. Bayard Clark was also relentless in questioning Safford. The effect of Safford’s “Winds Execute” testimony if true, Clark pointed out, was to accuse the most senior Army and Navy officers—Stark and Marshall—not only of “neglect of duty” but also of violating the criminal law of the land by secreting, removing, defacing or destroying public records. Safford admitted that his testimony was diametrically opposed to that of other witnesses. However, he said, the fact remained that documents were missing from the files.¹⁰⁰

Murphy even badgered Safford about his behavior at the time of the attack. Safford told the committee he had interpreted the “Winds Execute” to mean

that war would commence within two or three days in all probability, possibly Saturday, December 6, possibly Sunday, December 7. That was the best estimate that could be made as to the timing implied by a message of that nature.¹⁰¹

⁹⁹Ibid., pp. 3704–06.

¹⁰⁰Ibid., pp. 3684–86.

¹⁰¹Ibid., p. 3684.

The “One P.M. Message” had come in early that Sunday morning. Yet, Murphy pointed out, Safford had had no one on duty to translate that message promptly. He had left the office Saturday at 4:30 P.M. and was at home, in Murphy’s words, “still in pajamas having breakfast at 2:00.”¹⁰²

Safford explained that he had fulfilled his responsibilities as head of the security section of Naval Communications before he left the department on Saturday. He had done his best to alert the men in the field by sending out instructions concerning the need to destroy confidential codes and ciphers. He was not authorized to send out warnings to the field, and he had no responsibility to issue orders to the translators.¹⁰³ Neither the Japanese reply to our note of November 26 nor the “One P.M. Message” had come in before Safford’s duty ended on Saturday. Moreover, Sunday was his “regular day off.”¹⁰⁴ Even so, Murphy practically accused Safford of not being interested in protecting the American navy.

Murphy: Do I understand you to say you were not responsible for anything at all that might help with winning the war?

Keefe: Mr. Chairman, I don’t think that the answer bears any such interpretation. I think it is an unfair question. The witness didn’t testify to any such thing. The witness is entitled to some degree of fairness and fair play. . . . I object because the witness has testified that under the setup he had no responsibility for translators. You are trying to make it appear that he did have and had no interest in protecting the welfare of the Nation.¹⁰⁵

When Keefe had an opportunity to question Safford, he said he was “puzzled” and assumed other committee members were

¹⁰²Ibid., pp. 3715–18.

¹⁰³Ibid., p. 3746.

¹⁰⁴Ibid., p. 3777.

¹⁰⁵Ibid., p. 3746.

too. What “possible interest, personal interest” might Safford have in this controversy? “You realize, of course,” Keefe said to Safford, “that in view of the implications that have been stated in the cross-examination of you, especially by the gentleman from Pennsylvania [Murphy], that you have made some rather strong charges? . . . That may well militate against your career as a naval officer. Did you realize that when you came here as a witness?”

Of course, Safford replied, every time he had testified. True, he had “no personal interest, except I started it and I have got to see it through.”

Keefe: And despite the fact that you have nothing personally to gain, and everything to lose, you have persisted in this story every time you have testified?

Safford: I have.¹⁰⁶ . . . I believe the best defense is telling the truth.¹⁰⁷

Finally Safford completed five days (February 1–6) before the JCC, battered and bruised perhaps, but unbowed. His testimony remained consistent throughout the investigations.

Chief Warrant Officer Ralph T. Briggs, the Cheltenham code clerk who had intercepted the “Winds Execute,” had bowed to the command of his superior officer and did not testify. Safford had respected Briggs’s request for confidentiality, never mentioned his name, and revealed nothing Briggs had told him in confidence.¹⁰⁸ (Because of personal problems—his wife was going blind—Briggs complied with the order of Captain Harper, his superior officer, out of fear he would be fired if he disobeyed. Only since his retirement in 1977 has he acknowledged intercepting the

¹⁰⁶Ibid., pp. 3807–08.

¹⁰⁷Ibid., p. 3717.

¹⁰⁸See Chapter 28, pp. 671ff.

“Winds Execute” and located records proving this.¹⁰⁹ The reassurance Safford received from Briggs that a “Winds Execute” had actually been picked up on December 4, 1941 must have given him added confidence in standing up to the vigorous and grueling cross-examination by some of JCC’s Democratic members. His determination to learn the truth about Pearl Harbor persisted for the rest of his life. He worked closely with this author in trying to follow investigative leads and to explain discrepancies in some of the testimony.

Safford later was recognized for some of his contributions to cryptography. On February 11, 1946, the Navy Department awarded him the Legion of Merit “for his work as a cryptographic expert from March 1942 to September 1945.”¹¹⁰ In 1958 Congress rewarded him \$100,000 for his efforts in solving foreign codes and constructing our own codes.¹¹¹ And in 1983, a decade after his death, he was awarded a delayed patent for his invention that “overcomes jamming of radio communications.”¹¹²

KRAMER, U.S. NAVY TRANSLATOR AND COURIER, TESTIFIES

On February 6 Captain Alwin Dalton Kramer took the stand. Forty-two years old and a 1925 graduate of the Annapolis Naval Academy, Kramer had 21 years in the Navy. He had been in charge of a section of the Division of Naval Communications,

¹⁰⁹See John Toland’s *Infamy: Pearl Harbor and Its Aftermath* (New York: Berkley Books, 1983), “Postscript,” section 4, pp. 346–47. Toland reports the recollections of the Japanese naval attaché in Washington, Captain Yuzuru Sanematsu, who picked up the “Winds Execute” on December 4, 1941, and those of assistant attaché, Lieutenant Commander. Yoshimori Terai. See chapter 10, pp. 228–29.

¹¹⁰Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 9, p. 4344.

¹¹¹*Washington Star*, May 18, 1973.

¹¹²*The New York Times*, August 27, 1983.

but at the time of the attack he had actually been serving under Safford in the security section. During the crucial months before December 7, he had been the Navy's courier and Japanese translator. A couple of years after the attack, he was sent to the Pacific where he served under Admiral Nimitz in Pearl Harbor and then under Admiral Halsey in Noumea, New Caledonia. He had been promoted during the war from lieutenant commander to captain.¹¹³

As Japanese translator and Navy courier, Kramer had been a crucial player in the pre-attack situation. It was hoped that, with his intimate knowledge of the Japanese intercepts, he would be able to shed some light on the receipt of these intercepts and the timing of their delivery to the various recipients.

When he was sworn in by Chairman Barkley, the old Senate Caucus Room was packed, the audience tense in anticipation. Among those who had been attending the hearings regularly for weeks was Alice Roosevelt Longworth, daughter of the late Republican president, Theodore Roosevelt, and widow of the late speaker of the House, Nicholas Longworth. Mrs. Longworth was in her usual seat on a bench behind the committee members. At the other end of the room, was Mrs. Kramer, who was often seen, standing on her seat nervously biting her fingernails, during the five days her husband was a witness.

Kramer said he had been thoroughly familiar with the Japanese MAGIC intercepts, but "It was not essential for the activities of my section that I be so familiar with the negotiations," nor with the status of the diplomatic arrangements and intercourse between this country and Japan.¹¹⁴ However, his familiarity with the intercepts clearly made him one of JCC's most important witnesses.

¹¹³Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 8, pp. 3894–95, 3897.

¹¹⁴*Ibid.*, part 36, p. 81.

Kramer had not been called to testify before the Roberts Commission or the Hart inquiry. However, in 1943–44, when stationed in the South Pacific, he had had occasion to review the pre-attack situation. At that time he received two letters from Safford—one dated December 22, 1943,¹¹⁵ which he had answered, and a second dated January 22, 1944,¹¹⁶ which he had not.¹¹⁷ Then in mid-May 1944, Kramer’s commanding officer, Halsey, received a letter from Kimmel.¹¹⁸ Kimmel asked Halsey to consult Kramer about the “Winds Execute” and the December 6-7 deliveries of the crucial last-minute Japanese intercepts to top Washington officials.

Kramer reviewed the situation in his mind at that time and wrote a memorandum “For the benefit of Halsey,” answering in effect both Safford’s second letter and Kimmel’s letter to Halsey. Halsey read Kramer’s memorandum and returned it to him.¹¹⁹ Kramer did not send it to Safford. For reasons of security, he made only a single copy, which he retained in his personal files in a sealed envelope.¹²⁰

In September 1944 Kramer was issued travel orders to go from Halsey’s headquarters in New Caledonia to Pearl Harbor to testify before the Navy Court of Inquiry. When he appeared on September 13 he spoke quite readily about the arrangements made to intercept weather broadcasts, about his having been

¹¹⁵Ibid., part 8, pp. 3698–99.

¹¹⁶Ibid., pp. 3700–04.

¹¹⁷Ibid., part 9, p. 4093.

¹¹⁸Ibid., p. 4080–81; also part 18, pp. 3333–34, Exhibit 150, Kimmel letter to Halsey.

¹¹⁹Ibid., part 9, pp. 4079–84. See also pp. 4096–124, Kramer 1944 memorandum.

¹²⁰Ibid., pp. 4153–56.

shown the “Winds Execute” when it was received, and about his having helped to interpret it.¹²¹

The following spring the Hewitt inquiry had begun. On May 22, 1945, when Kramer appeared there, he was “less positive” that the “Winds Execute” had included the words referring to the United States, “Higashi no kaze ame.”¹²²

When recalled by Hewitt a couple of months later, Kramer was again questioned about the “Winds Execute,” this time by Lieutenant Commander John F. Sonnett, counsel to Hewitt and special assistant to the secretary of Navy. His testimony this time, on July 6, 1945, differed in important respects from his 1944 testimony before the NCI. In replying to Sonnett, Kramer adopted Sonnett’s phraseology, agreeing that “there was a ‘winds’ message,” but he could not say with certainty what the contents were.” Nor could he

recall the exact Japanese nomenclature used, but the phrase “not in accordance with expectations” . . . could have the implication of our words “relations are reaching a crisis,” . . . either a minor crisis or a major crisis.

It could mean simply that “negotiations concerning an understanding with the United States were at an end or that relations were to be broken or it could even mean that the crisis was so severe that war was imminent.”¹²³

In his testimony before the JCC, Kramer said that in mid or late September, before the committee began its work, he was invited to Stark’s home for lunch. Also invited were Schuirmann and McCollum.¹²⁴ The luncheon “was largely and primarily a social affair and we discussed old times.” But Kramer said “some

¹²¹Ibid., part 33, pp. 847–76.

¹²²Ibid., part 36, pp. 79–85.

¹²³Ibid., pp. 339–50.

¹²⁴Ibid., part 9, p. 4060.

aspects” of Pearl Harbor were discussed. “[T]he chief point” he remembered was “as to what time Admiral Stark got down [to his office Sunday morning, December 7] and whether there was a conference in his office.” There were no papers at the luncheon, and no mention was made of the “Winds Code” message, the “Pilot Message,” or the 14-part Japanese reply.¹²⁵

Then on September 28 Kramer was hospitalized.¹²⁶ (A month earlier he had gone to the Navy Medical Hospital at Bethesda for a routine physical check-up.) The hospitalization of “the most important witness in the [upcoming congressional] investigation” attracted press attention.¹²⁷ A United Press dispatch reported Republican charges, denied by the Navy, that he “had been ‘broken in mind and body’ and was being held incommunicado in a hospital psychopathic ward.”¹²⁸ An Associated Press story also held, quoting an unidentified source, that Kramer was “being badgered to change his original testimony.”¹²⁹ According to the *New York Times*, Kramer “had been beset and beleaguered . . . badgered and beset by an effort to breakdown (*sic*) his testimony.” He denied the charge and “asserted that he was feeling very well and would appear before the committee prepared to state fully ‘anything I know that they may want to know’.”¹³⁰

Kramer was visited in the hospital by Safford and committee members Gearhart and Keefe. Their conversation was “very pleasant in nature,” Kramer said; they made no attempt to “bulldoze”

¹²⁵Ibid., pp. 4061, 4063.

¹²⁶Ibid., pp. 3964, 4060.

¹²⁷Ibid., pp. 3964–65.

¹²⁸Ibid., p. 3966.

¹²⁹Ibid.

¹³⁰Ibid., p. 3965. Also C.P. Trussel, *New York Times*, November 12, 1945.

him into changing his opinion “or anything of that kind.”¹³¹ Kramer was also interviewed at the hospital by reporters.¹³²

KRAMER’S NCI “WINDS CODE” TESTIMONY VS. HIS “REFRESHED” JCC TESTIMONY

In his December 1943 and January 1944 letters, Safford had asked Kramer about his recollections of the pre-attack situation in Washington, especially about the “Winds Execute” and Kramer’s December 6–7 intercept deliveries. When Kramer appeared before the JCC, Keefe questioned him about his 1944 memorandum prepared for Admiral Halsey.¹³³ In that memorandum and again before the NCI, Kramer had detailed his role in translating and delivering the pre-attack intercepts. Passage by passage, Keefe went over the memorandum with Kramer. And passage by passage, Kramer modified his 1944 statements.¹³⁴

There were serious discrepancies between Kramer’s earlier (1944) NCI testimony and his later newly “refreshed” JCC recollections concerning the receipt, or non-receipt, of a “Winds Execute.” At the NCI, Kramer had testified quite readily about the “Winds Execute,” even volunteering details on his own: “Higashi No Kaze Ame is East Wind, Rain. . . . The sense of that, however, meant strained relations or a break in relations, possibly even implying war with a nation to the eastward, the United States.”¹³⁵ However, when Keefe questioned Kramer, he waffled:

Keefe: Was it the truth?

¹³¹Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 9, p. 3964.

¹³²*Ibid.*, p. 4078.

¹³³*Ibid.*, part 9, pp. 4080–81.

¹³⁴*Ibid.*, pp. 4093ff.

¹³⁵*Ibid.*, p. 4128.

Kramer: It was not, sir. . . . It was the truth as it came to my mind at the time. . . . [T]hat occasion, namely, the Naval Court of Inquiry, was the first time that the question of what country appeared in that piece of teletype ever came up in any conversation in which I was participating. . . .

Keefe: So that we now have a situation where you make a statement on a vital issue before the Naval Court of Inquiry which you admit was not true because you claim that subsequent events have now convinced you that the answer which you gave was not [true]; is that the fact? . . .

Kramer: [D]espite the fact that I was caught cold [at the NCI] on that point when the question was propounded my reaction even then was that only one country was involved on that piece of teletype paper.¹³⁶

Keefe: Now you want us to understand when I read your testimony before the naval court that according to your present refreshed and current recollection you were mistaken, that there were no such words in the message that you saw?

Kramer: No words referring to the United States. . . .

Keefe: You do not remember what words were in the message; is that your testimony, Captain?

Kramer: What I mean to imply by that—I think it has been reiterated many times—is that I do not now and have never known since the time I saw that piece of teletype exactly what Japanese phraseology was in it, sir. . . .

Keefe: You pretended to know what words were in it when you testified before the Naval Court of Inquiry, did you not?

Kramer: That was apparently the impression I created; yes, sir.

¹³⁶Ibid., part 9, pp. 4128–29.

Keefe: Yes. Now, I want to understand what your testimony is today. Am I correct in the assumption that according to your present, or what you have referred to many times as your current, recollection after being refreshed, you are not able to tell this committee what words were in that coded execute message?

Kramer: My present belief and conviction is that piece of teletype referred to one country and that country was England. . . . "Nishi No Kaze Hare." . . .

Keefe: I asked you the simple question as to whether the statement which you made, which I have read to you, the answers that you gave in response to those questions was the truth. Was it or wasn't it?

Kramer: [I]t was not the whole truth as I see it now, inasmuch as there was no reference in that answer to any handwriting [on the teletype message].¹³⁷

Keefe then turned Kramer's attention to his mid-1945 testimony before Hewitt. Concerning the "Winds Execute," Kramer had said at that time:

Kramer: It may have been "Higashi no kaze ame," specifically referring to the United States, as I have previously testified at Pearl Harbor, but I am less positive of that now than I believe I was at that time. The reason for revision in my view on that is the fact that in thinking it over, I have a rather sharp recollection in the latter part of that week of feeling that there was still no overt mention or specific mention of the United States in any of this traffic, which I was seeing all of and which also was the only source in general of my information since I did not see, as a rule, the dispatches from the fleet commanders or going out to them from Operations.¹³⁸

¹³⁷Ibid., pp. 4131–32.

¹³⁸Ibid., pp. 4133–35.

Keefe: So as late as the time you testified before Admiral Hewitt you were of the opinion that it may have contained the words “Higashi no kaze ame,” but you were becoming uncertain about it in the light of your further refreshing?

Kramer: I meant to imply by that specifically that I did not recall, and still do not recall, the precise wording of the Japanese on the piece of teletype paper. . . .

Keefe: So we now get to the point of your testimony here that there was a message, it had something on it, and must have had something on it to designate it as a wind code execute message? . . . Then I am to understand, Captain Kramer, that this message, which was considered of top importance by everybody, which everybody was looking for and on the lookout for, and for which you have testified specific arrangements had been set up as in connection with no other message, after this message comes in you see it, you read it, you determine that this is the message you have been looking for, and you can't tell us now what was on that message? . . . Or what it said? . . .

Kramer: That is correct, sir.¹³⁹

Keefe: . . . Then Mr. Sonnett examined you about a lot of other matters. Then, Captain Kramer, at the conclusion of the examination of Admiral Hewitt, is it a fair assumption to conclude that as far as your testimony discloses, there was a wind execute code message received in the middle of the week, the exact date of which you were then uncertain, which may have referred to the United States, England, or possibly Russia, you were not certain: you were not then certain, and you are not certain what the message specifically said but it may have referred to one or both or all three of the countries in the original code set-up; is that what you meant to tell Admiral Hewitt?

Kramer: That is what I meant to tell him at the time. . . .

¹³⁹Ibid., pp. 4136–37.

Keefe: Now, you, as the man in charge of translations of these messages, with knowledge that the whole Government was set up to pick up this very vital and important message, who handled that message, who saw it, who read it, who checked the interpretation of the watch officer on that message, sit here before us today, and say you can't tell us what the message said, you have no collection of what it said at all; is that correct?

Kramer: That is correct, sir. However, I would like to point out to you, Mr. Keefe, that I think that an entirely unwarranted emphasis and importance is being attributed to that message, not only in this hearing but in past hearings, and in the press. There were many other messages more specific as to Japanese intentions during this period. . . . A wind message would have been only one further indication of the general trend of this traffic as well as the general trend of the international situation.

Keefe: Well I am very happy that you have made that statement, Captain, because I have concluded that, as one member of this committee, a long time ago that there were plenty of messages to have warned those who read them and saw them that war was imminent and just about to break, without this winds execute message. But, Captain Kramer, the Navy Department and all of the officials in the Navy Department—and I assume the War Department, too—considered that that winds execute message was of supreme importance, otherwise why did they set up this great set-up of cards and treat it as they did, with complete priority over every other message that was received? . . . Well it did appear, didn't it. . . . Now, this message came in over the teletype, didn't it? . . .

Kramer: Yes, sir.

Keefe: Yes. You saw it?

Kramer: I saw it.¹⁴⁰

¹⁴⁰Ibid., pp. 4138–39.

Keefe: . . . The thing that attracted the attention of the GY watch officer was that in this message appeared the same Japanese language words that were in the original set-up; isn't that true? . . . And you still want to say to us that you can't recall what those words were?

Kramer: That is correct, sir.

Keefe: They must have been the words of the original code, otherwise you wouldn't have paid any attention to it. . . . And it is because the words on this teletype tape were the original Japanese code words in the original code set-up that you determined that this was the coded execute message at that time; isn't that true?

Kramer: It is not sir. . . . I should like to explain precisely what I mean by that. The determination was not made by me in the case of this piece of teletype. On the number of previous times when I had been called down concerning possible messages in this winds system, I had examined long sheets of this teletype paper, had looked for the point of whether or not the expression was repeated or appeared as it was supposed to appear in the middle or at the end, or both. In this particular case my presumption was that the GY watch officer had made that determination inasmuch as the piece of paper I saw was only a short piece of paper, 3 or 4 inches in length as I recollect, and that presumably he had identified this message as being an authentic winds message, not only from the wording that actually appeared in it, but from its location in the Japanese plain language broadcast. That was a function of the GY watch officer not only as regards this winds system, but as regards all systems to determine its authenticity and to break it down. The only reason for having shown this piece of paper to me was in connection with the Japanese words thereon, and that is all, sir. . . .

Keefe: And you looked at those words and looked at the interpretation which he had given them. You may have corrected it

in some particular, and you became convinced that the Japanese language words on that piece of teletype made that message the Japanese code execute message and you so determined at that time and went down to Captain Safford's office and handed it to him, or saw the watch officer hand it to him and said, "Here it is." "This is it." "The thing that we have been straining ourselves for and setting up all this intercepting apparatus." That is true, isn't it?

Kramer: It is, sir.¹⁴¹

Keefe: So if the words "Higashi no kaze ame" appear on this winds execute message the interpretation would mean "East wind rain;" that is right, isn't it? . . . Then you say that is plain Japanese language. The sense of that, however, meant strained relations or a break in relations, possibly even implying war with a nation on the eastward, the United States. Now that interpretation is the same today as it was when you testified out there before the Naval Court of Inquiry, isn't it?

Kramer: Exactly, sir.

Keefe: So that if you had wanted to you could have indicated that those words meant war with the United States, couldn't you, and be within the interpretation which you had given to the Naval Court of Inquiry? It was one of the three alternatives, was it not?

Kramer: Only, Mr. Keefe, insofar as you would evaluate the Japanese instructions contained in the set-up of this wind message referring to the destruction of codes and classified papers. An evaluation which concluded that that meant war would then include that interpretation; yes, sir.¹⁴²

¹⁴¹Ibid., pp. 4141-42.

¹⁴²Ibid., p. 4144.

Keefe then asked Kramer about the cards distributed at the direction of Noyes to persons who were to watch for a plain-language Japanese “Winds Execute.” Kramer had testified before the NCI that “these cards had on them the [Japanese] expressions contained in this exhibit, and the meaning.”¹⁴³ However, Kramer told the JCC that “apparently my memory was faulty at that moment as to what was on the cards. My present belief and conviction is that the Japanese expressions did not appear on those cards.” Keefe thought it “perfectly in line with common sense” for Kramer to have listed the “Japanese words on the card, together with their meaning, so that these top-flight people to whom the cards were directed . . . would be able to compare it [a “Winds Execute”] with the Japanese words on the card and then know the meaning.” However, Kramer wanted to change that testimony. He insisted that, according to his “present, current, refresh[ed] recollection,” the only words he had put on the cards were the “English translation and the country referred to and that was all. . . . East Wind—rain—United States; west wind—clear—England; north wind—cloudy—Russia’.”¹⁴⁴

As Keefe’s questioning wound down, Kramer admitted that there *had* been a “Winds Execute;” on that point he and Safford were in agreement. And he had “believed that it was an authentic message of that winds system . . . [u]ntil the last few days when I . . . had been making further studies, including the reading of interrogations of high Japanese officials by General MacArthur.”¹⁴⁵

When Republican Representative Keefe finished questioning Kramer, Democratic Senator Lucas took over. He pointed out that Kramer had had only a few brief seconds of contact,

¹⁴³Ibid., part 9, p. 4126.

¹⁴⁴Ibid., pp. 4126–27.

¹⁴⁵Ibid., pp. 4123–24; part 18, pp. 3323–31, Exhibit 142D, for November 7, 1945, report on interrogation of Japanese officials re “Winds.”

“Not over 30 seconds. Probably nearer 10 or 15 seconds” with the “Winds Execute” before it was handed to Safford. He had not been involved in its decoding, translation, and delivery. It was “by mere chance” that he had happened to be in his office as the GY watch officer passed on his way to deliver it to Safford. Thus, Lucas implied, Kramer’s contact with the message was so brief that it was not surprising his recollections were not too clear.¹⁴⁶

“PILOT MESSAGE” RECEIVED, ANNOUNCING JAPAN’S RESPONSE TO U.S. NOVEMBER 26 “ULTIMATUM”

On Saturday morning, December 6, 1941, U.S. intelligence picked up a Japanese dispatch that became known as the “Pilot Message” because it announced to the Japanese ambassadors in Washington the impending arrival of their government’s 14-part response to the U.S. note of November 26 rejecting their latest proposal for compromise. This “Pilot Message” told the Japanese ambassadors that the time for its presentation to the United States would be wired separately¹⁴⁷—in “Purple”-coded English; it would need decrypting but not translating.

The time sheet shows that the “Pilot Message” was intercepted by a Navy station on the west coast December 6, 1941, between 7:15 to 7:20 A.M. (east-coast time) and then teletyped in Japanese code to the Navy in Washington.¹⁴⁸ It was more than four hours later (12:05 P.M.) when the Army, whose day it was to decode, received it from the Navy. This abnormal delay was never accounted for. It was then decoded, typed up by the Army’s Signal Intelligence Service, and delivered to the Army and Navy officer couriers.

¹⁴⁶Ibid., pp. 4145–46.

¹⁴⁷Ibid., part 12, pp. 238–39.

¹⁴⁸Ibid., part 14, p. 1413, Exhibit 41, message time sheet.

When Kramer appeared before the JCC on February 6, he acknowledged that the Navy had intercepted the “Pilot Message” between 7:15 and 7:20 A.M. that Saturday morning and that it hadn’t reached the Army, until 12:05 P.M.¹⁴⁹ In any event, Kramer was “as certain as” he could be “that the first knowledge I had that the [14-part] Japanese note was being sent to the United States was around 3 or shortly after 3:00 P.M. Saturday, December 6, 1941.” Although the Army might possibly have delivered the “Pilot Message” to Kramer’s section earlier in the afternoon, he had “no recollection of seeing that message until later in the afternoon.”¹⁵⁰

Two days later Kramer changed the story he was telling the JCC. He said he didn’t believe the “Pilot Message” had been disseminated Saturday afternoon at all and listed it (Navy #7149) as one of several intercepts that were delivered at 10:30 Sunday morning.¹⁵¹

I find as a result of my study last night [after referring to a Navy Department file] that the pilot message was not disseminated, at least in the Navy, until Sunday morning subsequent to 10:00, at the time when the so-called hidden word message and a number of other short messages, including the 1:00 message, were disseminated.¹⁵²

When Senator Ferguson asked Kramer:

If you did not know what this pilot message was until 10:30 . . . on Sunday morning how did you know there was going to be a fourteenth part? . . . How did you know without the pilot message that you were going to get an answer to the 26th note?

¹⁴⁹Ibid., part 9, pp. 4100–01.

¹⁵⁰Ibid., part 8, p. 3898.

¹⁵¹Ibid., part 9, pp. 4017–18.

¹⁵²Ibid., pp. 4015.

Kramer replied that he

did not, at least, know positively but certainly at the time and now presumed from the context of the parts we were breaking down that that must be the reply to Mr. Hull's note of 26 November.¹⁵³

Ferguson tried to find out what there was in the records to show whether the "Pilot Message" had actually been received in the Navy Department Saturday, December 6, or Sunday morning, December 7. Kramer admitted that "There is nothing whatsoever in the file, Senator, to show definitely one way or another that point."¹⁵⁴

Kramer repeated again the next day his account of the Sunday morning receipt and delivery of the "Pilot Message." His "present belief," he told the JCC, was that he "did not get it in my section from the Army until the next morning, Sunday, December 7. . . . Sometime between 9 and 10:30 that morning." His memory had been "refreshed . . . since I got to studying this on my arrival at Washington."¹⁵⁵

As a matter of fact, Kramer told the JCC two days later that he did not believe the "Pilot Message" had even been included with the first delivery early on the morning of the 7th, but that it had become available only in time for the second round of deliveries. According to the "study I made . . . a few days ago, my best knowledge and present conviction is that my section in the Navy Department did not receive it until approximately 10:25 or 10:30 Sunday morning."¹⁵⁶ His "sole reason" for saying this, he told Ferguson, was "due to the fact that in the Navy book it [the "Pilot Message"] appears *after* the 14-part message and *after* the 1:00

¹⁵³Ibid., p. 4019.

¹⁵⁴Ibid., pp. 4019–20.

¹⁵⁵Ibid., p. 4102.

¹⁵⁶Ibid., p. 4188.

message” (italics added). Thus he had been led to the “conclusion that it must have been delivered Sunday instead of Saturday.”¹⁵⁷

KRAMER TESTIFIES FURTHER ON JAPAN’S REPLY TO U.S. NOVEMBER 26 NOTE AND OTHER MATTERS

When Republican Senator Brewster took over the questioning of Kramer, he said he was “amazed” that Kramer had not reread the memorandum he had written at Halsey’s request in 1944, not even when he had shown it to others—Lieutenant Commander Baecher, Admiral Wilkinson, his “long-time personal friend” Captain Rochefort, and Marine Corps Colonel Bales.¹⁵⁸ Brewster could see no reason why Kramer shouldn’t have reviewed his memorandum prior to his appearance before the JCC. It would have been far easier to credit his story if he had, rather than basing his “entire present recollection on the refreshment received from consultation with officers who examined that document.”¹⁵⁹

Kramer, like Safford, had been examined by Sonnett, counsel in the Hewitt inquiry. Senator Lucas asked Kramer if his experience with Sonnett had been at all similar to Safford’s. Kramer denied that Sonnett had “badgered or beset” him at any time or tried to persuade him to change his testimony. He knew of no one in the Navy, Army, State Department, or chief executive’s office who had “provoked, angered, or tricked those peaceloving and harmless Japs into attacking Pearl Harbor” or who had “maneuvered, conspired, or attempted to lay the sole blame for the Pearl Harbor disaster on Kimmel and Short.”¹⁶⁰

¹⁵⁷Ibid., p. 4208.

¹⁵⁸Ibid., p. 4153.

¹⁵⁹Ibid., pp. 4155–56.

¹⁶⁰Ibid., pp. 4148–49.

Kramer was also asked why there were occasional gaps in the numbered intercepts. Sometimes the numbering machine would skip a number, he said. Army and Navy both often worked on decryption of the same intercept, he said, and both would assign it a number. When it was discovered later that the same message had been given two different numbers, one was canceled.¹⁶¹

When asked to explain the missing “Winds Execute” teletype, Kramer said he believed

the purpose of having duplicates for any of this traffic, whether encoded or plain language, was to have an extra copy for systems which we were not reading so that more than one person could work on that system in attempting to break it down.¹⁶²

As for the “Winds Execute,” Kramer had not had anything specifically to do with it; it had gone directly to Noyes’s office and had not been handled through Kramer’s office.¹⁶³

Representative Cooper, vice chairman of the committee, questioned Kramer about how all the documents relating to the “Winds Execute” could have vanished from the files. He could offer no explanation. Given the precautions that had been taken to conceal the combination to the safe in which these papers were kept, Kramer couldn’t understand it. Only he and two others knew the combination, and if anyone had broken into the double-sealed envelope in the Navy Department’s front offices where the combination was kept, someone would surely have known.¹⁶⁴

Vice Chairman: I understand then, Captain that these messages, including the number 7001, were in your custody. . . . And were kept in your safe in your office?

¹⁶¹Ibid., p. 3931.

¹⁶²Ibid., p. 4140.

¹⁶³Ibid., p. 3978.

¹⁶⁴Ibid., p. 3939.

Kramer: Yes, sir. . . .

Vice Chairman: And all of the files were in their proper order and in their proper place and kept there in your safe?

Kramer: That is correct, sir. I might further amplify that answer, sir, to this effect, that the so-called numerical file, after a series of messages were numbered for dissemination, a copy was invariably and immediately inserted in that numerical file. Messages were never removed from that numerical file for reference or for any other purpose. That numerical file had two primary purposes, one to have a solid file of what had been translated and disseminated and, two, the primary purpose was to have something to which the translators could turn in case of references to back traffic when future messages were received. We had a very complete and involved cross-index system on 3 by 5 cards, covering every originator in the Japanese diplomatic service. By that I mean every consulate, every embassy, every legation that originated messages had their own serial numbers for their series of messages. . . .

From this basic numerical file there was no occasion that I know of where anything was removed or destroyed from that file with the exception of the fact that if it was determined later, probably a few days or a week later, that we had two identical messages, one of which was a duplication of another, when that was discovered the latest numerical file number would be canceled as a duplication of the earlier one. . . .

Vice Chairman: Well, could anybody have gone in there and filched or stolen all of the messages relating to the winds execute message and you have known nothing about it?

Kramer: I don't see how that would be possible, sir, with this possible exception, that the combination of the safe in which these were kept, there was a copy of that combination in a double-sealed envelope in some of the front offices. If that envelope had been opened someone else would, of course, be able to

open my safe. Otherwise, the only people who knew the combination of the safe in which that particular file was kept were three people, Lieutenant Harrison, the then Chief Yeoman Bryant, and myself. . . . From an examination of the files last Saturday in the Navy Department and this study, exhibit 142, of about a week or so ago . . . I am as positive as I can be that that file number 7001 could not possibly have been any winds message. That is in addition to the fact that I have absolutely no matter of any kind, no recollection, no knowledge that a winds message was ever written up by my section.¹⁶⁵

Keefe questioned Kramer about the Japanese government's 14-part reply. According to Kramer's 1944 memorandum, Kramer recalled receiving the first 13 parts during the afternoon of December 6. He had tried by phone to locate Beardall, Turner, Wilkinson, and Bratton. He had tried, unsuccessfully, to reach Stark. Kramer said he had delivered the 13 parts to Beardall's aide at the White House that Saturday evening.¹⁶⁶ He also told the JCC that he delivered the 13 parts about 9:45 p.m. to Knox at the Wardman Park and had then gone to Wilkinson's home in Arlington, Virginia, where he was having a dinner party. [Kramer delivered to Wilkinson's home and Beardall was there. Kramer thought Wilkinson MAY have phoned Stark and Turner that evening.] "Admiral Wilkinson was present, also Captain Beardall [FDR's naval aide]." Kramer said his memory had been "refreshed only quite recently to the effect that General Miles was also present." Kramer had then returned to the Navy Department, before going home.¹⁶⁷

He was positive that he had not delivered the 13 parts of the Japanese reply that evening either to Ingersoll, the assistant chief of Naval Operations, or Turner, chief of the Navy War Plans

¹⁶⁵Ibid., part 9, p. 3939.

¹⁶⁶Ibid., pp. 4096–97.

¹⁶⁷Ibid., part 8, pp. 3903–04, 4025.

Division. Yet apparently Turner had seen it that evening; he testified before the NCI that “a rather long dispatch” had been brought to him “some time during the very late evening of December 6 or the early morning of December 7. . . . [T]he officer who brought the dispatch to the house stated that there was a part of the message missing . . . the latter part.”¹⁶⁸ Still Kramer maintained he had neither telephoned Ingersoll nor delivered to him directly any of these intercepts that night.¹⁶⁹

Kramer held also that he had not delivered the 13 parts to Turner, although he had testified to the contrary.¹⁷⁰ Ferguson read an excerpt from Turner’s JCC testimony, and Kramer had to agree that “Admiral Turner knew what he was talking about.” However, Kramer continued to maintain that he had made no delivery to Turner that evening. He would admit only that Turner’s recollection “obviously differs from my recollections.”¹⁷¹

Ferguson elicited from Kramer that he had drafted for Noyes a December 1 message concerning Japanese movements in Thailand, thousands of miles from any U.S. possessions.¹⁷² Ferguson wanted to know why, especially if Kramer “knew nothing about our policy in case of an attack by the Japanese on the British,”¹⁷³ he

felt that we should insure that they [CINCAF and CINCPAC] got that picture, sir, even though they may have received it and read it on the Asiatic station, the British also at Singapore, and the unit at Honolulu.¹⁷⁴

¹⁶⁸Ibid., part 9, p. 4027.

¹⁶⁹Ibid., p. 4026.

¹⁷⁰Ibid., part 4, pp. 1970–71.

¹⁷¹Ibid., part 9, p. 4029.

¹⁷²Ibid., pp. 4175–76 (extension #2027).

¹⁷³Ibid., p. 4176.

¹⁷⁴Ibid., p. 4175.

Why would he, Kramer, “send a message that involved the British and the Japanese a thousand miles from any of our possessions directly to the information of CincPac, which was Admiral Kimmel,”¹⁷⁵ when he had not sent to either the Pacific or Asiatic Fleet the ship movement message, “which set up a plan of Pearl Harbor, indicating what they wanted it for was an attack later.”¹⁷⁶

Kramer said that “Every message bearing on ship movements, either of our Navy, our merchant marine, or foreign navies, specifically England, was given high priority in my section and all were translated and disseminated by my section.”¹⁷⁷ He admitted that the Japanese had “used [this grid bombing map] for all ship movements subsequently to setting up of this abbreviated system of reporting ships in Pearl Harbor.”¹⁷⁸ However, “evaluation . . . was never at any time a function of his section.”¹⁷⁹ Moreover, Kramer pointed out, Pearl Harbor was not the only base the Japanese had been watching: “Back in 1940, during the course of negotiations with the Dutch in Java . . . the Japanese conducted rather rigorous reconnaissance of all military establishments, not only in Java but in other islands of the Dutch East Indies.” They had also requested information on the “military establishments, air bases, fleet facilities, in Panama and in part of the Western Hemisphere under United States jurisdiction. The Japanese diplomatic service, as well as their military and naval attaches abroad,” Kramer testified, “were very conscientious people and reported in meticulous detail all facts that they could learn. . . . They likewise reported in great detail the air bases in the vicinity of Seattle and Bremerton Navy

¹⁷⁵Ibid., p. 4176–77.

¹⁷⁶Ibid., part 12, p. 261, Exhibit 2, p. 12, Tokyo to Honolulu Message #83.

¹⁷⁷Ibid., part 9, p. 4174.

¹⁷⁸Ibid., p. 4177.

¹⁷⁹Ibid., p. 4178.

Yard, sir, similarly on the San Francisco area.”¹⁸⁰ Nevertheless, Kramer could not point to any requests from the Japanese “in the latter part of November or December [1941] in relation to San Francisco and Seattle” for bombing maps of any locations other than Pearl Harbor.¹⁸¹

Kramer was on the witness stand for five long days (February 6–11, 1946; February 10 was a Sunday). After he finished testifying, he returned to the hospital where he remained until after the committee’s reports were released for the Sunday papers of July 21. The next month at age 46, he was given a medical discharge and an untaxed pension. He maintained his silence on Pearl Harbor throughout his remaining 26 years. He died in 1972.

BRATTON, ARMY COURIER, ON DELIVERY OF JAPAN’S REPLY TO U.S. NOTE OF NOVEMBER

Colonel Rufus Bratton was another key figure in the events of December 6–7. As Army courier, he had been Kramer’s counterpart, charged with the delivery of the Japanese MAGIC intercepts to the Army’s list of officials entitled to see them. These included Hull, Stimson, Marshall, Gerow, and Miles. Bratton’s chief assistant had been Colonel Carlisle C. Dusenbury.

Every time Bratton testified he changed his story slightly in some respects.

On September 15, 1944, he had told Colonel Clarke, who was conducting a special investigation for Marshall, that Japan’s 14-part reply started coming in on the 6th of December. It was then his “recollection” that he had “transmitted a copy to the Secretary of State that night.”¹⁸² He made no mention of any other deliveries that evening.

¹⁸⁰Ibid., p. 4179.

¹⁸¹Ibid.

¹⁸²Ibid., part 34, p. 21.

On September 30, 1944, when appearing before the Army Pearl Harbor Board, Bratton testified that he had “had the bulk of it [the Japanese reply] since the evening” of December 6. “It came in fourteen parts. . . . Thirteen of those parts were received the afternoon and evening of the 6th.”¹⁸³ He said he had delivered the first 13 parts to three recipients that evening: “the office of the Chief of Staff [actually Marshall’s secretary, Colonel, later General, Bedell Smith], the A.C. of S. G-2 [actually Gerow’s executive officer, Colonel Gailey], the office of the Secretary of State.”¹⁸⁴

On July 27, 1945, in an affidavit for Clausen, who was touring the Army’s several theaters of operations under orders of Stimson to interview and collect sworn affidavits from persons involved in some way with Pearl Harbor, Bratton had given a still different account of the events of December 6–7. Clausen had shown Bratton several sworn affidavits submitted by men Bratton knew, some of them Bratton’s superiors in the Army. Bratton had interpreted some of those affidavits as differing from his previous testimony, although on examination it is apparent that they were not actual contradictions so much as merely carefully crafted evasions. However, they influenced Bratton to revise his statement.¹⁸⁵

In his affidavit for Clausen, Bratton had said that, after receiving the first 13 parts of the Japanese reply and ascertaining that the 14th part would not be coming in that evening, he had directed Dusenbury “to deliver the set for the Chief of Staff at his home at Fort Myer.” The affidavit stated further, in contradiction to his APHB testimony, that he had delivered only one set of those 13 parts that evening himself, the set destined for the secretary of state, which he had left “between 10 and 11:00 P.M.” with

¹⁸³*Ibid.*, part 29, p. 2349.

¹⁸⁴*Ibid.*, pp. 2349 (September 30, 1944); 2419, 2421–22 (October 2, 1944); and 2455 (October 6, 1944).

¹⁸⁵*Ibid.*, part 10, p. 4616.

the night duty officer at the State Department. He also said in his affidavit that the sets for the other officials on Bratton's list "were delivered the next morning, 7 December 1941, with the fourteenth part." Bratton had said that when he saw Marshall that morning, Marshall had on his desk the 14-part message, which he "had not given him." He could not explain how it had reached Marshall. According to Bratton,

Any prior statements or testimony of mine which may be contrary to my statements here [the affidavit for Clausen] . . . should be modified and considered changed in accordance with my statements herein. This affidavit now represents my best recollection . . . after having my memory refreshed in several ways and respects.¹⁸⁶

By the time Bratton was finally called to the witness stand by the Joint Congressional Committee, he had been listening for months to the sworn testimony of witnesses, some of whom had contradicted one another; some had even contradicted their own earlier testimony, and some had offered to shoulder the blame for Marshall's possible delinquencies.¹⁸⁷ As the bewildered Bratton took the chair on February 14, 1946, suspense pervaded the packed hearing room.

DELIVERY TO TOP OFFICIALS EVENING OF DECEMBER 6 OF JAPANESE REPLY TO U.S. "ULTIMATUM"

Respecting the receipt of the "Pilot Message," Bratton contradicted the testimony of his Navy opposite, Kramer. Kramer's "refreshed" testimony was that the message had not reached him, ready for delivery, until about 10 or 10:30 Sunday morning, December 7.¹⁸⁸ However, it was undoubtedly available to Navy

¹⁸⁶Ibid., part 35, pp. 96–98, Bratton affidavit.

¹⁸⁷Ibid., part 3, p. 1036.

¹⁸⁸Ibid., part 9, pp. 4015, 4018–19, 4022, 4101–02.

officials in Washington on Saturday afternoon, for several Navy officers testified that it had been phoned or distributed to the usual Navy recipients by then.¹⁸⁹

Bratton told the JCC the message had first come to *his* attention at about 2:00 P.M. on Saturday, that it had been translated by the Army, typed, and delivered to him. He then had it distributed “that afternoon about 3:00”¹⁹⁰ to the full list of persons for whom he was responsible.¹⁹¹ Bratton said he even recalled discussing its contents with both Gerow and Miles.¹⁹²

If the “Pilot Message” had been decoded and distributed on Saturday, as Bratton testified, then Washington officials would have been on notice that Tokyo’s reply to our November 26 note was on its way. They expected this reply to be a rejection of our proposal, so they would have had reason to anticipate a final break with Japan, possibly the outbreak of war, and would have had some opportunity to think about how best to respond. If it had *not* been available until Sunday morning, as Kramer said, the top personnel would not have been expecting Japan’s response and would have had little time to anticipate and decide how to respond to the Japanese threat.

When the first 13 parts of Japan’s reply, which had been intercepted, decoded, and typed up by early Saturday evening, were actually placed in the hands of the top Washington officials was crucial for determining what we knew of Japan’s intentions prior to the attack. Bratton had testified variously about his deliveries of this intercept. JCC Associate General Counsel Kaufman asked him about these several discrepancies.

“Now, before answering your question,” Bratton began,

¹⁸⁹Ibid., part 3, p. 1874; part 4, pp. 1761, 1874, 1972, 2056; part 10, p. 4668.

¹⁹⁰Ibid., part 9, pp. 4509–12.

¹⁹¹Ibid., p. 4513.

¹⁹²Ibid., pp. 4513, 4536.

I would like to state that this is the fifth time I have appeared as a witness in this Pearl Harbor investigation, I hope it will be the last time, but it is also the first time that I have had an opportunity to examine files, records and documents in the War Department to refresh my memory as to the details of various events and it is the first time that I have had an opportunity to talk to the people I worked for and with at that time. In consequence my memory as to the details of certain events have [sic] been greatly improved. As to the details of certain other events it is foggier than ever for the reason that I have heard and seen so many conflicting arguments and statements here and elsewhere since my return to Washington.¹⁹³

Returning to the 13 parts:

There are several details . . . that stand out very clearly in my mind. . . . First, I called up the SIS [Signal Intelligence Service] . . . to ask if there was any likelihood of the fourteenth part coming in later that night [December 6]. . . . After some discussion in the SIS, this officer returned to the phone and he said “No, there is very little likelihood of that part coming in this evening.”

Bratton knew Hull had a strong interest in this message, so he put the 13 parts in the pouch, locked it, and delivered it personally to the State Department’s night duty officer some time after 10:00 p.m. He advised the night duty officer that this was “a highly important message as far as the Secretary of State was concerned” and it should be sent out to his quarters immediately. Bratton was assured it would be.¹⁹⁴

Then at about 11:00 p.m. Bratton had returned to his quarters. From there he phoned Miles’s home and was told he was out. When Miles got home and returned Bratton’s call, Bratton

¹⁹³Ibid., p. 4510.

¹⁹⁴Ibid., pp. 4513–14.

described the 13 parts “in guarded terms” and added that the 14th and most important part had not yet been received. Miles said he had seen the 13 parts where he had been a dinner guest. Bratton also told Miles that he, Miles, had delivered the first 13 parts to Hull.¹⁹⁵ Kaufman asked Bratton if Miles had told him it wasn’t necessary to deliver the 13 parts to Marshall that night. Bratton remembered no such instructions. Kaufman then read into the record Miles’s JCC testimony, in which he took

full responsibility for that . . . message not going to the Chief of Staff that night. . . . I knew its substance. I did not consider that it was necessary to arouse the Chief of Staff at that time of night for that message.¹⁹⁶

After having this testimony called to his attention, Bratton added: “I would like to say further at this point that if there was any error of omission or commission with respect to the delivery of the 13 parts of that message Saturday night of the 6th of December 1941 to Army personnel the error was mine, and I accept full responsibility for it.”¹⁹⁷ In this way, both Miles and Bratton added their names to the list of those willing to take the responsibility for a possible failure on the part of Marshall.

DENIALS BY TOP OFFICIALS LEAD BRATTON TO DOUBT HIS EARLIER TESTIMONY

The persons in the Army who “customarily” received MAGIC, Bratton said, were Marshall, Gerow, and Miles. “And do we have it now,” Kaufman asked, “that no delivery was made to any of those persons other than to the Secretary of State and excepting

¹⁹⁵Ibid., p. 4514.

¹⁹⁶Ibid., part 3, p. 1554.

¹⁹⁷Ibid., part 9, p. 4515.

General Miles who had already seen it at Admiral Wilkinson's house?"

"This is the point" Bratton said at which his "memory begins to go bad"; he could "not state positively whether there was any delivery made that night or not at this time." He had testified before the APHB that he "had made delivery to the Secretary of the General Staff, to the night duty officer, or to General Gerow and to General Miles." That, Bratton said, was his "normal procedure." He "tried to make simultaneous delivery to all these people." However, when he made that statement to the APHB he "had not remembered . . . that Colonel Dusenbury was working with me in the office that night."¹⁹⁸ Also Clausen had shown him a number of sworn affidavits collected from various officers: Bedell Smith, General Ralph Smith, Gerow, Gailey, and others

to the effect that they did not receive the 13 parts of this message from me or from anyone else Saturday night. Now, I know all these men. I do not doubt the honesty and integrity of any one of them, and if they say that I did not deliver these pouches to them that night, then my memory must have been at fault.¹⁹⁹

Asked by Ferguson why he had changed his testimony, Bratton replied:

It was a combination of facts, sir. . . . My subsequent recollection that Colonel Dusenbury was at work with me in the office that evening . . . and the affidavits of various officers stating that I did not make deliveries to them on Saturday evening, and my recollection of the telephone conversation with General Miles at about half-past eleven Saturday night, my subsequent conversations with Colonel Dusenbury, with whom I have talked here in Washington, my conversations with General Gerow,

¹⁹⁸Ibid., p. 4515.

¹⁹⁹Ibid.

with whom I talked here in Washington, my conversations with General Miles before he appeared before the Committee, all of these have combined to lead me to the belief that the evidence that I have given before the committee today is my best recollection of the facts.²⁰⁰

After the lengthy questioning of Safford, Kramer, Bratton, and all the other officers concerned, it was difficult to know just what to believe. Their testimony had often been confusing and contradictory. Kramer's testimony did little to clear up the mystery over whether a "Winds Execute" had been intercepted before December 7—or if it had been, what it had meant. His testimony about the "Pilot Message" raised questions as to whether it was actually received before or after the 14-part response itself. And Bratton's testimony on the delivery of the Japanese intercepts during the evening of December 6 helped little in clarifying the situation.

INTERCEPTS INDICATING IMMINENCE OF WAR DELIVERED TO THE WHITE HOUSE EVENING, DECEMBER 6

At my suggestion, committee member requested a list of all persons who had been on duty at the White House on December 6 and 7. One name on that list was Navy Commander Lester R. Schulz.

On February 12, 1946, while at sea aboard the *Indiana*, Schulz received orders to come to Washington.²⁰¹ When he arrived at the Capitol, Senator Ferguson and Lieutenant Commander Baecher, assistant counsel and the Navy's liaison to the committee, took him aside in a room adjoining the chamber where the hearings

²⁰⁰Ibid., part 9, pp. 4597; part 10, 4611–12.

²⁰¹Ibid., pp. 4668–69.

were being held.²⁰² When the senator returned to the committee table, he said to me *sotto voce*, “This is it!”

Schulz had told his story about the evening of December 6 to no one except when he had spoken briefly with Baecher the previous December. This was his first time to testify, he said.²⁰³ He had never written his experiences down and had no notes.²⁰⁴

In 1941 Schulz had been a Navy lieutenant in the Office of Naval Communications for communications intelligence. He had first entered the White House on December 5, on a temporary assignment from the communications division. On the evening of December 6 he had been on temporary duty at the White House as a communications assistant to Naval aide Captain Beardall.²⁰⁵ At about 4 P.M. Beardall told Schulz to remain in the office to receive a special message for the president.²⁰⁶ “[D]uring the evening Captain Kramer would bring up some magic material and that I was to take it and give it immediately to the president,” Schultz testified. The material would be in a locked pouch, and Beardall gave Schultz the key so he could remove the material.²⁰⁷ Beardall told him it was “of such importance” that the president was expecting it.

Beardall himself left at about 5:30 to attend a dinner party.²⁰⁸ This was the first time in his seven months as FDR’s naval aide that he had been asked to make special arrangements to deliver a message to the president after 5:30 or 6:00 in the evening, i.e., after the close of the ordinary workday.²⁰⁹

²⁰²Ibid., pp. 4666, 4669.

²⁰³Ibid., p. 4669.

²⁰⁴Ibid., p. 4664.

²⁰⁵Ibid., p. 4660.

²⁰⁶Ibid., p. 4668.

²⁰⁷Ibid., p. 4661.

²⁰⁸Ibid., p. 4668.

²⁰⁹Ibid., part 11, p. 5278, Beardall testimony.

The first 13 parts of the Japanese reply were in the Navy Department and ready for distribution by 9:00 P.M. on December 6. Before delivering the locked pouch with these 13 parts to anyone else, Kramer took them to the White House.²¹⁰

Schulz had been given a small office, not in the White House proper, but in a corner of the mailroom in the White House office building. At about 9:30 P.M. Kramer came in with a locked pouch, which he handed to Schulz. Schulz immediately took the pouch over to the White House and obtained permission to go up to the president's study on the second floor. He was accompanied by someone from the usher's office who announced him to the president. Then Schulz went into FDR's study alone. "The president was there seated at his desk, and Mr. [Harry] Hopkins was there," Schulz said. He told FDR that he was delivering the material which Kramer had brought.²¹¹

Schulz unlocked the pouch, took out the papers, "perhaps 15 typewritten pages . . . fastened together in a sheaf," and handed them to Roosevelt personally. According to Schulz,

The president read the papers, which took perhaps 10 minutes. Then he handed them to Mr. Hopkins. . . . Mr. Hopkins then read the papers and handed them back to the president. The president then turned toward Mr. Hopkins and said in substance . . . "This means war." Mr. Hopkins agreed, and they discussed then, for perhaps 5 minutes, the situation of the Japanese forces, that is, their deployment.²¹²

Schulz was a young graduate of Annapolis, decent and upright in appearance, his manner open and forthright. There could be no doubting the truth of what he was saying. The spectators in the

²¹⁰*Ibid.*, part 9, p. 4025.

²¹¹*Ibid.*, part 10, pp. 4660–61.

²¹²*Ibid.*, p. 4662.

packed hearing room listened in complete silence, straining to catch his every word.

Counsel Richardson asked Schulz if he could remember anything specific that FDR or Hopkins had said. Schulz could remember only a few words, but he could say “definitely” that

the substance of it was that—I believe Mr. Hopkins mentioned it first—that since war was imminent, that the Japanese intended to strike when they were ready, at a moment when all was most opportune for them. . . . That is, when their forces were most properly deployed for their advantage. Indochina in particular was mentioned, because the Japanese forces had already landed there and there were implications of where they would move next.²¹³

The president mentioned having sent a message to the Japanese emperor concerning the presence of Japanese troops in Indochina and requesting their withdrawal.²¹⁴ Schulz did not see Roosevelt’s message, but he recalled

the president quoting from this message that he drafted to the effect that he had told Hirohito that he could not see how it could be held that there was any danger to peace in the Far East as far as the United States was concerned if there were no Japanese forces in Indochina.

In other words, we were not going to attack Indochina, nor was anyone else. Therefore the presence of Japanese forces in Indochina was for an aggressive purpose or for ulterior purposes on the part of the Japanese. We ourselves held no threat for Indochina.²¹⁵

²¹³*Ibid.*, pp. 4662–63.

²¹⁴*Ibid.*, p. 4663.

²¹⁵*Ibid.*, p. 4671.

Schulz continued:

Mr. Hopkins then expressed a view that since war was undoubtedly going to come at the convenience of the Japanese, it was too bad that we could not strike the first blow and prevent any sort of surprise. The president nodded and then said, in effect, "No, we can't do that. We are a democracy and a peaceful people." Then he raised his voice, and this much I remember definitely. He said, "But we have a good record."²¹⁶

Schulz got the impression that "we would have to stand on that record, we could not make the first overt move. We would have to wait until it came."²¹⁷

The only geographic name Schulz remembered was Indochina. There was no mention of Pearl Harbor. The time when war might begin was not discussed. "[T]here was no indication that tomorrow was necessarily the day," he said. Schulz "carried that impression away because it contributed to my personal surprise when the news did come." According to Schulz, "There was no mention made of sending any further warning or alert."²¹⁸

After the discussion to the effect that the war was going to begin at the convenience of the Japanese, the president said

he believed he would talk to Admiral Stark. He started to get Admiral Stark on the telephone. It was then determined—I do not recall exactly, but I believe the White House operator told the president that Admiral Stark could be reached at the National Theater.

Schulz could not hear what the operator said, but he did hear the National Theater mentioned. The president then went on

²¹⁶Ibid., p. 4663.

²¹⁷Ibid.

²¹⁸Ibid.

to state, in substance, that he would reach the admiral later, that he did not want to cause public alarm by having the admiral paged or otherwise when in the theater, where, I believe, the fact that he had a box reserved was mentioned and that if he had left suddenly he would surely have been seen because of the position which he held and undue alarm might be caused, and the president did not wish that to happen because he could get him within perhaps another half an hour in any case.²¹⁹

According to Schulz, nothing was said about telephoning anybody else. "To the best of my knowledge that is all that was discussed. The president returned the papers to me and I left the study." Schulz had been there about a half hour; he left about ten.²²⁰

He then went back to the office "over toward the State Department. . . . on the basement level." Kramer was waiting. According to Schulz's recollection, he returned the locked pouch to Kramer.

The happenings during that particular period are somewhat hazy but I know that I did not have the papers the next day. Further, I hadn't too suitable a place to put them during the night because of their high secrecy classification. . . . I would not have kept them under any circumstances.²²¹

Schulz phoned Beardall "to inform him that I had received the papers, the president had seen them and I had carried out my instructions." Schulz was then free to go home. He "left the White House at about 10:30."²²²

Schulz's testimony demolished the administration's claim of shocked surprise at the Japanese attack. The Democratic

²¹⁹Ibid.

²²⁰Ibid., p. 4664.

²²¹Ibid., p. 4665.

²²²Ibid., p. 4666.

members of the JCC were stunned; they did not attempt to rebut. His appearance was a highlight of the congressional investigation.

GENERAL MARSHALL DOES NOT RECALL HIS ACTIVITIES SATURDAY NIGHT, DECEMBER 6

There is no evidence in the JCC hearings that FDR actually summoned his closest aides to the White House the night of December 6–7. But for FDR to call a meeting to discuss the growing crisis would have been consistent with his operational style; he liked to talk things over with his associates. Marshall and Stark were the only ones asked if there might have been such a meeting, and their answers were not very helpful.²²³

Keefe: Can you state definitely whether or not you have a present recollection as to whether the president did in fact contact you?

Marshall: I am quite certain that he [the president] did not [contact me]. . . . There is no question in my mind; no. That is a positive answer.

Keefe: And you are certain that you did not attend any meeting then, at the White House that night?

Marshall: I am absolutely certain of that. . . . So, all the evidence, in my own mind, short of my absolute knowledge of the matter, is that I was home, as was customary. . . .

Keefe: But you are certain of one thing and that is that you received no communication from the president on the evening of the 6th of December and that you didn't attend any meeting at the White House that night?

²²³Ibid., Marshall testimony, part 11, pp. 5193–94; Stark testimony, part 5, pp. 2291–92.

Marshall: That is correct. I will add that the first information I had of anything unusual was, as I have testified, after I got into my shower, or was going into my shower [December 7, A.M.] when this message was relayed to me from Colonel Bratton that he wanted to come out to the house with an important matter.²²⁴

Gearhart questioning Stark: When you left the office on Saturday night didn't you leave word there as to where you were going to be and where you could be reached on December 6, 1941?

Stark: Yes; when I went out I always left word. I do not recall of any time when I did not. . . . I do not recall being out that night but I also do not recall whether I was out or not; so there it is. . . . [I]f I were going out at night my aide would usually leave word with the duty officer where I could be found, assuming that my intentions to go out were before I left the office. If after I got home I suddenly decided to go out somewhere, I would leave word with the house and usually call up the duty officer in addition.

Gearhart: Well, have you searched the records in the office of the chief of Naval Operations to ascertain where you were on Saturday night, the 6th day of December 1941?

Stark: We have found nothing as to where I was and it follows my assumption that my thought was that I was at home. There is nothing I have been able to find out which locates where I was that evening.

Gearhart: In view of the fact that the Chief of Staff [Marshall] cannot remember where he was on that night is it possible that you and he could have been together?

Stark: I think we had no such conspiracy at that time, sir.

²²⁴Ibid., part 11, p. 1594.

Gearhart: Well, do you shut it out as being an utter impossibility that you and he could have been in each other's company that night?

Stark: I do not shut it out as an utter impossibility that we could have been in each other's company, but I think we were not.

Gearhart: You do not remember that.

Stark: No; but I feel that perhaps we both would have remembered it if that had occurred.

Gearhart: Well, you not remembering where you were certainly you cannot remember that you were not with General Marshall on that night, can you?

Stark: Well, I think that may be a reasonable assumption.

Gearhart: You were together a great deal all the time, were you not?

Stark: We were together either talking by telephone or interoffice visits a great deal during office hours. We were not together a great deal in the evening. . . . I have heard that an effort was made to locate me.

Gearhart: And you also have learned that a courier called at your quarters and you were not there?

Stark: No; I have not heard that.

Gearhart: Did you have any telephone call that evening from Colonel Knox, the Secretary of the Navy?

Stark: Not that I recall.²²⁵

²²⁵Ibid., part 5, pp. 2291–92.

Thirty two years after the attack, evidence of just such a December 6–7 White House meeting surfaced. It came in a letter from James G. Stahlman, a longtime friend of Knox, then on active duty in the Navy. On his return from Pearl Harbor immediately after the attack, Knox confided to Stahlman “that he, Stimson, Marshall, Betty Stark and Harry Hopkins had spent most of the night before [the attack] at the White House with FDR, all waiting for what they knew was coming after those intercepts.”²²⁶

INTERCEPT HERALDING ACTUAL
APPROACH OF WAR DELIVERED TO THE NAVY
SUNDAY MORNING, DECEMBER 7

Saturday evening, with the delivery of the first thirteen parts of Japan’s 14-part reply to our note of November 26, it was apparent that war with Japan was imminent. It was the next morning, Sunday, December 7, 1941, that the Japanese intercepts that heralded the final approach of war were received in Washington. Most notable among these were the fourteenth part of Tokyo’s reply and the “One P.M. Message” giving the Japanese ambassadors in Washington instructions as to precisely how and when to deliver that reply to Secretary of State Hull. JCC members devoted considerable time to asking Navy courier Kramer about his Sunday morning deliveries.

Kramer had said in his 1944 memorandum that on his first trip Sunday morning he had seen Stark with others in his office “[a]bout 0900” when he, Kramer, had “left night-before matters,”²²⁷ including all fourteen parts of Japan’s reply to our note of

²²⁶James G. Stahlman letter of November 26, 1973 to Admiral Kemp Tolley.

²²⁷The sequence of Kramer’s December 7 morning deliveries varied slightly from account to account:

At the NCI (Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 33, pp. 858–60), in mid-1944, he said he had delivered the 13 parts plus part 14 and other new material to (1) Stark, (2) the White House and (3) Knox

November 26. However, after “talking it over with people” upon

at the State Department. Then upon his return to the Navy Department at 10:20, he found the “One P.M. Message” had been received.

On February 6, 1946 before the Joint Committee, he testified (*ibid.*, part 8, pp. 3904–08) that he had delivered all 14 parts to (1) McCollum, (2) Wilkinson, (3) Stark, possibly through McCollum and Wilkinson, and (4) directly to Knox, whom he saw personally, at State. He had then returned to the Navy Department where he had encountered the “One P.M. Message.” This account made no mention of delivering the 14 parts to the White House (Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 8, pp. 3904–08).

Kramer testimony February 6, 1946 at the JCC:

Richardson: Now, how early did you go to the office the next morning?

Kramer: My recollection is it was very shortly after 7:30. . . . The normal office hours commenced at 8 o'clock . . . I further wanted to be at the office earlier that morning [December 7] than usual because of the likelihood that I would have to make earlier disseminations that morning than usual [late morning]. . . . I had a specific appointment to be at the State Department by 10 that morning, on instructions from Secretary Knox. I gathered from conversation with Admiral Wilkinson that Admiral Stark would very likely be in Sunday morning, which was not a usual practice. . . . it was an unusual thing for Admiral Stark to be there on Sunday morning [*italics added*]. On a number of occasions that fall on Sunday morning I had delivered folders to his home and had been received in his study on the second deck, he being in pajamas and dressing gown on one occasion having breakfast. I recollect that because I was offered some coffee. . . .

Richardson: Now you got in your office around 7 o'clock on Sunday morning.

Kramer: Shortly after 7:30, is my best recollection. . . . [M]y recollection is that the fourteenth part was there shortly after I got in that morning, or possibly when I got in that morning. . . . I was on a 24-hour basis, and my translators were also. I had on at least two dozen occasions, during the course of 1941, been called to my office at odd hours of the night, sometimes 2 or 3 in the morning. I had standing instructions with the GY watch officer to call me any time they felt a translator was required. . . . I was the nearest translator to my office, only 5 minutes away in Arlington near Fort Myer. I therefore put myself in

his arrival in Washington and after having had his memory “refreshed as to the events,” Kramer revised his testimony slightly as to his delivery times; he said then that “[a]ctually [he] did not

the status of being the first one called rather than one of the translators whose homes were in outlying districts. . . .

Richardson: When the delivery was made on Sunday morning then the entire 14-part message was delivered as one message?

Kramer: That is correct, sir. . . . Some details of delivery between 8 and 9 o'clock I have only in the last month or so had my memory refreshed on, in conversations with other officers. The first delivery, to my present best recollection, was made to Commander McCollum, head of the Far Eastern Section, Navy Intelligence. . . . It was probably about 8 o'clock or a few minutes after. . . . Another delivery was made, I believe, about a quarter of 9 to Captain McCollum also, or Commander McCollum then, when I was informed that Admiral Wilkinson had arrived at his office, and I therefore automatically delivered another copy to Admiral Wilkinson. It was about that time, or shortly afterward that another copy was delivered to Admiral Stark's office. . . . That first delivery to Admiral Stark's office, I believe, was done by either Admiral Wilkinson or Captain McCollum. . . . My first positive recollection of seeing Admiral Stark is when I was on my way to the State Department to keep my 10 o'clock appointment when I left a copy of some of the other traffic that had come in in Admiral Stark's outer office. That was probably 9:30 or 9:40. . . . I was at the State Department almost exactly 10 minutes of 10.

Richardson: And to whom did you make delivery actually?

Kramer: Actually to Mr. Knox directly. He came in, as I recollect, about 5 minutes of 10, a few minutes after I got there, and went into the conference room, Mr. Hull's office. . . . There was a brief discussion between myself, the Army courier, and Mr. Hull's private secretary in Mr. Hull's outer office. It lasted probably not more than 3 or 4 minutes, and then I headed back for the Navy Department.

Richardson: What time did you return to the Navy Department?

Kramer: My best recollection is about 10:20. . . . On my arrival there at 10:20, the most striking recollection I have is the first sighting of that message from Tokyo directing the delivery of this note from Tokyo at 1 o'clock p. m., December 7, Washington time. . . . I immediately instructed by chief yeoman to prepare another set of folders so I could make immediate delivery of them.

go to Admiral Stark's office until about 9:30," although he admitted he was "still a little hazy on precise times."²²⁸

When Kramer reached Stark's office on Sunday morning, December 7, all of the higher Navy echelon, including, Stark, Wilkinson, and Turner, were there. Kramer agreed with Congressman Keefe who was questioning him that "Sunday was not usually a day for the big boys in the Navy to assemble at their offices"²²⁹ and that the arrangements for such a group of top level officers to meet that Sunday morning must have been made the night before.²³⁰ It was "no formal conference, but many officers were in Admiral Stark's office, and going and coming." Kramer said,

It was in a similar manner that the normal 11:00 conference was held more or less daily in Admiral Stark's office, similarly assembled. . . . However, it was no formal conference but a continuing discussion that Sunday morning.²³¹

After making his first round of deliveries that Sunday morning, Kramer returned to the Navy Department. There he had encountered the "One P.M. Message" plus several other intercepts²³² with final words of advice and thanks to the Japanese ambassadors for their efforts. Kramer recognized the importance of the "One P.M. Message" immediately and this added special urgency

²²⁸Joint Committee, *Pearl Harbor Attack*, part 9, pp. 4102–03. Kramer testimony.

²²⁹*Ibid.*, p. 4097. Kramer February 9, 1946 testimony.

²³⁰*Ibid.*, p. 4098. Kramer February 9, 1946 testimony.

²³¹*Ibid.*, p. 4105. Kramer testimony.

²³²*Ibid.*, p. 3997. Including also the "Pilot Message," if Bratton's "refreshed" JCC testimony is believed, although Bratton doesn't mention it in his testimony concerning his Sunday morning delivery rounds.

to his second round of deliveries.²³³ In his 1944 memorandum for Admiral Halsey, Kramer had described in “pretty meticulous detail”²³⁴ his haste to deliver the “One P.M. Message” that Sunday morning, December 7.

In his testimony before the NCI in 1944 Kramer said that on this, his second trip of the morning, he had first delivered the “One P.M. Message” to Stark’s office between 1030 and 1100, secondly to the White House and finally to Navy Secretary Knox who was still in a meeting at the State Department with Secretary Hull.²³⁵

²³³Ibid., part 8, pp. 3908–09. Kramer testimony before the Joint Committee:

Kramer: On my arrival there [back at the Navy Department] at 10:20, the most striking recollection I have is the first sighting of that message from Tokyo directing the delivery of this note from Tokyo at 1:00 P.M., December 7, Washington time . . . I immediately instructed my chief yeoman to prepare another set of folders so I could make immediate delivery of them. . . . Just as I was about to leave the office, a plain language Japanese message was sent in to my office by the GY watch officer that carried, I believe the so-called hidden word message. . . . I recognized it as such from an external indicator, namely the word “Stop” at the end, and recognized the first word as being one of the code words referring to England. In scanning the rest of the message, as I recollect, the sixth or seventh word had another code word, which, incidentally, were all proper names. The word was “Hattori” which, although I recognized [it] as a code word, I did not immediately recall the meaning of, and hastily referred to the list of such code words . . . interpreted as “relations between Japan and (blank) country,” to be inserted, was not in accordance with expectations. I dictated to my chief yeoman the sense of that message.

²³⁴Ibid., part 9, p. 4110. Keefe’s description of Kramer’s 1944 account.

²³⁵Ibid., part 33, pp. 859–60. Kramer testimony re “One P.M. Message” at the NCI in mid-1944:

At the NCI, Kramer said that he had returned to the Navy Department after his first delivery on the morning of December 7. There he had discovered the “One P.M. Message” along with several others. Within ten or fifteen minutes he was at Admiral Stark’s office. From there he had gone to the White House and *then* [italics added] to State, where Knox and Stimson were meeting with Hull. Kramer said he had not seen Knox personally, but he had “made a point of verbally inviting

At the JCC, he changed the sequence of his deliveries slightly, saying that after delivering first to CNO Stark, he had delivered it secondly to Knox at the State Department and then finally to the White House.²³⁶

When Kramer testified before the JCC about delivering the “One P.M. Message” to Navy Secretary Knox at the State Department, where Knox was still meeting with Secretary of State Hull, he said that before the folder was taken in to Mr. Hull “there was a brief conversation . . . pointing out the tie-up of the time 1:00 Washington, with the situation in the Southwest Pacific.” Kramer had talked with one of Mr. Hull’s private secretaries about that, also with the Army courier, he thought it could have been Bratton who was there at the time making delivery to Secretaries Hull and Stimson.²³⁷

Safford had told the NCI that when Kramer made delivery to Knox at the State Department on Sunday morning, December 7, Kramer had sent a note via Knox’s personal aide, a foreign service officer, “saying in effect, that this means a sunrise attack on Pearl Harbor today and possibly a midnight attack on Manila.”²³⁸

the attention of Mr. Knox” through a State Department Foreign Service Officer who regularly handled this material for Mr. Hull “the implications of the times.” 1300 Washington time was 7:30 at Pearl Harbor and a few hours before sunrise at Kota Bharu, where the Japanese appeared to be heading.

²³⁶Ibid., part 8, pp. 3909–12. Kramer testimony:

Kramer told the JCC (part 8, pp. 3910–12) that he had delivered the “One P.M. Message” to (1) the State Department where he had “most emphatically not” spoken with Knox, (2) the White House, and then (3) back to the Navy Department.

²³⁷Ibid., part 8, pp. 3910, 3912. Kramer testimony.

²³⁸Ibid., part 9, p. 4180. Excerpt reprinted from Safford NCI testimony.

Ibid., part 9, p. 3909. Kramer testimony:

Kramer: I stopped off at Admiral Stark’s office [Stark was in his office; it was between 10:30 and 10:35]. . . . The office door was closed. . . . Word was sent in . . . that I had something for him. My impressions

Kramer said he had not then seen Knox personally, and he had “most emphatically not” sent him a note. “There was only the verbal explanation.”²³⁹ Kramer had not said that the time, 1:00, had “any significance in connection with any attack at Pearl Harbor.”²⁴⁰ It had been Safford’s interpretation, Kramer said later, that turned that remark into a reference to Pearl Harbor.

earlier have been that it was his Flag Secretary, then Commander Wellborn. That has only quite recently been corrected on that score since I am informed that Wellborn was not there that morning at all. My recollections were fully refreshed in a conversation only in the last few days with Captain McCollum to the effect that he was the one who came to the door. I distinctly recollect that now. I further recollect pointing out to Captain McCollum the tie-up of the time, 1:00 Washington, with the scheme that had been developing for the past week or so in the Southwest Pacific with reference to Malaya and the Kra Peninsula. Captain McCollum reacted instantaneously to my pointing that out. His reactions, I believe, were identical with mine. I do not believe our conversation lasted more than 10 seconds or so, and then I headed for the State Department.

Ibid., part 8, p. 3910:

[Arriving at State at about 10:45, Kramer made delivery to] one of the private secretaries of Mr. Hull. . . . Before that folder was taken in to Mr. Hull there was a brief conversation of the identical nature that I had had with Captain McCollum at Admiral Stark’s door, pointing out the tie-up of the time 1:00 Washington, with the situation in the Southwest Pacific.

Richardson: One o’clock Washington meant dawn in Hawaii, did it not?

Kramer: It was 7:30 in Hawaii, yes, sir.

Richardson: And was that fact pointed out in your conversation with McCollum, and at the State Department?

Kramer: It was mentioned in passing, yes, sir.

²³⁹Ibid., p. 3911. Kramer testimony.

²⁴⁰Ibid., pp. 3909–12. Kramer testimony:

Questioned by Richardson, Kramer said: “The primary point of that [the 1:00 delivery time] was the conviction, at least in my mind, that the Japanese intended to carry out their plans against Kota Bharu, with the intention and purpose of forcing the hand of the Thai Premier,

[T]he reference to Pearl Harbor was purely a passing reference for the benefit of non-naval personnel, namely, these foreign service officers and the Army officer present. . . . [He] never intended in the least to imply that those remarks . . . indicated an attack on Pearl Harbor, or, in fact, any overt intention on the part of the Japanese directed toward the United States.²⁴¹

He had only intended to comment “on how the hour [1:00 P.M. EDT] tied with the sun and moves in progress elsewhere;”²⁴²

Pibul, who had been maintaining, for some time past, the position that his country was neutral, that any foreign nation that invaded his quarters would be considered an enemy, and that the moment such an invasion took place he would call on the other party for assistance. By ‘other party’ I refer to Japan or to Britain.”

Ibid., part 9, pp. 4110, 4116. Excerpts of Kramer’s 1944 memorandum reprinted. Kramer explained the significance of the “One P.M. Message” for Knox’s benefit, as he often had explained other Japanese intercepts to the Navy personnel authorized to see them:

The implications were so obvious in the light of what we know, that it was not necessary to state that invasion of British territory was undoubtedly scheduled for 1300 (EDT), and that at least a complete break with the U.S. was scheduled simultaneously. . . . I recollect conversation only for Mr. Knox’ benefit regarding the implications of the 1300 hour. I distinctly remember that the tie-up of these times would be apparent to experienced naval officers, but that a civilian (Mr. Knox) might overlook it. Hence the pains I took to point it out at the State Department. I repeated this point at least half a dozen times that morning to others, chiefly subordinates, I think, but including one of Mr. Hull’s secretaries who handled this material for him, to one or two of my office workers, and I believe also to Colonel Bratton [the Army courier] in Mr. Hull’s outer office, probably to Commander Wellborn, and Admiral’s flag secretary, possibly to McCollum, and probably to you [Safford] too.”

²⁴¹Ibid., part 9, pp. 4180–82. Kramer testimony.

²⁴²Ibid., p. 4180. Kramer quoting from 1944 memorandum prepared for Halsey.

After delivering the “One P.M. Message” at State, Kramer had gone to the White House “to deliver the same set of traffic.”²⁴³

INTERCEPT INDICATING ACTUAL APPROACH OF WAR DELIVERED TO THE ARMY SUNDAY MORNING

“On or about December 10, 1941” Miles and Bratton drafted “a memorandum for the record, of [their] recollection of what took place in General Marshall’s office that morning” of December 7.²⁴⁴ Bratton had referred to this memorandum when appearing before both the Army Pearl Harbor Board and Clarke’s investigation.²⁴⁵ Most of Bratton’s testimony before the JCC concerning the events of this morning were also based on that memorandum. Bratton told the JCC that “the fourteenth part of the [Japanese] message was not delivered to me until between 8 and 9:00; around 8:15 or 8:30” on the morning of December 7. It had then been “delivered immediately to the State Department.” Bratton didn’t remember whether he had taken it himself.

It is entirely possible that I may have gotten a car and rushed over there with the 14th part so that the Secretary of State’s book would be complete. On the other hand, I may have given it to Colonel Dusenbury to deliver.

In any event Bratton knew that “the Secretary of State had all 14 of the parts before 10 o’clock that morning.”²⁴⁶

He continued:

[A]t about 9:00 or shortly before 9:00 there was placed in my hands the so-called 1:00 P.M. delivery message. This immediately

²⁴³Ibid., part 8, p. 3911. Kramer testimony.

²⁴⁴Ibid., part 29, p. 2347, APHB.

²⁴⁵Ibid., part 34, p. 19, Clarke investigation.

²⁴⁶Ibid., part 9, p. 4516.

stunned me into frenzied activity because of its implications and from that time on I was busily engaged trying to locate various officers of the General Staff and conferring with them on the exclusive subject of this message and its meaning.²⁴⁷

Bratton said he “washed my hands of all other matters, turning them over to my assistant, Colonel Dusenbury, and proceeded to take steps with the 1:00 P.M. delivery message.” When he

discovered that neither the Chief of Staff [Marshall], Chief of War Plans Division [Gerow], or G-2 [Miles], were in their offices [I] immediately put in a phone call for General Marshall at his quarters at Fort Myer. One of his orderlies answered the telephone and informed me that the General had gone horse-back riding.

Bratton asked the orderly to find Marshall and “tell him who I am and tell him to go to the nearest telephone, that it is vitally important that I communicate with him at the earliest practicable moment.” The orderly assured Bratton he would do so.²⁴⁸

He then phoned Miles at his home and told him to come to the office. Miles came in about 10:00. Bratton discussed “this whole business with General Miles in his office. . . . So that General Miles was thoroughly conversant with the entire matter” before he and Bratton went together later into Marshall’s office after he had arrived. Bratton or Miles had then phoned Gerow, although Bratton said he didn’t “remember seeing General Gerow that morning until he joined us in General Marshall’s office” at about 11:25.²⁴⁹

Bratton’s frantic call had reached Marshall’s orderly “shortly after 9:00,” probably between 9 and 9:15. From that time until

²⁴⁷Ibid., p. 4517.

²⁴⁸Ibid., p. 4524.

²⁴⁹Ibid., p. 4525.

Marshall arrived in his office, Bratton “kept [Marshall’s] copy [of the “One P.M. Message”] in my hands until I gave it to [Marshall] in his office.”²⁵⁰ Marshall had returned Bratton’s call “in person sometime between 10 and 10:30.” Bratton “explained to him that I had a most important message that he must see at once, and that if he would stay where he was, I would get a car and bring it to him.”²⁵¹ Bratton thought he “could have gotten there in 10 minutes.”²⁵² Marshall replied, “No, don’t bother to do that. I am coming down to my office. You can give it to me then.”²⁵³

Marshall finally arrived about an hour later, at 11:25 A.M. Bratton couldn’t explain why it had apparently taken Marshall an hour or more to reach the War Department, when it was normally a ten-minute trip from his quarters to his office.²⁵⁴ It took Marshall only ten minutes to make that same trip in the afternoon after he had heard the news of the attack.²⁵⁵

After his phone conversation with Marshall, Bratton “went up towards General Marshall’s office, and stood around there in the hall, or in the office of the secretary of the General Staff, waiting for General Marshall to arrive.” When Marshall finally arrived at 11:25, he “went into his office from the door that opens into the hall and General Miles and I . . . not more than a minute or 2 minutes after that walked in through the other door.”²⁵⁶

Bratton was “positive” that when he reached Marshall’s office at 11:25, the chief of staff had on his desk all 14 parts of the message that Bratton had not delivered to him.²⁵⁷ Bratton was waiting

²⁵⁰Ibid., p. 4524.

²⁵¹Ibid., p. 4525.

²⁵²Ibid., p. 4546.

²⁵³Ibid., p. 4525.

²⁵⁴Ibid., pp. 4548–50.

²⁵⁵Ibid., part 14, p. 1411, Exhibit 39.

²⁵⁶Ibid., part 9, pp. 4546, 4573.

²⁵⁷Ibid., p. 4544.

for him with the “One P.M. Message” in his hand. “General,” he said, “I have a very important message here which I think you should see at once.”²⁵⁸ But Marshall did not look up; he had the 14-part reply “and was reading it.” Bratton and Miles “tried to interrupt him with this 1:00 P.M. delivery business but he would not be interrupted, and he went right ahead with his reading until he got to the end of the 14 parts.”²⁵⁹ Marshall hurriedly drafted his last-minute warning to the field commanders.²⁶⁰

Bratton had taken this message to Colonel French, Signal Corps officer in charge of the message center, and had “explained to him that it was General Marshall’s desire that the message be transmitted to the addressees by the fastest possible safe means, giving the Philippines first priority.” Bratton testified that he reported back to Marshall, who asked him to return to the message center and find out how long it would take for the messages to reach the addressees. French said “the message would be encoded in about three minutes, on the air in about eight minutes, and in the hands of the addressees in about thirty minutes.”²⁶¹ Bratton checked his watch; it was then 11:50 A.M.²⁶² The message should be in the hands of the Army Signal Officer in Hawaii, still in code, by 12:30 EDT—7:00 A.M. in Hawaii.

One important question still remained unanswered when Bratton finished testifying: If he hadn’t delivered the 14-part reply to Marshall, how was it on his desk when he arrived at 11:25 A.M.? Gearhart asked Bratton where Marshall could have obtained it when “the only places that the 14 parts had been delivered before that meeting at 11:25 was at the White House and

²⁵⁸Ibid., p. 4573.

²⁵⁹Ibid., p. 4547.

²⁶⁰Ibid., part 3, p. 1112.

²⁶¹Ibid., part 9, p. 4554.

²⁶²Ibid., p. 4555.

the State Department and to Admiral Stark.”²⁶³ Had Marshall obtained a copy message from Stark or the White House, where Kramer had made deliveries that morning?²⁶⁴ Did Bratton’s assistant, Dusenbury, deliver it to one of Marshall’s secretaries, possibly Colonel Deane, earlier that morning, as Bratton said he might have?²⁶⁵ Or could he have gotten a copy of the first 13 parts at the White House during the night, possibly from Hull for whom Bratton had delivered them to the State Department, or from Knox to whom Kramer had delivered in his Wardman Park apartment? FDR had not kept copies of the messages delivered to him Saturday evening.

MARSHALL’S SUNDAY MORNING WHEREABOUTS

Another unanswered question concerns Marshall’s whereabouts on the morning of December 7. He was supposedly on duty 24 hours a day. If unavailable for some reason, an aide or duty officer should have been able to reach him at any moment. Yet Bratton told the JCC that when he called his quarters at about 9:00 Sunday morning in the attempt to deliver the urgent “One P.M. Message,” he was told Marshall was out “horseback riding.”²⁶⁶

Where was Marshall during the hour and a half between 10 or 10:30 A.M., when he returned Bratton’s 9:00 call, and 11:25 when he arrived in his office? Marshall may have gone horseback riding earlier, but where was he when he called Bratton? Bratton assumed he was still at his quarters at Fort Myer. But was he? Perhaps he was calling from somewhere else and that was why he had told Bratton not to drive out, but to wait in his office. Did he

²⁶³Ibid., p. 4547.

²⁶⁴Ibid., pp. 4544–45, 4547.

²⁶⁵Ibid., pp. 4547–48, 4573.

²⁶⁶Ibid., p. 4524.

call from somewhere in the War Department? From Stark's office in the Navy Department? The White House?

One report of Marshall's whereabouts that morning comes from then Colonel (later Major General) John R. Deane. On the day of the attack, Deane was one of the secretaries of the general staff. Marshall had asked him to come in to the office that Sunday morning to write a one-page statement on the number of planes and anti-aircraft guns in the United States. Marshall wanted that information to refer to during his scheduled appearance before a congressional committee the next day. Later, in describing the events of the day, Deane wrote that Marshall had "arrived at the office at about 10:00 or shortly thereafter and had a series of conferences with staff officers from G-2 and the War Plans Division."²⁶⁷

So Marshall could have phoned Bratton from the War Department at 10:00. But why would Marshall not want to tell Bratton where he was? Why would he want to conceal his activities that morning? Would they have destroyed the myth that the Japanese attack was unexpected? Or was some devious scheme afoot that would have ruined the nation's reputation as a peace-loving nation if it had become known?

Some years later in an interview (May 3, 1961), Captain Arthur H. McCollum, at the time of the attack chief of the Far Eastern section of the Navy's communications division, told me that he knew nothing about the JCC testimony reporting Marshall out horseback riding that Sunday morning, but he was willing to swear that he had seen Marshall coming out of Stark's office at around 9:30.

²⁶⁷Ibid., part 14, p. 1411, Exhibit 39, Deane June 8, 1942, memorandum about the events of the morning of December 7, 1941.

STARK CANNOT RECALL HIS
SATURDAY EVENING WHEREABOUTS OR
EARLY SUNDAY MORNING ACTIVITIES

Like Marshall, Stark was supposed to be available 24 hours a day; if he was not home or in his office, an aide or duty officer should have been able to locate him at any time. Yet Kramer, who had phoned Stark's home Saturday evening about the 13 parts, had not been able to reach him. Wilkinson testified that he had also tried, unsuccessfully, to telephone Stark at his home that evening.²⁶⁸

Asked during the JCC hearings where he had been the night before the attack, Stark replied,

Nobody reached me [that evening]. . . . I thought I was home but if they had tried to reach me I should have been there. Also if I were not there word would have been left where I was. Also the duty officer was generally informed of my whereabouts.²⁶⁹

Stark testified that he had tried to chase down several leads in the attempt to discover where he had been that evening. "Unfortunately," he said, his wife had

destroyed her date calendar of that time. . . . We have found nothing as to where I was and it follows my assumption that my thought was that I was at home. There is nothing I have been able to find out which locates where I was that evening.²⁷⁰

Gearhart asked Stark: "In view of the fact that the Chief of Staff cannot remember where he was on that night is it possible

²⁶⁸Ibid., part 4, pp. 1762, 1874.

²⁶⁹Ibid., part 5, p. 2183.

²⁷⁰Ibid., p. 2291.

that you and he could have been together?” Stark thought they “had no such conspiracy at that time.” He did

not shut it out as an utter impossibility that we could have been in each other’s company, but I think we were not. . . . We were together either talking by telephone or interoffice visits a great deal during office hours. We were not together a great deal in the evening.²⁷¹

JCC general counsel Mitchell told Stark that, according to the record, Knox and Wilkinson had both received Japan’s first 13 parts during the evening. As a result, Knox had made an appointment for the next morning with Stimson and Hull. Yet Stark said he had “no recollection of having seen or heard of the pilot message” announcing that the Japanese reply would soon be en route; his first information on that score, he said, was “Sunday forenoon.”²⁷² Stark also insisted he had not heard anything at all that evening about the 14-part message.

He was asked by JCC members when he had gone to his office on Sunday morning. He didn’t answer directly.

I can only guess on that. . . . I usually got down to the office Sunday mornings around 10:30 and I just assumed that I had gotten there somewhere around 10:30 or 11:00. I was lazy on Sunday mornings unless there was some special reason for getting up early. I usually took a walk around the grounds and greenhouse at the Chief of Naval Operations’ quarters and didn’t hurry about getting down and my usual time, as I recall, was about 10:30 or 11:00. What time it was on this particular Sunday morning I couldn’t go beyond that.²⁷³

²⁷¹Ibid., pp. 2291–92.

²⁷²Ibid., p. 2183.

²⁷³Ibid.

According to Stark, therefore, it was about 10:30 or 11—after he reached his office that morning—that he saw the 14-part Japanese reply. It was then also, he said, that he had learned that the Japanese ambassadors had been directed to present his government’s reply “to the Secretary of State at 1:00 P.M.” that same day.²⁷⁴ Stark said he had discussed the Japanese reply and the time of its presentation with Navy Captain Schuirmann, State Department liaison.²⁷⁵ However, several other witnesses told of seeing Stark in his office much earlier than 10:30 or 11:00. Kramer told the 1944 Naval Court of Inquiry that he “made the hurried delivery” of the 14-part Japanese reply to Stark in his office “at about 9:00 A.M. on the morning of December 7.”²⁷⁶ Stark had not been alone, he said; there were then “about 12 or 15 officers present. Most of the heads of divisions in the Navy Department and those that attended the Admirals’ conference were there.” Kramer was relieved that Wilkinson was there because Kramer could “let him carry the ball with Admiral Stark as far as any further explanation of references were concerned.”²⁷⁷

In February 1946 before the JCC, Kramer changed his story slightly. He testified: “As soon as this 14th part was typed up . . . shortly after 8:00, delivery was made to Captain McCollum along with the other 13 parts.”²⁷⁸ Kramer’s 1946 “recollection” was that it was “about 9:30” that all fourteen parts were delivered to Stark’s office.²⁷⁹

Wilkinson also testified before the JCC that Stark was in his office earlier that Sunday morning than 10:30 or 11:00, Stark’s “usual” arrival time. Wilkinson had reached his own office “shortly

²⁷⁴Ibid., p. 2184.

²⁷⁵Ibid.

²⁷⁶Ibid., part 33, p. 865.

²⁷⁷Ibid.

²⁷⁸Ibid., part 9, p. 4006.

²⁷⁹Ibid., part 9, p. 4038. Kramer testimony before the Joint Committee.

after 8:00 on the morning of Sunday, the 7th.” He thought it was about 9:15 when he and McCollum “went to the office of the Chief of Naval Operations [Stark], where,” he recalled, “Admiral Stark, Admiral Ingersoll, and Admiral Turner were present.”²⁸⁰ In any event, he was quite clear that Stark had read the 14-part message in its entirety by 9:15 or 9:30. Wilkinson was struck by the “fighting words” in the 14th part. He was “more impressed by that language than by the breaking off of negotiations” and he had pointed out to Stark “the seriousness of that language.”²⁸¹

Wilkinson believed the Japanese “were going to press on in the direction of the advance which they were then following in the South Sea and that something might be expected in that or other directions.” He was particularly concerned that, in view of “this strong language,” the fleet “should be advised of the latest development.” According to Wilkinson, Stark had the authority to act. Wilkinson thought Stark *should* act. But Stark did *not* act.²⁸²

It would certainly appear that Stark was in his office and had seen the 14-part reply and even the “One P.M. Message” several hours before the Japanese ambassadors’ delivery deadline. Yet, except for the assembly of an unusual number of naval officers, the apparent lack of any sense of urgency in Stark’s office contrasted sharply with the frantic activity in Marshall’s office at the last minute, after he finally arrived there at 11:25.²⁸³

Stark said that when Marshall phoned him at about 11:40 and asked “what I thought about sending the information concerning the time of presentation on to the various commanders in the Pacific,” Stark’s first response was that “we had sent them so much already that I hesitated to send more.” A minute or so later,

²⁸⁰Ibid., part 36, p. 236.

²⁸¹Ibid., part 4, pp. 1766–67.

²⁸²Ibid., p. 1800.

²⁸³Ibid., part 5, pp. 2132–33.

Stark called Marshall back and told him “there might be some peculiar significance in the Japanese Ambassador calling on Mr. Hull at 1:00 P.M.” and asked him to include instructions to his Army people “to inform their naval opposites.”²⁸⁴

PEARL HARBOR ATTACK— NOT A COMPLETE SURPRISE TO FDR

Further evidence that the attack did not take the administration by complete surprise is revealed in FDR’s letter, dictated December 5, to Wendell Willkie, defeated 1940 Republican presidential candidate. In that letter, FDR had suggested that Willkie visit Australia and New Zealand as special representative of the president.

It would, of course, be of real value to cement our relations with New Zealand and Australia and would be useful not only now but in the future. There is always the Japanese matter to consider. The situation is definitely serious and there might be an armed clash at any moment if the Japanese continued their forward progress against the Philippines, Dutch Indies or Malays or Burma. Perhaps the next four or five days will decide the matter.

After the attack, before mailing, the president had added in longhand: “This was dictated Friday morning—long before this vile attack started. F.D.R.”²⁸⁵

COMMITTEE ADJOURNED

The committee, created by a Senate Resolution of September 6, 1945, had held its first open hearings on November 15, 1945. By the time Commander Schulz appeared on February 15, 1946,

²⁸⁴Ibid., part 5, p. 2133; Stark opening statement.

²⁸⁵Ibid., part 17, p. 2457, Exhibit 111; part 6, p. 2495.

most of the principals involved in the attack had been heard from. The hearings continued a few more days and a few more persons were questioned. Finally the committee members decided it was time to wind up their hearings. In closing Chairman Barkley congratulated the members: “[O]n the whole the attendance of this committee and the interest it has manifested in the testimony of all the witnesses has been extraordinary.” The committee adjourned February 20, 1946, subject to recall by the chairman.²⁸⁶

COMMITTEE RECONVENED TO HEAR
TESTIMONY RE DECEMBER 6–7 WHEREABOUTS
OF STARK AND MARSHALL

On April 9 Barkley reconvened the committee to question Stark and Marshall once more as to their whereabouts on December 6–7.²⁸⁷

Marshall had been appointed ambassador to China by President Truman in November 1945, but was back in Washington for a brief visit in April 1946. At that time he appeared once more before the committee.

Brewster asked Marshall, among other things, to explain why, in view of all pre-attack considerations and factors, he had not expected an attack on Pearl Harbor. Marshall said he had

felt that was a vital installation. . . . [T]hat was the only installation we had anywhere that was reasonably well equipped. . . . In our opinion, the commanders had been alerted. In our opinion, there was nothing more we could give them at the time for the purpose of defense. In our opinion, that was one place that had enough within itself to put up a reasonable defense.

²⁸⁶Ibid., part 10, pp. 5150–51.

²⁸⁷Ibid., part 11, p. 5153.

MacArthur, in the Philippines, was just beginning to get something. His position was pitiable, and it was still in a state of complete flux, with the ships on the ocean en route out there and the planes half delivered and half still to go.

The Panama Canal was quite inadequate at that period, seriously inadequate in planes, and, of course, of vast importance to anything in the Pacific.

The only place we had any assurance about was Hawaii, and for that reason we had less concern about Hawaii. . . . [W]e had worked on it very industriously . . . and we felt reasonably secure at that one point.²⁸⁸

When Marshall was in Washington testifying, Ferguson in the men's room in the Capitol overheard him talking with Barkley. Ferguson did not see the two men, but he recognized their voices and heard Marshall tell Barkley that if Marshall were to say where he was on the night of December 6–7, it would get the “Chief” (FDR) in trouble.²⁸⁹

These remarks may also have sparked the following line of questioning by Keefe. He reminded Marshall that on Saturday evening, after the president had read the first 13 parts, he had turned to Hopkins saying, in substance, “This means war.” The President had then tried to get in touch with Stark.

²⁸⁸Ibid., part 11, pp. 5186–87.

²⁸⁹This story, related to me by Ferguson, lends credence to Stahlman's assertion that Marshall and Stark along with Knox, Stimson, and Hopkins, had “spent most of the night before [the attack] at the White House with FDR.” See James G. Stahlman's November 26, 1973 letter to Admiral Kemp Tolley (copy in author's files). Several attempts were made in the course of the JCC hearings to determine if there had been such a White House meeting. See for instance the questioning of Marshall. Ibid., part 3, pp. 1110 and part 11, p. 5193. And the interlocutory with Stark at part 11, p. 5549.

Keefe: Can you state definitely whether or not you have a present recollection as to whether the President did in fact contact you?

Marshall: I am quite certain that he did not. . . . There is no question in my mind; no. That is a positive answer.

Keefe: And you are certain that you did not attend any meeting then, at the White House that night?

Marshall: I am absolutely certain of that. . . . I might say that . . . not only had I no dinner engagements of any kind between the 1st of November and the 7th of December . . . but that Mrs. Marshall was convalescing from having broken three or four ribs and we didn't go out anywhere. . . . So all the evidence . . . is that I was home, as was customary. . . .

Keefe: That is your present recollection? . . .

Marshall: I can't say that is my recollection. I am certain I was at home, but I don't recall anything about it.

Keefe: But you are certain of one thing and that is that you received no communication from the president on the evening of the 6th of December and that you didn't attend any meeting at the White House that night?

Marshall: That is correct.²⁹⁰

When asked about the morning of December 7, Marshall repeated his account of his Sunday morning routine. He said

the first information I had of anything unusual was . . . after I got into my shower, or was going into my shower when

²⁹⁰Ibid., part 11, pp. 5193–94.

this message was relayed to me from Colonel Bratton that he wanted to come out to the house with an important matter.²⁹¹

When Stark appeared before this reconvened session of the JCC, his mind still drew a blank as to where he had been or what he had been doing Saturday evening. He remembered “very clearly having seen a revival of *The Student Prince*, but I had not connected it with that Saturday night.” Nor did he now. “My recollection was it was in Philadelphia” that he had seen the revival and he had “contacted my daughter and her husband who were there, and they said no. The next I heard of it was in connection with Commander Schulz’s testimony.” But even that did “not ring any bell” with him. He could “only assume, in view of the testimony of Commander Schulz and of others who tried to contact me . . . that I probably was there.”²⁹²

And Stark did not remember hearing from the president that evening. “To the best of my knowledge and belief, the president did not call me that night.” Nor did he think he had learned then that “there was a dispatch down there [at the White House] which was clear-cut and which meant war.”²⁹³ In any event, he was “absolutely certain” that he “did not go to the White House that night, December 6” and that he “did not see the first 13-parts of the Jap 14-part message that night.”²⁹⁴

Stark persisted in saying that his visit to the office Sunday morning had been “routine.”²⁹⁵ He did not recall meeting there that morning with various officers, as Kramer and Wilkinson had testified that he had.²⁹⁶

²⁹¹Ibid., pp. 5191, 5194.

²⁹²Ibid., p. 5154.

²⁹³Ibid., pp. 5157, 5159.

²⁹⁴Ibid., p. 5232.

²⁹⁵Ibid., p. 5155.

²⁹⁶Ibid., p. 5163.

* * * * *

On April 11, 1946, after introducing additional material on the record, the committee stood “adjourned subject to the call of the Chair.”²⁹⁷ However, on May 23, it reopened to accept a few more documents. Among other materials, Ferguson introduced for the record written statements from former Secretary of State Hull²⁹⁸ and former Secretary of War Stimson.²⁹⁹ Stimson’s notes for December 7 described a meeting with Hull and Knox that morning and told of his position that “the main thing is to hold the main people who are interested in the Far East together—the British, ourselves, the Dutch, the Australians, the Chinese.” For the record, Stimson attached copies of the statements expressing similar sentiments he had solicited that morning from Hull and Knox.³⁰⁰

With the introduction of these documents, the hearings were “officially closed” and the committee stood “adjourned, subject to call by the Chair.”³⁰¹

JCC HEARINGS REOPENED AGAIN TO HEAR AN ACCOUNT OF STARK’S DECEMBER 6 EVENING

Although officially closed, the committee reopened once more on May 31, 1946, at the special call of Barkley. Stark had written Barkley a letter advising that he had finally been reminded of his

²⁹⁷Ibid., part 11, p. 5364.

²⁹⁸Ibid., pp. 5367–416, “Replies to Interrogatories Propounded by the Honorable Homer Ferguson.”

²⁹⁹Ibid., pp. 5416–40, 5441–63, “Secretary of War Stimson’s Statement of Facts as Shown by My Current Notes and My Recollection as Refreshed Thereby.”

³⁰⁰Ibid., pp. 5439–41.

³⁰¹Ibid., p. 5542.

whereabouts on the evening of December 6.³⁰² Barkley did not feel he should sit on Stark's letter. Nor did he think he should simply put it in the record where it would in effect be lost and buried. The matter could not be delayed as Stark was leaving for London that afternoon.³⁰³

Barkley hurriedly reopened the hearings just to hear from Stark and his informant. Some of the ten committee members were out of town and unable to attend on such short notice. Only four Democrats appeared, and one Republican—Keefe—who, having had only a few minutes notice by phone, arrived late.

Stark had written Barkley that Navy Captain Harold D. Krick, a personal friend and Stark's former flag captain, had reminded Stark that the two men and their wives had spent that evening together. They had attended a performance of *The Student Prince* at the National Theater in Washington. When they returned from the theater to Stark's quarters, one of Stark's servants told him that the White House had called. Stark went immediately upstairs to phone FDR from his study, where a direct line to the White House was located. According to Krick, when Stark came back downstairs, he told him "in substance that the situation with Japan was very serious."³⁰⁴

When the two couples again met socially on Saturday, May 25, 1946, Krick happened to relate these events to Stark. Stark did not remember the occasion, but he realized that this meant that his testimony that he had not talked to FDR that evening was incorrect. The more Stark thought about this, "the more disturbed" he became. He thought "the committee should have this, the record should have it straight." He got up around 2 or 3 in

³⁰²Ibid., pp. 5543–44.

³⁰³Ibid., pp. 5544, 5555.

³⁰⁴Ibid., p. 5544, quoting Stark's letter to Barkley.

the morning and wrote the letter that he had delivered to Barkley on May 27.³⁰⁵

Counsel Richardson asked Stark:

Admiral, if the president had told you in his talk with you that night . . . that this thirteenth-part message meant war, thereby impressed you with his very serious estimate of it, what would have been, in accordance with your custom, the action for you to have then taken, with that information?

Stark thought that he “should have gotten in touch with Ingersoll [assistant CNO] and with Turner [chief, Navy War Plans]. We had had a conference a few days previously,” Stark said,

going over the seriousness of the situation, if there was anything more we could have sent, and, as I say, we practically repeated this fourteenth point . . . some days earlier we had sent the same thing. We thought, and the president knew every move that we had made, that we had sent everything possible, on that premise, that war was in the immediate offing. I don't know that I would have done anything. I couldn't say.

Richardson then took advantage of the opportunity to ask Stark “another odd question” about a possible late-night December 6-7 meeting at the White House.

I never heard of such a conference. I know of nothing now regarding such a conference, was not present at it, I had never even heard anyone suggest such a thing until it was mentioned here in previous hearings. My honest opinion is that nothing of the sort took place. It was a complete surprise to Marshall that even the question came up. It was to me. I am certain that I didn't leave the house after the Kricks left. I just can't think of any such thing as happening. Certainly I was not present, and

³⁰⁵Ibid., p. 5548.

Colonel Knox never mentioned any such thing to me. . . . [S]uch a conference at the White House, under those circumstances,

Stark said, would have been “so extraordinarily unusual” that it should “unquestionably” have stood out in his memory. But he didn’t remember any such meeting.³⁰⁶

In spite of Krick’s detailed account of the events of the evening, Stark’s memory did not revive. He remained consistent in saying that he could recall neither attending the theater with the Kricks nor phoning the president when he returned home. He did “not remember that evening.”³⁰⁷

Keefe had arrived at this special meeting only after Stark had given the bulk of his testimony. He feared that by reopening the hearings for this purpose they were establishing “a precedent now that may plague us in the future” and that its proceedings could go “on and on.”³⁰⁸ The JCC finally accepted Richardson’s suggestion “to take the Captain’s [Krick’s] testimony . . . and then if the committee later decides not to use any of this testimony, all right; on the other hand, if they allow it to go in, we have it.”³⁰⁹

Krick testified that he and his wife had seen the Starks socially on May 25, 1946. The subject of their December 6 meeting came up quite casually in the course of the conversation. Krick hadn’t been following the JCC testimony closely, and so he hadn’t realized what Stark had told the committee. But then he had seen a headline to the effect that the admiral couldn’t remember where he had been that evening.³¹⁰ He told Stark that they all had attended a performance of *The Student Prince* at the National Theater on the evening of December 6. When they returned to the admiral’s

³⁰⁶Ibid., p. 5549 (part 11).

³⁰⁷Ibid., pp. 5554–55.

³⁰⁸Ibid., p. 5550.

³⁰⁹Ibid., p. 5552.

³¹⁰Ibid., p. 5558.

quarters, one of the servants had told Stark that there had been “a White House call during the evening.” Stark “excused himself and retired to his study on the second floor.” When he returned he said only “that the conditions in the Pacific were serious . . . in a critical state, something of that sort.”³¹¹

Krick’s reminder of their December 6 theater party made Stark realize that he had given wrongful testimony to the JCC and, according to Krick, he was “very disturbed.” Stark told him: “You realize that I have testified to the contrary,” and he implied that this matter should be laid before the committee.³¹²

Asked by Lucas how he could remember this so vividly, Krick replied that the events of the evening were strongly impressed on his mind “because I was a very small fish, and great things were transpiring, and you don’t forget that sort of thing. It is not like looking down, when you look up at something.” When the Pearl Harbor disaster struck the following day, “the entire evening was definitely impressed” on him, and he said “it will be there for a long time to come.”³¹³

Thus by chance the committee learned of Stark’s whereabouts on the evening of December 6. Unfortunately, no witness ever came forward to enlighten the JCC similarly as to Marshall’s doings during these crucial hours.

Finally, the Committee adjourned subject to call.³¹⁴

³¹¹Ibid., p. 5557.

³¹²Ibid., p. 5558.

³¹³Ibid., p. 5560.

³¹⁴Ibid.

30.

Joint Congressional Committee on the Investigation of the Pearl Harbor Attack: Reports

JCC REPORT, JULY 20, 1946

The committee's report was published in a separate unnumbered volume and transmitted to Congress under date of July 20, 1946.¹ The hearings had continued much longer than anticipated, and the deadline for the report had been extended. By the time the committee closed down in May 1946, it had

¹79th Cong., 1st sess. Joint (Congressional) Committee on the Investigation of the Pearl Harbor Attack. *Report of the Joint Congressional Committee on the Investigation of the Pearl Harbor Attack and Additional Views of Mr. Keefe Together with Minority Views of Mr. Ferguson and Mr. Brewster* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1946), p. i.

held 70 days of open hearings, examined 43 witnesses, taken 15,000 pages of testimony, introduced countless documents, and admitted some 183 exhibits.² Incorporated in the volumes of the hearings were the findings of all previous Pearl Harbor investigations. Moreover, the JCC had had access to a great deal of secret information that had not been available before; much new material had been revealed. To organize all this data, gathered from various sources, to separate the wheat from the chaff, the relevant from the irrelevant, and to determine responsibility was a formidable task.

THE MAJORITY REPORT

The Majority Report itself was a veritable book, 492 pages long. It reviewed in considerable detail the historical background of the attack, Japan's Asiatic policy, the Japanese-U.S. negotiations, U.S. diplomacy, and U.S. agreements to cooperate with the British and the Dutch. It described the attack itself, including the Japanese plan for making and executing the attack, the defenses of U.S. forces in Hawaii, the surprise occasioned in Pearl Harbor by the attack, and the U.S. losses that resulted.

The Majority Report was signed by only eight of the committee's ten members. One of the signatories, Keefe, dissented in some respects and presented "Additional Views."³

The conclusion of the Majority Report was that the "ultimate responsibility" for the attack rested with Japan; the top Washington officials had done nothing to provoke the Japanese into attack and had

discharged their responsibilities with distinction, ability, and foresight . . . and had made every possible effort, without sacri-

²Ibid., p. xiv.

³Ibid., pp. 266-266W.

figing our national honor and endangering our security, to avert war with Japan.⁴

The Majority Report did not let Washington military officials get off scot-free, however. It charged the war plans division of the War Department with having “failed to discharge its direct responsibility to advise the commanding general he had not properly alerted the Hawaiian Department.”

It also held:

The Intelligence and War Plans Divisions of the War and Navy Departments failed: (a) To give careful and thoughtful consideration to the intercepted messages from Tokyo to Honolulu of September 24, November 15, and November 20 (the harbor berthing plan and related dispatches) and to raise a question as to their significance. . . . (b) To be properly on the *qui vive* to receive the “one o’clock” intercept and to recognize in the message the fact that some Japanese military action would very possibly occur somewhere at 1 P.M. December 7. . . . Notwithstanding the fact that there were officers on twenty-four hour watch, the Committee believes that under all of the evidence the War and Navy Departments were not sufficiently alerted on December 6 and 7, 1941, in view of the imminence of war.⁵

Thus the Majority Report was somewhat critical of Gerow (War Plans) and Turner (Intelligence), for not being more alert, and it placed some blame indirectly on Marshall and Stark for not having reacted more promptly on receiving the “One P.M. Message.” However, it held Hull’s diplomatic role justified and praised Knox and Stimson.

According to the Majority Report,

⁴Ibid., pp. 251–52.

⁵Ibid., p. 252.

everyone was surprised that Japan struck the Fleet at Pearl Harbor at the time that she did. Yet officers, both in Washington and Hawaii, were fully conscious of the danger from an attack; they realized this form of attack on Pearl Harbor by Japan was at least a possibility; and they were adequately informed of the imminence of war.⁶

The Report listed several failures on the part of the Hawaiian commanders and concluded: "The errors made by the Hawaiian commands were errors of judgment and not of derelictions of duty."

The principal recommendations were to institute "unity of command . . . at all military and naval outposts" and to integrate "Army and Navy intelligence agencies in order to avoid the pitfalls of divided responsibility which experience has made so abundantly apparent."⁷

KEEFE'S "ADDITIONAL VIEWS"

In his "Additional Views," Keefe said that he agreed with most of the Majority Report's conclusions and recommendations. For instance, he recognized, as the majority did, that both Washington and Hawaii were surprised. Apparently neither believed that Pearl Harbor would be Japan's initial target; both expected Japan to strike first in the Asiatic area. "If this belief was unjustified," as Keefe believed it was,

then the mistake lies on the Washington doorstep just as much as it does upon that of Hawaii. Throughout the long and arduous sessions of the committee in the preparation of the committee report [I had] continuously insisted that whatever "yardstick" was agreed upon as a basis for determining

⁶Ibid., p. 251.

⁷Ibid., pp. 252-53.

responsibilities in Hawaii should be applied to the high command at Washington.

This was Keefe's "fundamental objection to the committee report." If "the high command in Hawaii was subject to criticism for concluding that Hawaii was not in danger," then Keefe insisted that "the same criticism with the same force and scope should apply to the high command in Washington."⁸

Keefe pointed out that it was FDR who had made the decision to retain the fleet at Pearl Harbor. Yet

the position of the Fleet in the Hawaiian area was inherently untenable and dangerous. . . . Once the ships were in Pearl Harbor, with its single channel, they were a target for any successfully launched air attack from carrier-borne planes.

As the fleet lacked sufficient patrol planes to conduct the necessary reconnaissance, out as far as 800 miles and for 360 degrees all around Oahu, the chance of discovering such a hostile carrier would be only "by lucky accident."

"An inferior Fleet, under enemy surveillance in an exposed naval base without resources to protect it," Keefe wrote,

could only avert disaster by receiving the best possible evidence of the intentions of its potential enemy. The Commander-in-Chief of the Fleet in 1941 recognized that information was essential to his making appropriate disposition to meet any crisis. He formally requested the Chief of Naval Operations that he "be immediately informed of all important developments as they occur and by the quickest secure means available."⁹

Yet Kimmel was not kept so informed.

⁸Ibid., p. 266A.

⁹Ibid., pp. 266B-266C.

Keefe reviewed some of the more vital information that had been available in Washington but which had not been relayed to Pearl Harbor—the evidence of Japanese intentions, the “bomb plot” or “ships in harbor” messages, FDR’s several statements concerning the imminence of war, the “Pilot Message,” the thirteen parts of Japan’s reply, etc. All in all, Keefe’s objections to the Majority Report were so substantial that Senators Brewster and Ferguson were surprised and disappointed that he did not join them in drafting their Minority Report.

JCC MINORITY REPORT

The two committee members who refused to sign the Majority Report, Brewster and Ferguson, submitted their own Minority Report.¹⁰ In it they pointed out that “the first purpose of the investigation,” according to Barkley, was “that of ‘fixing responsibility’ for the Pearl Harbor disaster ‘upon an individual, or a group of individuals, or upon a system under which they operated or cooperated or failed to do either’.”¹¹ They proceeded to lay the blame directly at the door of the Roosevelt administration.

Inasmuch as all decisions and activities connected with this occurrence at Pearl Harbor were decisions and activities of executive authorities of the Government of the United States, the issue of responsibility for the degree of success attained by the Japanese attack involves at least one general question and four subsidiary and specific questions:

The general question is: Did all the civil, military and naval authorities of the United States charged with responsibility for the conduct of diplomatic negotiations with the Japanese Government and for preparedness and defense at Pearl Harbor competently, efficiently, and with proper regard for the trust

¹⁰Ibid., pp. 495–573.

¹¹Ibid., p. 495.

imposed in them fulfill the duties of their respective offices under the constitution and laws of the United States?

The subsidiary and specific questions are:

1. Did the high civil, military, and naval authorities in Washington secure in advance of 10:00 A.M. (E.S.T.) December 7, 1941, information respecting Japanese designs and intentions sufficient to convince them beyond all reasonable doubt that war with Japan was immediately imminent?
2. If so, did they give to General Walter C. Short and Admiral Husband E. Kimmel, the commanders at Pearl Harbor, clear and definite orders, immediately prior to the Japanese attack, instructing them to be fully alert for defense against such an attack?
3. Was Hawaii adequately equipped for its defense against a Japanese attack in accordance with the known circumstances?
4. Did the commanders at Pearl Harbor take the appropriate measures required by the orders issued to them from Washington, by the duties of their respective offices, and by the information in their possession and the resources at their disposal, to maintain the security of the possessions of the United States as far as that responsibility was invested in them?¹²

The Minority Report objected to the trouble the committee had in obtaining documents. The proposal presented to Congress just before the death of FDR in April 1945, to prevent all disclosure of U.S. cryptanalysis activities, had failed to pass, thanks to the charges of censorship raised by Ferguson.¹³ However, the members of the Joint Congressional Committee still encountered obstacles to obtaining documents crucial to their investigation.

¹²*Ibid.*, p. 496.

¹³Senate Bill S.805. See *Congressional Record*, April 9, 1945, p. 3196, and *Congressional Record*, April 11, 1945, p. 3267.

Under date of August 28, 1945, President Truman issued an order similar to the April proposal.¹⁴ This order was relaxed somewhat in October 1945, when its application was limited to the state, war, and navy departments; also the secrecy of records was relaxed “only so far as ‘the Joint Committee’ was concerned.” The opportunity to search the records was still denied to individual members of the committee. Moreover, the order

contained the unfortunate phrase “any information in their [the government’s] possession *material to the investigation*,” which provided a cloak for those reluctant to yield information requested by members of the Committee. It was always possible to confront individual members with the view that the papers, data, and information desired was not “material to the investigation.” . . .

In an order of November 7, 1945, President Truman relaxed restraints on executives of the Government in order that they may speak freely to *individual members* of the Committee but the order closed with the direction: “This does not include any files or written material.”¹⁵

Brewster and Ferguson charged in their report that when they asked to have a search made for missing records, “Vigorous and public denial was made—presumably on Executive authority—that any records were missing.” Yet when it developed that some records actually were missing

most inadequate explanations were supplied. How any public interest could possibly have been prejudiced by affording any

¹⁴Joint Committee, *Report of the Joint Congressional Committee on the Investigation of the Pearl Harbor Attack and Additional Views of Mr. Keefe Together with Minority Views of Mr. Ferguson and Mr. Brewster*, p. 498.

¹⁵Ibid.

opportunity to examine the manner of keeping records of this character has never been satisfactorily explained.¹⁶

The major criticism of Brewster and Ferguson was of the top authorities in Washington—Roosevelt, the secretaries of state, war, and navy, the Army chief of staff, and chief of naval operations.¹⁷ Hours, even days, before the attack these men all had access to detailed information about Japan's intentions, information that was not available to the field commanders. They knew that a Japanese strike was imminent. Yet they did not act. They just waited. They waited—for Japan to strike the first blow. Yet all this time they failed to advise the military men in the field of the seriousness of the threat. And the warnings Washington did send to the field were

couched in such conflicting and imprecise language that they failed to convey to the commanders definite information on the state of diplomatic relations with Japan and on Japanese war designs and positive orders respecting the particular actions to be taken—orders that were beyond all reasonable doubts as to the need for an all-out alert. In this regard,

according to Brewster and Ferguson, “the said high authorities failed to discharge their full duty.”¹⁸

The Minority Report reviewed some of the crucial information that had been available in Washington, but which had not been transmitted to Hawaii:

Intercepts of Japanese messages made by the Army and Navy intelligence services showed high authorities in Washington that the Japanese Government had ordered its agents in Hawaii to report on American military and naval installations and ship

¹⁶Ibid., p. 500.

¹⁷Ibid., pp. 503–06.

¹⁸Ibid., pp. 504–05.

movements in that region. They also required reports on “lack of movement.” For example, September 24, 1941, it ordered an agent to subdivide the waters of Pearl Harbor into five sub-areas, as well as to report on ship movements there. Prior to and after this date Japanese agents were, up to the Japanese attack, reporting on ship movements, installations, and other matters of military and naval significance to the Japanese government.¹⁹

Witnesses before the Committee, it may be noted, in extenuation of their lack of emphasis on the probability of an attack on Pearl Harbor, called attention to the fact that Japanese agents were also reporting on the military and naval installations of the United States at Panama, the Philippines, the west coast, and other points. But to men, competent, careful, and watchful, men alert on their all-around and indivisible responsibility, this fact provided no excuse whatever for minimizing the probability of an attack on Pearl Harbor any more than at any other American outpost. Nor does it excuse the failure of Washington authorities to note that far greater detail was being asked for by the Japanese about Hawaii at a time when Japanese movements in the Southeastern Pacific had to contend with the strategic position of Hawaii where the real American striking force, the fleet, rested.²⁰

Basically, Brewster and Ferguson held Roosevelt to blame:

The President of the United States was responsible for the failure to enforce continuous, efficient, and appropriate cooperation among the Secretary of War, the Secretary of the Navy, the [Army] Chief of Staff, and the Chief of Naval Operations, in evaluating information and dispatching clear and positive orders to the Hawaiian commanders. . . . In the final instance of crucial significance for alerting American outpost commanders, on

¹⁹Ibid.

²⁰Ibid., pp. 523–24.

Saturday night, December 6; and Sunday morning, December 7, the President of the United States failed to take that quick and instant executive action which was required by the occasion and by the responsibility for watchfulness and guardianship rightly associated in law and practice with his high office from the establishment of the Republic to our own times.²¹

Evidence set forth in this report in detail is ample to show that in the period approximately from May 1940 to December 7, 1941, the high authorities at Washington assumed so much of the direction of affairs at Hawaii as to remove many of the basic responsibilities from the commanders in the field. The result was to reduce the discretion of the commanders in the field by those things which they were ordered to do by directions from Washington and not to do certain things unless they were so ordered from Washington. Another result of this practice was to lull the commanders in the field into awaiting instructions from Washington.²²

Admittedly Marshall and Stark were

carrying heavy burdens in preparing the armed forces of the United States for war; in making war plans; in building up an Army and Navy (which they knew were not yet ready for war), and in struggling for a postponement of the war until the Army and Navy were better prepared to cope with the foe. With regard to the President, the Secretary of State, the Secretary of War, and the Secretary of the Navy, it may be said justly that they were carrying heavy burdens also. But all these officials, as Secretary Stimson's diary demonstrates, spent many days before December 7 in general discussions which led to no decisions. This they did at a time when they possessed special knowledge of Japanese designs and were acquainted with their own intentions and resolves and certainly had the leisure to do the one

²¹*Ibid.*, pp. 505–06.

²²*Ibid.*, p. 553.

obvious duty dictated by common sense—that is—draw up a brief plan for telling the outpost commanders just what to do in a certain contingency [a Japanese attack on American possessions somewhere] on receipt of orders from Washington. . . . They had plans for action or actions by the armed forces of the United States *if* Congress declared war or *if* by some process the United States got into or entered the war. War plans (for example, Rainbow No. 5 which was WPL 46) were to go into operation only after war had begun and were not intended for preparation in meeting a surprise attack.

They prepared no plan giving the outpost commanders instructions about the measures they were to take in preparing for and meeting a Japanese attack on American possessions when and if it came. This plan could have been drawn up in a few hours at most and set down in two or three typewritten pages at most.²³

As to Kimmel and Short, Brewster and Ferguson said,

Whatever errors of judgment the commanders at Hawaii committed and whatever mismanagement they displayed in preparing for a Japanese attack, attention to chain of responsibility in the civil and military administration requires taking note of the fact that they were designated for their posts by high authorities in Washington. . . .

The defense of Hawaii rested upon two sets of interdependent responsibilities: (1) The responsibility in Washington in respect of its intimate knowledge of diplomatic negotiations, widespread intelligence information, direction of affairs and constitutional duty to plan the defense of the United States; (2) the responsibility cast upon the commanders in the field in charge of a major naval base and the fleet essential to the defense of the territory of the United States to do those things appropriate to

²³Ibid., p. 558.

the defense of the fleet and outpost. Washington authorities failed in (1); and the commanding officers at Hawaii failed in (2).²⁴

The Minority Report acknowledged that, “The question of the wisdom of the foreign policy pursued by the Government of the United States [was] excluded by the terms of the committee’s instructions.”²⁵ However, the two Senators did approach the matter as it related to military tactics. They asked why Japan’s request for a *modus vivendi* had been rejected.

Wholly apart from the merits or demerits of . . . the Japanese proposal of November 20, here was an opportunity at least to prolong “the breathing spell” for which General Marshall and Admiral Stark were pleading in their efforts to strengthen the armed forces of the United States for war.

Although Roosevelt had at first approved of a three-month *modus vivendi*, as opposed to the six-month version previously proposed, Hull had rejected it after talking with FDR. In doing this, he [Hull]

gave no advance notice to General Marshall and Admiral Stark, who were then preparing their second careful memorandum to the President begging for a postponement of war with Japan until the Army and Navy could make better preparation for waging it.²⁶

As they closed their Minority Report, Brewster and Ferguson said,

How to avoid war and how to turn war—if it finally comes—to serve the cause of human progress is the challenge to diplomacy

²⁴Ibid., p. 505.

²⁵Ibid., p. 497.

²⁶Ibid., pp. 561, 563.

today as yesterday. Here, too, much cannot be known regarding all the petty episodes that finally add up to war. No war comes in a moment. War is the sum of many minor decisions and some that are major. In this diplomatic aspect the Pearl Harbor investigation has sadly failed to live up to the lofty prospectus with which it was launched. . . .

In our opinion, the evidence before this Committee indicates that the tragedy at Pearl Harbor was primarily a failure of men and not of laws or powers to do the necessary things, and carry out the vested responsibilities. No legislation could have cured such defects of official judgments, management, cooperation, and action as were displayed by authorities and agents of the United States in connection with the events that culminated in the catastrophe at Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941.

This demonstrates the weakness of depending on the political head of the Government to bring about the necessary coordination of the activities of the military branches, particularly in the area of intelligence, and unification of command. The major lesson to be learned is that this coordination should be accomplished in advance of a crisis. . . .

The failure to perform the responsibilities indispensably essential to the defense of Pearl Harbor rests upon the following civil and military authorities:

Franklin D. Roosevelt — President of the United States and
Commander in Chief of the Army and Navy

Henry L. Stimson — Secretary of War

Frank Knox — Secretary of the Navy

George C. Marshall — General, Chief of Staff of the Army

Harold R. Stark — Admiral, Chief of Naval Operations

Leonard T. Gerow — Major General, Assistant Chief of Staff
of War Plans Division

The failure to perform the responsibilities in Hawaii rests upon the military commanders:

Walter C. Short — Major General, Commanding General,
Hawaiian Department

Husband E. Kimmel — Rear Admiral, Commander in Chief
of the Pacific Fleet

Both in Washington and in Hawaii there were numerous and serious failures of men in the lower civil and military echelons to perform their duties and discharge their responsibilities. These are too numerous to be treated in detail and individually named.

Secretary of State, Cordell Hull, who was at the center of Japanese-American negotiations bears a grave responsibility for the diplomatic conditions leading up to the eventuality of Pearl Harbor but he had no duties as a relevant link in the military chain of responsibility stemming from the Commander in Chief to the commanders at Hawaii for the defense at Pearl Harbor. For this reason and because the diplomatic phase was not completely explored we offer no conclusions in his case.

S/ Homer Ferguson

S/ Owen Brewster²⁷

²⁷Ibid., pp. 572–73.

31.

Epilogue

World War II is now history. The generally accepted view is that the United States was brought into that war as a result of Japan's sudden, unexpected and "dastardly" December 7, 1941, attack on the U.S. Fleet in Hawaii. As President Roosevelt pointed out the following day in his message to Congress this attack had been planned and undertaken even as U.S. and Japanese diplomats were still engaged in negotiations seeking to settle their differences in peace. In response Congress declared war on Japan almost immediately. Although it is obvious that the Japanese forces must bear the direct responsibility for the attack, the responsibility for the full extent of the disaster is much broader.

The Preamble of the U.S. Constitution provided for a government to "establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defence, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of liberty to ourselves and our Posterity." Except as those goals relied on the country's being at peace, they did not deal specifically with international relations. However, inherent in the Preamble was the idea that defending this nation and safeguarding the liberty of its citizens calls for protecting them from domestic and foreign aggression. The new United States should "mind its own business," base its policies and practices on

peaceful social cooperation and permit its citizens to trade and to travel as they wished. George Washington, the first president of the United States, expressed this idea in his Farewell Address (September 1789):

Observe good faith and justice toward all nations, cultivate peace and harmony with all. . . . The great rule of conduct for us in regard to foreign nations is, in extending our commercial relations to have with them as little *political* connection as possible. . . . It is our true policy to steer clear of permanent alliances with any portion of the foreign world. . . .

And Thomas Jefferson in his first inaugural address (March 4, 1801) again recommended “peace, commerce, and honest friendship with all nations—entangling alliances with none.” By the time of the Japanese attack, the Roosevelt administration in Washington had been violating these principles for months at least.

As we all know, the direct responsibility for the U.S. entry into World War was Japan’s catastrophic attack by her bombers and planes on the U.S. Fleet in Pearl Harbor. However, when considered in the light of the times, it seems that the attack might have been anticipated as the logical act of a beleaguered nation hoping to prevent the disruption of its military plans. However, to determine responsibility for the full extent of the disaster, one must ask why the Fleet was caught so completely by surprise, unprepared and unwarned.

Franklin D. Roosevelt took office as president in 1933. From then on, in view of his powers and duties under the Constitution, his position as Commander-in-Chief of the Army and Navy, and the trust vested in him by the people as Chief Executive of the United States, he must bear responsibility for U.S. foreign policy. A review of the historical record from the Washington point of view—as revealed in the investigations—now shows that the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor should not have been a complete

surprise to the administration officials. As a matter of fact, it is now apparent also that the president himself, even before the attack, had intended to order the U.S. armed forces to make a pre-emptive strike against the Japanese in the southwest Pacific in order to assist the British in southeast Asia. But the Japanese “jumped the gun” on him by bombing Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941. Thus, the attack was President Roosevelt’s *excuse*, not his *reason*, for having the United States go to war with the Japanese.

HISTORICAL REVIEW

By the mid-1930s, the world was in turmoil. In 1933, shortly after FDR became president, the United States recognized and established diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union. Hitler had come to power in Germany and was becoming more and more militaristic, laying claim to territory beyond his country’s borders. On October 3, 1935, Italy invaded Ethiopia. A civil war opened in Spain in July 1936. In July 1937 Japan was drawn into war with China. However, the people in this country did not want to become involved in any of these conflicts.

In 1935, Congress enacted and on August 31, the president signed the first Neutrality Act which prohibited “the export of arms, ammunition, and implements of war to belligerent countries” and their transportation in U.S. vessels.

Roosevelt had long sympathized with Britain personally and step-by-step he abandoned U.S. neutrality. Two years before the war actually began, he started “to explore with the British what we could do if we both found ourselves involved in a war in the Far East with Japan.” He personally instructed U.S. Admiral Royal E. Ingersoll when he left in December 1937 for a conference in London to discuss arrangements in case of a U.S.-British-Dutch-Russian-Chinese war against Japan. Then after the war had started in Europe, Roosevelt gave instructions on

August 6, 1940, to three top U.S. military officers who were going on another secret mission to London.

Early in the morning on September 1, 1939, Hitler's forces invaded Poland. England and France decided to honor their commitments to go to the defense of Poland if she were attacked. On September 3, both countries issued ultimatums to Germany which were rejected. Europe was at war. On September 3, 1939, FDR reconfirmed U.S. neutrality and during the months that followed, he continued to stress his determination to maintain U.S. neutrality. Nevertheless, FDR began almost immediately to help the British in their fight against Germany.

President Roosevelt instituted a "Neutrality Patrol" in the Atlantic and instructed the U.S. Navy, to watch for enemy vessels, to report sightings "in plain English," so as to allow British ships to investigate and destroy. When later Churchill asked for 40 or 50 of this country's destroyers, FDR arranged for their transfer to the British. And as Britain's war expenditures mounted and she was running out of gold to pay for military supplies, Roosevelt gave the "green light" for her to order 12,000 aircraft. When Hitler charged that such U.S. aid to the U.K. was "moral aggression," FDR replied that it was a defensive measure.

On the other side of the world, Japan, an ally of Germany through the 1939 Tripartite Pact, was taking actions in southeast Asia that the U.S. held could threaten U.S. and British interests in that part of the world. In January 1940, the U.S. began blocking exports to Japan of certain commodities that were essential to Japan's economy and military ventures—various chemicals, munitions, iron and steel scrap, and especially petroleum products. Upon the defeat of France in June 1940, Japanese troops were admitted into the formerly French Indochina. And in September, Japan established air bases and stationed troops there.

FDR announced that Pearl Harbor would be made the permanent base of the U.S. Fleet. This was against the advice of his

naval advisers, who pointed out that the harbor's "narrow entrance, inadequate anchorages and airfields, and its limited fuel supplies" would make the Fleet vulnerable to attack. It is quite possible that FDR's decision was in response to British Prime Minister Churchill's suggestion, made earlier that very same day, May 15, 1940, that the U.S. "keep that Japanese dog quiet in the Pacific."

By midsummer 1940, U.S. cryptographers had succeeded in deciphering the very complex Japanese government's diplomatic code and duplicating the extremely intricate typewriter, codenamed "Purple," on which it was encoded—a tremendous accomplishment. From then on, the U.S. had access to most of the secret diplomatic messages the Japanese government sent on this machine to its emissaries throughout the world.

As FDR campaigned in 1940 for a third term as president, he continued to assure the public of the United States's neutrality; he was doing all that he could to keep war away from these shores. He assured the voters that "Your boys are not going to be sent into any foreign wars."

1941

Yet Roosevelt continued to ask Congress to help the British who were at war. At FDR's urging, in early 1941 Congress passed Lend-Lease, which provided many millions of dollars worth of war supplies—ships, planes, munitions, food, etc.—to the nations who were fighting Germany. The U.S. war plans, as Roosevelt outlined them at this time, called on the United States to remain on the defensive in the Pacific, with the fleet based in Hawaii, but supportive of Britain in the Atlantic. At the time, the possibility of Japan's attacking in the southwest Pacific was discussed in Washington. Although it was felt that public opinion would support U.S. "action in the Far East if the Japanese go into Singapore or the Netherlands East Indies," Germany was considered the greatest threat.

In February and March 1941, U.S. military officials met secretly in Washington with British officials and drew up a joint U.S.-British war plan embodying a “Beat Hitler first” principle. The *Navy Basic War Plan Rainbow No. 5*, based on this worldwide War Plan, was sent out to U.S. military field commanders. Under this Army-Navy plan, Admiral Kimmel in Pearl Harbor was ordered to prepare the Pacific Fleet to undertake *offensive* operations against the Japanese and to support the British forces in the Far East south of the equator. However, at a White House conference it was decided that the most urgent matter still was to go “all out in the Atlantic.” As a result, approximately one fourth of the fighting ships of the U.S. Fleet, practically all the trained and equipped marines on the west coast, several small transports, and some other small craft, were transferred from the Pacific to the Atlantic. This, of course, reduced substantially the strength of the Fleet in the Pacific.

In the spring of 1941, the United States placed in “protective custody” the ships in U.S. ports of Germany, Italy, and Nazi-occupied Denmark. In June, FDR authorized the “acquisition” of all idle foreign merchant ships in our ports and ordered Axis funds in the United States frozen. The United States also “requested withdrawal of German and Italian consular staffs by July 10.”

Germany and Japan had hoped their 1939 Tri-Partite Pact alliance would keep the United States from interfering in the war in Europe. However, the U.S. started interfering with the war in Europe indirectly—by trying to keep the Japanese fully occupied in the ongoing Japan-China war so they would not go to the aid of Germany. The United States assisted Chiang Kai Shek in China financially. And she helped to build the Burma Road and organized Chennault’s American Volunteer [Flying Tiger] Group which flew supplies “over the hump” into China.

Representatives of the Americans, Dutch, and British met in Singapore in the spring of 1941. They drew a line beyond which the Japanese armed forces could not attack without evoking responses

from the governments of the United States, the British, and the Dutch. This line was drawn west of longitude 100° East and south of latitude 10° North—that is south and west of French Indo-China (currently Vietnam).

Hitler attacked Russia on June 22, 1941 and two days later, FDR “released Russian credits and promised American aid” in line with his “[p]olicy of giving material assistance to any country fighting Germany.”

As the war in the Atlantic heated up, German U-boats were sinking British ships in large numbers. FDR extended the area of the U.S. “Neutrality Patrol” to cover most of the Atlantic. In July, we occupied Iceland and we soon began convoying British ships in the North Atlantic. It wasn’t long before U.S. ships were shooting, being shot at, and even sunk, with the loss of American lives.

In August 1941, Roosevelt and British P.M. Churchill met personally for the first time in secrecy off the coast of Newfoundland. Churchill pleaded with President Roosevelt to enter the war. FDR reminded Churchill that in the United States, only Congress could declare war: “I may never declare war; I may make war. If I were to ask Congress to declare war, they might argue about it for three months.” The two men discussed the Japanese situation also. Although FDR said that, to strengthen America’s force, he must seek to delay a break with Japan, he agreed to warn Japan that if she encroached further in the southwest Pacific, the U.S. “would be compelled to take counter-measures, even though these might lead to war.” Moreover, he assured Churchill “that the United States, even if not herself attacked, would come into a war in the Far East. . . . [and] that if Japan ran amok in the Pacific, we [the British] should not fight alone.”

In the spring of 1941, the U.S. and Japan had embarked upon diplomatic negotiations in Washington in the attempt to settle the China-Japan conflict and establish peace in the Pacific area.

These discussions concerned Japan's war in China, her role on the Asian mainland, the Tri-Partite Pact binding Japan to the Axis and the U.S. trade embargo of Japan. These negotiations continued off and on through November. During all this time, we were reading Japan's secret diplomatic messages to her emissaries throughout the world.

In September, FDR issued a "shoot on sight order" to U.S. Navy ships in the Atlantic.

[W]hen you see a rattlesnake poised to strike, you do not wait until he has struck before you crush him. These Nazi submarines and raiders are the rattlesnakes of the Atlantic. . . . [O]ur patrolling vessels and planes will protect all merchant ships—not only American ships but ships of any flag—engaged in commerce in our defensive waters. . . . From now on, if German or Italian vessels of war enter the waters the protection of which is necessary for American defense they do so at their own peril.

The Japanese moved forces into Indo-China. The U.S. officials remonstrated. By mid-1941 it became apparent that as a result of Japan's war in China and her military ventures in S.E. Asia her most serious shortage was of oil. Roosevelt told the Japanese ambassador:

[I]f Japan attempted to seize oil supplies by force in the Netherlands East Indies, the Dutch would, without the shadow of a doubt resist; the British would immediately come to their assistance; war would then result between Japan, the British and the Dutch; and, in view of our own policy of assisting Great Britain, an exceedingly serious situation would immediately result.

FDR said that Japan would do much better if she tried to obtain the supplies she needed peacefully rather than by occupying Indochina. But the United States continued to embargo oil to Japan. And she persuaded the British and Dutch to do the same.

In July, Japan was advised that the United States considered it self-defense to protect the British against aggression in the Atlantic—also in Singapore. The Japanese Ambassador spoke of Japan's deteriorating economic situation, her objections to U.S. support of China, improving the Burma Road and supplying planes and pilots to Chungking, also of her, Japan's, plans to occupy French Indochina and her need to station troops in Inner Mongolia to suppress Chinese Communist elements and hinted that were the United States to accept these conditions, Japan would not be particularly concerned about any action the United States might take in the Atlantic. In response, the U.S. Director of the Navy's War Plans equated protecting the British from the Nazis with defending the U.S.:

[I]t is decidedly against the military interests of the United States to permit the United Kingdom to be overcome by Germany. . . . Furthermore . . . [t]he occupation of Indo-China by Japan is particularly important for the defense of the United States since it might threaten the British position in Singapore and the Dutch position in the Netherlands East Indies.

The Joint Board of the Army and Navy was not eager for the United States to become involved in a war with Japan. A major war effort in the Pacific "would require an enormous amount of shipping . . . from the Atlantic and other essential areas," which "would materially affect United States aid to England." CNO Stark warned his Admirals: "Since the US and Britain are held responsible by Japan for her present desperate situation there is also a possibility that Japan may attack these two powers."

Kimmel in Pearl Harbor had to rely on Washington for "intelligence." CNO Stark assured Kimmel that the Office of Naval Intelligence recognized its responsibility on that score. In mid-October, Stark wrote Kimmel:

Personally I do not believe the Japs are going to sail into us. . . . Perhaps I am wrong, but I hope not. In any case after long pow-wows in the White House, it was felt we should be on guard, at least until something indicates the trend.

In early November 1941, Army Chief of Staff General Marshall and Chief of Naval Operations Admiral Stark advised FDR that United States policy in the Far East should be based first on the defeat of Germany. War between the United States and Japan should be avoided while the U.S. built up her defensive forces in the Far East. They told FDR that it was all right to continue to send U.S. armed forces and other aid to China for intervention against Japan. However; Marshall and Stark wanted time before the eruption of any conflict and they recommended that “*no ultimatum be delivered to Japan.*” [italics added]

U.S. ambassador to Japan, Joseph Grew warned FDR, November 3, 1941, that “war between Japan and the United States may come *with dangerous and dramatic suddenness.*”

At the Cabinet’s weekly Friday meeting at the White House, November 7, 1941, FDR took

the first general poll of his Cabinet . . . on the question of the Far East—whether the people would back us up in case we struck at Japan down there. . . . It was unanimous in feeling the country would support us.

Secretary of War Stimson believed the vote would have been much stronger if the Cabinet members had known “what the Army was doing to reenforce the Philippines and how ready the Army was to pitch in” in case of an attack on the British or Dutch in southeastern Asia.

To facilitate the U.S.-Japanese diplomatic negotiations in Washington, Japan sent a second ambassador, Kurusu, to Washington in November. When Hull presented him to the president, Hull reminded Kurusu of Japan’s alliance with Germany:

[W]hen Hitler starts on a march of invasion across the earth with ten million soldiers and thirty thousand airplanes, . . . this country from that time was in danger. . . . [T]his country with no other motive except self-defense has recognized that danger, and has proceeded thus far to defend itself before it is too late.

The president and Hull “made it clear that we were not the aggressors in the Pacific but that Japan was the aggressor.”

The U.S. cryptographers intercepted a message from Tokyo setting a deadline for the U.S.-Japanese diplomats to reach agreement in their negotiations:

Because of various circumstances, it is absolutely necessary that all arrangements for the signing of this agreement [being negotiated with the United States] be completed by the 25th of this month [later extended to the 29th]. . . .

On November 20, the two Japanese Ambassadors suggested a *modus vivendi*, a temporary arrangement, to continue the status quo while negotiations continued. Both Japan and the United States would make some concessions. The United States would “supply Japan a required quantity of oil.” China’s Chiang Kai-shek “bombarded Washington with demands that no further concessions be made to Tokyo.”

Japanese ship movements in Far East grabbed the attention of Washington’s top officials. At a November 25, 1941, meeting, FDR said “we were likely to be attacked [by Japan] perhaps [as soon as] next Monday, for the Japanese are notorious for making an attack without warning.” Stimson remarked: “The question was how we should maneuver them into the position of firing the first shot without allowing too much danger to ourselves.” Hull was asked to prepare an “ultimatum” to Japan like that of August, notifying her that “if she crossed the border into Thailand she was violating our safety.”

Stark sent a warning to Kimmel. Neither FDR nor Hull “would be surprised over a Japanese surprise attack. . . . [A]n attack on the Philippines would be the most embarrassing thing that could happen to us.” Stark didn’t believe the Japanese would proceed against Russia; he considered “an advance into Thailand, Indo-China, Burma Road area as the most likely.”

November 26, 1941: Stimson told FDR that a Japanese expedition of five divisions had gone south from Shantung and Shansi to Shanghai, whence they had embarked on 30, 40, or 50 southbound ships.

November 26, 1941: The *modus vivendi* was jettisoned. And a 10-point “ultimatum” was issued to Japan.

After this November 26 “ultimatum” had gone out, Washington officials discussed what to tell MacArthur in the Philippines. It was agreed “we should send the final alert; namely, that he should be on the *qui vive* for any attack.” FDR was “particularly concerned . . . by current southward troop movements from Shanghai and Japan to the Formosa area,” preparing

for an early aggressive movement of some character . . . directed against the Burma Road, Thailand, Malay Peninsula, Netherlands East Indies or the Philippines. . . . [T]his next Japanese aggression might cause an outbreak of hostilities between the U.S. and Japan.

November 27, 1941: Washington warned (1) Manila, (2) Hawaii, (3) Atlantic fleet that Japanese southbound convoys were heading for the Philippines, Thai, or Kra Peninsula or possibly Borneo.

November 27, 1941: Marshall and Stark ask for time to prepare U.S. defenses. They were especially concerned about the Philippines: “The most essential thing now, from the United States viewpoint is to gain time.” It is recommended that: “military counteraction be considered only if Japan attacks or directly

threatens United States, British or Dutch territory.” And Japan should be warned “that advance beyond the lines indicated . . . may lead to war.”

November 28, 1941: The members of FDR’s “War Cabinet” all agreed that

if the [Japanese] expedition were permitted to land in the Gulf of Siam it would place a strong Japanese force in such a strategic position as to be a severe blow at all three of the powers in southeast Asia—the British at Singapore, the Netherlands in the Indies, and ourselves in the Philippines. We all agreed that it must not be allowed; that, if the Japanese got into the Isthmus of Kra, the British would fight; and, if the British fought, we would have to fight.

According to Stimson, “*The possibility of an attack on Pearl Harbor was not [then] discussed since our thoughts were all focused on this movement toward southeast Asia.*”

November 28, 1941: We intercepted Japan’s instructions to her ambassadors in Washington concerning our November 26 “ultimatum.”

The Imperial Government can by no means use it as a basis for negotiations. Therefore . . . the negotiations will be de facto ruptured. . . . However . . . [don’t] give the impression that the negotiations are broken off. Merely say . . . that you are awaiting instructions.

How should the United States respond if the Japanese attacked British territory in southeast Asia? Secretary of State Hull proposed that FDR present a message to Congress concerning the Japanese aggression. Hull, Stimson and Knox drafted such a message.

The supreme question presented to this country along with many other countries by the Hitler-dominated movement of

world conquest is that of self-defense. . . . We do not want war with Japan, and Japan does not want war with this country. If, however, war should come, the fault and the responsibility will be those of Japan. The primary *cause* will have been pursuit by Japan of a policy of aggression.

At a meeting on December 1, 1941, the Japanese ambassadors told Hull that the U.S. “ultimatum’s” ten points, “had been communicated” to their government which was studying the case. Hull responded: The “heavy Japanese troop movements into Indochina. . . . create an increasing menace to America and her friends. . . . [W]e will not allow ourselves to be kicked out of the Pacific.” Hull accused the Japanese of using Hitlerian methods in China. “[W]e cannot lose sight of the movement by Hitler to seize one-half of the world.” The Japanese militarists, Hull said, were “moving in a similar direction to seize the other half of the earth. . . . [T]his Government cannot yield to anything of that kind.”

On December 1, Roosevelt directed Admiral Hart in Manila to dispatch three small ships [minimally armed and equipped to be classified as “men of war”] to take up positions in the path of the southbound Japanese convoys—“to observe and report by radio Japanese movements.”

On December 1, Japan ordered her embassies worldwide to destroy their codes and code machines.

On December 3, 1941: Japan ordered its embassy in Washington to destroy all secret files, documents and codes but those now being used with their code machine. A December 1 Tokyo to Berlin “Purple” intercept decoded and translated in Washington read in part: “war may suddenly break out between the Anglo-Saxon nations and Japan through some clash of arms . . . quicker than anyone dreams.” A second Tokyo-Berlin message intercepted, decoded, and translated read: Before rejecting Japan’s *modus vivendi*, the United States

conferred with England, Australia, the Netherlands, and China [I]t is clear that the United States is now in collusion with those nations and has decided to regard Japan, along with Germany and Italy, as an enemy.

The United States continued to assure British and Dutch of American support. FDR to British Ambassador Lord Halifax: In the case of a direct attack on the British or the Dutch, “we should obviously all be together.” According to Halifax, the president said the British “could count on American support if we [the British] carried out our move to defend the Kra Isthmus [on Thai territory] in the event of a Japanese attack.”

On December 2, Roosevelt told the Japanese ambassadors that the continuing troop movements to southern Indochina portend Japanese aggression against the Philippines, NEI, Burma, Malaya, Thailand. “Such new aggression would, of course, be additional to the acts of aggression already undertaken against China, our attitude towards which is well known.”

The next day FDR reconfirmed his pledge of “armed support” to the British and he told Halifax

that, when talking of support, he meant “armed support,” and that he agreed with the British plan for operations in the Kra Isthmus if the Japanese attacked Thailand. The U.S. and British talked about joint war plans, as to when and where the U.S. and Great Britain should strike.

On December 4, Lord Halifax expressed his Government’s “very deep appreciation” for FDR’s promises of “armed support.” He thought the warning they had talked about should apply

to an attack by Japan on Thailand, Malaya, the Dutch East Indies, or the Burma Road (through Indo-China). Mr. Roosevelt was doubtful about including the Burma Road, but otherwise agreed to the warning.

The United States warned its U.S. outposts in Asia of the imminence of war with Japan. Navy Captain McCollum, in charge of the Far Eastern section of Naval Intelligence's foreign branch, drafted a warning message (December 3, 1941) to Admiral Hart (Manila), Admiral Kimmel (Pearl Harbor), and to commandants of the naval districts in Hawaii and the Philippines:

[I]nstructions were sent yesterday to Japanese diplomatic and consular posts at Hongkong x Singapore x Batavia x Manila x Washington and London to destroy most of their codes and ciphers at once and to burn all other important confidential and secret documents.

During the first week of December 1941, several warnings of impending Japanese aggression were received in Washington from Purple code MAGIC intercepts. The Japanese consul was asked to report to Tokyo, at irregular intervals but at a rate of twice a week, on a system of grids, the location of "ships in [Pearl] Harbor." A special Japanese code based on false weather reports, the "Winds Code," had also been set up so Tokyo could communicate secretly with its embassies and consulates around the world if, as, and when, it was no longer possible to reach them with coded messages after their code machines had been destroyed. This code was implemented December 4, by a "Winds Code Execute" indicating troubled relations with Great Britain, the Dutch East Indies and the U.S., but not with Russia. These crucial intercepts, indicating that U.S. territory, quite possibly the U.S. Fleet in Pearl Harbor, was likely to be a target of Japan's aggression, were sent to all the top brass in Washington, but not to our commanders in Hawaii—not to General Short, who was responsible for the safety of the fleet while in port, nor to Admiral Kimmel, commander-in-chief of the Pacific Fleet based in Pearl Harbor. Upon receipt of the "Winds Execute," Safford, Chief of Security of Naval Communications, alerted U.S. outposts in the Pacific to destroy classified documents, but his alerts were delayed and didn't reach their addressees until after the attack.

Captain McCollum, Naval Intelligence, Far Eastern Branch, drafted a message based on the “Winds Execute” to warn Pearl Harbor, but he learned later that it had not been sent.

On December 3, U. S. Army military intelligence cabled the U.S. military attaché in Tokyo to destroy its codes. On December 4, the State Department suggested that the U.S. and British coordinate their withdrawal or exchange of Americans from Japan, Manchuria, and Japanese-occupied China in the event of British-Japanese hostilities.

More indications of the imminence of war were intercepted December 6, 1941: Messages from Italy, the Japanese Embassy in Washington, and Tokyo, indicated that war was imminent. Japanese offices worldwide acknowledged Tokyo’s code-destruct order. The British and Dutch were on the *qui vive* in Southeast Pacific. Admiral Hart in Manila reported U.S. overflights had sighted Japanese convoys in South China Sea heading toward Malaya and the Isthmus of Kra.

On Saturday, December 6, U.S. cryptographers started to pick up Japan’s several-part response to the United States November 26 “ultimatum.” A “Pilot Message” announced that Japan’s 14-part reply was en route to her ambassadors in Washington. The first 13 parts were received, deciphered and delivered to top Washington officials and to FDR about 9:30 p.m. After reading it, FDR said to his aide, Mr. Hopkins: “This means war’.” The two men speculated as to where and when the strike would come. Pearl Harbor was not mentioned. Nor was there any indication that tomorrow was the day. No mention was made of sending a further warning or alert.

On December 6, 1941, FDR announced to the press and to the world that he had sent Japanese Emperor Hirohito a plea-for-peace. The State Department had completed on December 5, its draft of a message for the president to present to Congress, possibly on December 8–9, depending on Hirohito’s response to FDR’s “plea for peace.”

December 6–7, 1941: A late night meeting of FDR’s “inner circle” was held in the White House; they were waiting for what they expected was coming—a Japanese strike against British Malaya or Thailand’s Isthmus of Kra, and possibly the Dutch East Indies. They had been agonizing over this for weeks and FDR’s Cabinet Secretaries had been asked to draft statements presenting the rationale for our going to war against Japan to defend the British and Dutch.

In the Philippines, on the other side of the dateline (December 7, 1941) Admiral Hart, after talking with the top British admiral who had been visiting Manila from Singapore, cabled Washington for instructions concerning U.S. commitments to the British in southeast Pacific, thousands of miles west of Pearl Harbor.

In the morning of December 7, 1941, Hull and Knox, at the request of Secretary of War Stimson, each drafted a statement as to what the United States should do in the event of Japanese action in southeast Asia.

Hull: The Japanese government is dominated by “military fireeaters” who were aiming to acquire military control over one-half of the world with nearly one-half its population. . . . [A]ll of the conquered peoples would be governed . . . militarily, politically, economically, socially, and morally by the worst possible military despotism

such as that used by Japan in China and Hitler in Europe.

[C]ontrol of the South Sea area by Japan is the key to the control of the entire Pacific area, and therefore defense of life and commerce and other invaluable rights and interests . . . must be commenced within the South Sea area. . . . Self-defense, therefore, is the key point for the preservation of each and all of our civilized institutions.

Knox: We are tied up inextricably with the British in the present world situation. The fall of Singapore and the loss to England of Malaya will automatically not only wreck her far eastern position but jeopardize her entire effort. . . . If the British lose their position the Dutch are almost certain to lose theirs. . . . If the above be accepted, then any serious threat to the British or the Dutch is a serious threat to the United States . . . [T]he Japanese should be told that any movement in a direction that threatens the United States will be met by force.

The fourteenth part of Japan's reply to the U.S. "ultimatum" was picked up and delivered to top U.S. Army and Navy officials on the morning of December 7. Also the Japanese government's message directing its Ambassadors in Washington to deliver Tokyo's 14-part reply to the United States at precisely One P.M. Washington time.

December 7, 1941 (just before noon): Marshall, with Stark's approval, messaged Manila, Panama, Pearl Harbor:

Japanese are presenting at one P.M., Eastern Standard Time today what amounts to an ultimatum. Also, they are under orders to destroy their code machines immediately. Just what significance the hour set may have we do not know but be on alert accordingly. Inform naval authorities of this communication.

This message went right through to Manila and Panama, but due to atmospheric conditions it did not reach Hawaii until late that afternoon.

December 7, 1941 (8 A.M., Hawaii time; 1:30 P.M. Washington time): Japanese planes, launched from aircraft carriers a few hundred miles north, bombed and torpedoed the U.S. Fleet at Pearl Harbor. Kimmel in Hawaii radioed all U.S. stations that "an air raid attack was on and that it was 'no drill'."

POST ATTACK

So the United States had been attacked. More than 2,500 soldiers, sailors and marines had been killed at Pearl Harbor on that December 7, 1941. In his address to Congress the following day, President Roosevelt called immediately for a declaration of war against Japan. And Congress complied.

The people were mad at the Japanese and eager to revenge the “dastardly attack.” Apparently Japan’s brilliantly planned and brilliantly executed attack had caught the U.S. forces at Pearl Harbor completely unawares. The people wanted to know who was responsible. They wanted to know why the U.S. forces at Pearl Harbor had been caught off guard—unwarned, ill-equipped, and poorly prepared.

It was obvious that Japan was directly responsible for the attack. However, it is not so easy to determine responsibility for the *extent* of the Pearl Harbor disaster—the element of surprise, the tragic loss of life, and the catastrophic devastation of ships, planes, etc. The Pearl Harbor commanders, Admiral Kimmel and General Short, were held responsible and publicly blamed for the disaster. However, it is now apparent that in the final analysis it was President Roosevelt himself, who was truly responsible for Pearl Harbor’s lack of preparedness. It was he who determined U.S. policy and who directed the Secretaries of State, War, and Navy how to implement that policy. The top Washington officials who were privy to MAGIC also contributed to the extent of the disaster by not adequately warning Pearl Harbor in a timely manner. Their contributions, however, were sins of omission rather than sins of commission.

An Administration “cover-up,” under the guidance of FDR and with the support of his loyal lieutenants, was apparently aimed at keeping the public from learning of the Administration’s role in failing to keep the Pearl Harbor commanders adequately equipped and informed of the imminence of war with Japan, and

of the likelihood that Pearl Harbor could be a target. Moreover, it has never been explained how the secret Japanese intercepts, which had been received, decoded, translated and distributed before the attack, which had revealed a great deal—not all—of Japan's thinking to those in Washington who were privy to MAGIC, disappeared from both Army and Navy files where they had been held under tight security.

Upon a review of the events that took place over the months preceding the attack—as revealed in the several investigations—the top Washington officials had ample reason to expect that a Japanese attack on U.S. territory was imminent. Yet they did not relay that sense of urgency to Kimmel and Short. Moreover, their warnings directed the attention of the Pearl Harbor commanders to the southeast Pacific.

It seems in retrospect that the U.S. diplomatic negotiations, which were officially still ongoing at the time of the attack, were not always conducted in completely good faith; time and again U.S. officials rejected compromises offered by the Japanese. The U.S. embargoed the sale to Japan of oil and other commodities she needed, and persuaded the British and Dutch to follow suit. U.S. officials in Washington apparently failed to realize that Japan might consider the U.S. Fleet at Pearl Harbor a threat to Japan's plans for military expansion in the southwest Pacific, and thus might try to put it out of commission before embarking on a war against the U.S. They not only failed to furnish the Pearl Harbor commanders with the men, planes, munitions and other materiel they requested, but a substantial number of the Fleet's ships had been transferred to the Atlantic thus reducing substantially the U.S. defensive strength in the Pacific. Moreover, Washington officials had reminded Kimmel and Short again and again that the United States's principal enemy was Hitler, and that the war was in the Atlantic.

Top Washington officials failed repeatedly to relay important "intelligence" to the commanders in the field. They failed to advise

Kimmel and Short that Japan was reporting regularly to Tokyo on a grid plot the locations of ships in Pearl Harbor. They failed to recognize the importance of the “East Winds Rain” message, intercepted on December 4, 1941, indicating that an attack on U.S. territory, as well as the British and Dutch, was a likely first target. As a matter of fact, no record has ever been found of what happened to the “East Winds Rain” message after it was delivered to Naval Communications on the morning of December 4, 1941. The top Washington officials warned Kimmel and Short of Japan’s advances being made thousands of miles west of Pearl Harbor, toward the Philippines and southeast Asia—Thailand, Borneo, the Dutch East Indies and the Isthmus of Kra. U.S. intelligence officials had lost track of the Japanese aircraft carriers. Apparently they did not dream that they could be steaming across the Pacific toward Hawaii with bombers and torpedo planes onboard, and that November 29 was the Japanese ambassadors’ deadline for completing their diplomatic negotiations because it might be the deadline for recalling Japanese forces from an intended mission several days away.

Roosevelt and his top Washington advisers were undoubtedly concerned lest blame be attached to them for failure to fulfill their responsibilities for the country’s defense. According to Roosevelt confidant and speechwriter Robert Sherwood, the President may even have had qualms that his pre-attack dealings with the British might be considered impeachable offenses. Secretary of Navy Knox apparently felt guilty for not having more adequately warned the Pearl Harbor commanders. And General Marshall too, must have had qualms about his dilatory tactics in warning the area commanders, for he began his own investigation almost immediately into the delay in delivering his last minute message to Pearl Harbor. Thus, the leading principals in Washington were hesitant to have investigations that might reveal some of their own actions as “derelictions in duty” and/or “errors in judgment.”

Moreover, FDR was especially anxious to keep the world from learning that, all the time he had been assuring voters that he had no intention of sending their sons to fight in a foreign war—unless we were attacked—he had been planning a pre-emptive strike to send U.S. armed forces to defend the British and Dutch from the Japanese thousands of miles from our shores. And that Admiral Kimmel in Pearl Harbor had been under orders to prepare the Fleet to take *offensive* action against the Japanese in the southeast Pacific.

After the war's end, Congress commissioned the year-long Joint [Congressional] Committee on the Investigation of the Pearl Harbor Attack. Many of the facts presented in this book were revealed in its hearings (November 15, 1945–May 31, 1946).

* * * * *

CONCLUSION

It must be said also that the evidence revealed in the course of the several investigations leads to the conclusion that the ultimate responsibility for the catastrophe inflicted on the U.S. Fleet at Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, must rest on the shoulders of President Roosevelt, to whom the Constitution assigns authority as Commander in Chief of the Army and Navy and the responsibility to preserve, protect and defend the Constitution of the United States. It is now evident that the stage was set for a Japanese attack on U.S. territory by President Roosevelt's decisions and actions. He was responsible for squeezing the Japanese economically until they were forced to try to use force to seize the resources they needed and to prevent the U.S. Fleet from trying to stop them. It was thanks to Roosevelt's decisions and actions that an unwarned, ill-equipped, and poorly prepared Fleet remained stationed far from the shores of continental United States, at a base recognized by his military advisers as indefensible and vulnerable to attack. Given

that situation, it is not strange that the Fleet was surprised by the attack of Japanese torpedo planes and bombers that fateful Sunday morning, December 7, 1941. And then when the extent of the damage was known, it was Roosevelt who orchestrated a cover-up to make Admiral Kimmel and General Short scapegoats and to conceal any negligence on the part of the administration.

The revelation herewith of the address Roosevelt would have made to Congress on December 8 or 9, if the December 7 attack had not intervened, indicates that Roosevelt would have ordered the U.S. armed forces to take the offensive against the Japanese, *without waiting for an attack on U.S. territory.* Thus the attack on Pearl Harbor became FDR's excuse, not his reason, for calling for the United States's entry into World War II.

* * * * *

Appendix: Dramatis Personae

BRITISH/AUSTRALIAN

Brooke Popham, Sir Henry Robert Moore

Air Chief Marshall in Command of Entire Far East, 1940–1942; stationed in Singapore.

Burnett, Sir Charles, Air Chief Marshall

Chief of Staff, Royal Australian Air Force.

Cadogan, Sir Alexander

Under Secretary of Foreign Affairs.

Casey, Richard G.

Australian Minister to the United States.

Chamberlain, Neville

Prime Minister, 1937–1940.

Churchill, Winston

First Lord of the Admiralty, 1911–1915, Prime Minister, 1940–1945; 1951–1955.

Craigie, Sir Robert

Ambassador to Japan.

Eden, Anthony

Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (1940–1945, 1951–1955); Prime Minister (1955–1957).

Halifax (Edward Frederick Lindley Wood), Lord

Ambassador to the United States, 1941–1946.

Hewitt, Air Commodore

Royal Australian Air Force intelligence officer.

Layton, Walter, Sir

Director General, Programmes in the British Ministry of Supply.

Lothian (Philip Henry Kerr), Lord

Ambassador to the U.S., 1939–1940 (died in office).

Earl of Lytton.

Phillips, Sir Frederick

Representative of British Treasury.

Phillips, Sir Tom S.V.

Commander-in-Chief, Eastern Fleet; lost at sea when his ship, the *Prince of Wales* was sunk, December 8 (?), 1941.

Purvis, Arthur B.

Head, Anglo–French Purchasing Mission.

Ramsey A.H.M., Captain

Member of British Parliament who saw and reported messages Tyler Kent had taken from the U.S. Embassy.

Stephenson, William, Sir

British agent, “Intrepid;” Chief, British Security Coordination in the U.S.

DUTCH

Salm, Commander

Dutch Indies naval liaison officer to Australian government.

FRENCH

Reynaud, Paul. French Foreign Minister.

CHINESE

Chiang Kai-Shek

Generalissimo in war against Japan, 1937–1941; appointed supreme commander, allied forces, Chinese War Theater, January 1942; President National Government, 1943–1949, and on Taiwan, 1950–1975.

Chiang Kai-Shek, Madame

Meiling Soong, second wife of the Generalissimo.

Hu Shih

Ambassador in Washington.

Quo Tai-chi

Chinese Foreign Minister.

Soong, T.V., Dr.

Chiang's brother-in-law and personal emissary in Washington, China Defense Supplies, Inc.

GERMAN AND ITALIAN

Ciano, Conte Galeazzi

Italian Minister of Foreign Affairs, 1936–1943; son-in-law of Mussolini.

Hitler, Adolf

German Chancellor, 1933–1945, dictator.

Mussolini, Benito

Premier; Dictator; after fall of France led Italy into war, 1940; deposed 1943; imprisoned, rescued by Germans, Sept. 1943; assassinated by Italian partisans April 28, 1945.

Raeder, Erich, Admiral

Commander-in-Chief, German Navy.

Ribbentrop, Joachim von

German Foreign Minister; convicted of war crimes and hanged, 1946.

JAPANESE

Ando

Embassy, Washington; associate of Terasaki, ordered by Tokyo pre-attack to leave the U.S.

Hirohito. Emperor (1926–1989).

Konoye, Prince

Prime Minister, June 4, 1937–October 18, 1941.

Kurusu, Saburo

Second ambassador to the United States (arrived in Washington, November 15, 1941).

Nomura, Kichisaburo, Admiral

Ambassador to the United States (appointed January 1941).

Ogimoto

Petty Officer, intelligence officer posing as a code clerk, Japanese embassy in Washington.

Ohashi, Chiuchi

Vice Minister for Foreign Affairs.

Sanematsu, Yuzuru

Assistant Naval Attache, Japanese Embassy in Washington.

Shigemitsu

Japanese Ambassador to London.

Takagi

Embassy, Washington; associate of Terasaki, ordered by Tokyo pre-attack to leave the U.S.

Terasaki, Hidenari

First Secretary, Japanese Embassy, Washington; head of Japanese espionage in Western Hemisphere.

Tojo, Hideki, Lieutenant General

Prime Minister, 1941–1944; convicted as war criminal and hanged, 1948.

Yamamoto

Chief, American Bureau of Japanese Foreign Office.

Yamamoto, Isoroku, Admiral

Commander in chief of Combined Fleet; shot down in air action, 1943.

UNITED STATES
PRE-FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT ADMINISTRATION

Castle, William R., Jr.

Former Ambassador to Japan; Under-secretary of State under Hoover.

Coolidge, Calvin

U.S. President, 1923–1929.

Hoover, Herbert

U.S. President, 1929–1933.

Hurley, Patrick

Secretary of War, 1929–1933; Ambassador to China, 1944–1945.

Kent, Tyler

U.S. code clerk (London) who smuggled secret messages out of the U.S. Embassy and was tried and imprisoned in England for the duration of the war.

Pershing, John J., General

Commander in Chief, American Expeditionary Force 1917–1919.

Roosevelt Theodore

U.S. President, 1901–1909.

Taft, Howard

U.S. President, 1909–1913.

Yardley, Herbert O.

World War I War and State Department cryptographer; author of *The American Black Chamber* (1931).

WASHINGTON (1941)—CIVILIAN, POLITICAL

Austin, Warren R., U.S. Senator

(R) Vermont.

Ballantine, Joseph W.

Foreign Service Officer, U.S. State Department.

Barkley, Alben W., U.S. Senator

(D) Kentucky.

Biddle, Francis

Attorney General.

Bloom, Sol, U.S. Representative

(D) New York. Chairman Foreign Affairs Committee.

Bullitt, William C.

First U.S. Ambassador to U.S.S.R., 1933–1936. Ambassador to France, 1936–1940.

Byrd, Harry Flood, U.S. Senator

(D) Virginia.

Carter, Edward C.

Former Secretary General of the Institute of Pacific Relations, New York.

Connally, Tom, U.S. Senator

(D) Texas; Chairman, Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

Currie, Lauchlin

Administrative Assistant to President Roosevelt.

Dooman, Eugene H.

Counselor, U.S. Embassy in Tokyo.

Early, Stephen

Secretary to the President.

Eaton, Charles A., U.S. Representative

(R) New Jersey.

Edison, Charles

Secretary of War, 1933–1940.

Gauss, C.E.

U.S. Ambassador to China.

Grew, Joseph C.

U.S. Ambassador to Japan prior to December 7, 1941.

Hackworth, Green H.

Legal Advisor, State Department.

Hamilton, Maxwell M.

Chief of Division of Far Eastern Affairs in State Department.

Harriman, Averell

Special Representative of the President, with ambassadorial rank.

Henderson, Leon

Head of Office of Price Administration and Civilian Supply.

Hillman, Sidney

Labor union leader; co-director (with William S. Knudsen) of Office of Production Management.

Hopkins, Harry

Personal adviser to FDR; Secretary of Commerce (1938–1940); head of Lend-Lease Administration (1942); member War Production Board (1942); special assistant to President Roosevelt (1942–1945).

Hornbeck, Stanley K.

Special Assistant to Secretary of State, Advisor on Political Relations.

Hull, Cordell

Secretary of State, 1933–1944.

Ickes, Harold

Secretary of the Interior, 1933–1946; Petroleum Coordinator for National Defense, 1941.

Johnson, Hiram, W., U.S. Senator

(R) California.

Kennedy, Joseph P.

U.S. Ambassador to England (1933–1940), father of John F. Kennedy, U.S. President (1961–1963).

Knox, Frank

Republican candidate for Vice President, 1936; Secretary of Navy, 1940–1944.

Knudsen, William S.

Commissioner of Council of National Defense (1940); co-director (with Hillman) of Office of Production Management (1941); director of production, War Department (1942–1945).

Krock, Arthur

Columnist, *New York Times*.

LaGuardia, Fiorello H.

Mayor of New York City, 1935–1943; chief, U.S. Office of Civilian Defense.

Landon, Alfred M.

Republican presidential candidate, 1936.

Lattimore, Owen

U.S. political adviser to Chiang in China.

Martin, Joseph W., Jr., U.S. Representative

(R) Massachusetts, House Minority Floor Leader.

McCormack, John W., U.S. Representative

(D) Massachusetts, House Majority Floor Leader.

McCoy, Frank, Major

Long-time aide to Henry L. Stimson.

McIntire, Ross, Dr.

Roosevelt's personal physician.

McNary, Charles L., U.S. Senator

(R) Oregon.

Merle-Smith, Van S., Colonel

U.S. Military Attache, Melbourne, Australia.

Morgenthau, Henry J., Jr.

Secretary of Treasury, 1934–1945.

Nelson, Donald M.

Executive Director of Supply Priorities, Office of Production and Management (1941); Chairman, War Production Board (1942–1944).

Perkins, Frances

Secretary of Labor.

Powell, Joseph W.

Vice President of Bethlehem Shipbuilding Co., Special Assistant to Knox, accompanied him to Pearl Harbor, December 8–14.

Rayburn, Sam, U.S. Representative (D) Texas.

Roosevelt, Eleanor, Mrs.

Wife of President Roosevelt.

Roosevelt, Franklin D. (FDR)

U.S. President, 1933–1945.

Sayre, Francis B.

U.S. High Commissioner in the Philippines

Stimson, Henry L.

Secretary of War, 1940–1945.

Truman, Harry S., U.S. Senator

(D) Missouri; U.S. President, 1945–1953.

Vinson, Carl, U.S. Representative

(D) Georgia, Chairman, House Naval Affairs Committee.

Walker, Frank C.

Postmaster General, 1940–1945.

Wallace, Henry A.

Secretary of Agriculture (1933–1940); Vice President during Roosevelt's 2nd term (1941–1945).

Walsh, David L., U.S. Senator

(D) Massachusetts, pre-war critic of FDR's foreign policy; Chairman, Senate Naval Affairs Committee.

Watson, Edwin Martin ("Pa"), Major General

President Roosevelt's appointment secretary.

Welles, Sumner

Under Secretary of State (1933–1943).

White, Harry Dexter

Adviser to Treasury Secretary Morgenthau.

Winant, John G.

U.S. Ambassador in London (1941–1946).

Woodring, Harry Hines

Secretary of War (1933–1940).

WASHINGTON (1941)—NAVY

Badt, Harry A.

Captain, *Tuscaloosa*.

Beardall, John R., Rear Admiral

Naval Aide to President Roosevelt.

Beatty, Frank E., Captain (later Vice Admiral)

Aide to Knox, accompanied him to Pearl Harbor, December 8–14.

Brainard, Roland M., Vice Admiral

Director of Ship Movements, CNO Office, Washington.

Briggs, Ralph T.

Radioman stationed at Cheltenham, Maryland.

Brotherhood, Francis M., Lieutenant Commander

Watch Officer in Op20-G, Naval Communications.

Creighton, John M., Captain

U.S. Naval Observer, Singapore.

Easton, Lieutenant

Air Corps Pilot who flew Navy Secretary Knox to Pearl Harbor December 8–14.

Edgers, Mrs. Dorothy

Research Analyst, ONI.

Halsey, William F., Vice Admiral

Commander Aircraft Patrol Force; Commander, Task Force Two.

Hart, Thomas C., Admiral

Commander-in-Chief, Asiatic Fleet, the Philippines (Manila). Headed Hart Inquiry into Pearl Harbor Attack (March–June, 1944).

Hayes, Lieutenant Commander

Former court stenographer, typed Knox's report on return flight from Pearl Harbor.

Heard, W.A., Captain

In charge of Foreign Branch, ONI.

Hindmarsh, Albert E., Lieutenant

Naval Intelligence, Far Eastern Section, economic analyst.

Ingersoll, Royal E., Admiral

Assistant Chief of Naval Operations.

King, Ernest J., Admiral

Commander-in-Chief, Atlantic Fleet.

Kramer, A.D., Commander

Op20-G, Navy Communications, Head of translation section of communication security.

Krick, H.D., Captain

Friend and theater companion December 6, 1941, of Admiral Stark.

Leahy, William Admiral

Chief of Naval Operations

Lynn, G.W., Lt. Commander

Senior Watch Officer, Op20-G, decoding Japanese diplomatic cryptographs.

McCollum, Arthur H., Captain, USN

In charge of Far Eastern Section, Foreign Branch, Office of Naval Intelligence.

Merle-Smith

U.S. Naval Attache, Australia.

Moreell, Ben, Admiral

Chief, Bureau of Yards and Docks (Seabees).

Nimitz, Chester W., Admiral

Chief of Bureau of Navigation.

Noyes, Leigh, Rear Admiral

Director of Naval Communications.

Pering, Alfred F., Lt. Commander

On duty in Op20-G, Naval Communications.

Redman, Joseph R., Admiral

Assistant Director of Naval Communications.

Richardson, J.O., Admiral

CincUS prior to Admiral Kimmel.

Safford, Laurence F., Captain

In charge of Security Section of Naval Communications, intercepts.

Schuirmann, R.E., Captain (later Rear Admiral)

Director Central Division, Liaison with State Department for CNO.

Schulz, Lester Robert, Lieutenant

Communication Watch Officer, on temporary duty at the White House,
December 6, 1941.

Smith, Leonard B.

Ensign, U.S. Navy, "adviser" aboard British plane who spotted the German
Bismarck.

Smith-Hutton, H.H., Captain

Naval Attache in Tokyo prior to December 7, 1941.

Stark, Harold R., Admiral

Chief of Naval Operations (CNO).

Tolley, Kemp, Lieutenant (later Rear Admiral)

Commander, *Lanikai*.

Thorpe, Elliott R.

ALUSNA, Naval Attache in Batavia, Netherlands East Indies.

Turner, Richmond Kelly, Vice Admiral

Director of Navy's War Plans Division, CNO.

Wigle, Daryl

Chief, "Station M," Cheltenham, Maryland.

Wilkinson, Theodore S., Rear Admiral, USN

Director of the Office of Naval Intelligence.

WASHINGTON (1941)—ARMY

Arnold, H. ("Hap") H., General

Commanding General, Army Air Corps.

Bratton, Rufus S., Colonel

Chief, Far Eastern Section, Military Division.

Deane, John R., Colonel

Aide to Army Chief of Staff General Marshall.

Dusenberry, Carlisle Clyde, Colonel

Assistant to Army courier Bratton.

- French, Edward F., Colonel
Signal Officer, Army Message Center.
- Gailey, Charles K., Jr., General
Executive Officer to General Gerow.
- Gerow, Leonard T., General
Army Chief of War Plans.
- Gullion, General
Provost Marshall.
- Harrison, George L., Major
Aide to Henry L. Stimson, War Department.
- MacArthur, Douglas, Lieutenant General
Commander, U.S. Forces Far East in Manila; Allied Supreme Commander, S.W. Pacific (1942); General of the Army (1944).
- Marshall, George C., General
Army Chief of Staff (1935–1945).
- Miles, Sherman, Major General
Director of Military Intelligence, G-2.
- O'Dell, Robert H.
Assistant Military Attache, Australia.
- Roosevelt, Elliott
FDR's 2nd son.
- Roosevelt, James, Captain
FDR's eldest son, Marine Corps Reserve, liaison between Marine Corps HQ and Office of Coordinator of Information.
- Smith, Bedell, Colonel
Secretary to Army Chief of Staff, General Marshall.
- Wedemeyer, W.C., Major (later Lieutenant General)
War Plans Division, War Department (later Commander of the American troops in the China Theater).

PEARL HARBOR (1941)—NAVY

Bellinger, Patrick Nelson L., Vice Admiral

Comdr. Hawaiian Based Patrol Wings and Comdr. Patrol Wing Two;
Comdr. Task Force Nine; Comdr. Fleet Air Detachment, Pearl Harbor;
Liaison with Com14; Comdr. Naval Base Defense Air Force.

Bloch, Claude C.

Com14; Comdr. Local Defense Forces; Comdr. Hawaiian Sea Frontier;
Comdt. Navy Yard Pearl Harbor; Naval Base Defense Officer under 2CL-
4, Comdr. Task Force Four.

Brown, Wilson, Rear Admiral

Commander, Scouting Force, Task Force 3, Pacific Fleet.

Calhoun, W.L., Vice Admiral

Commander Base Force, U.S. Fleet.

Coleman, H.M., Lieutenant. CinCPAC's staff.

DeLaney, W.S., Rear Admiral

Assistant Chief of Staff for Operations (for Admiral Kimmel).

Ghormley, Robert L., Rear Admiral

Assistant Chief of Naval Operations; participant in U.S.-British conver-
sations (London), August 1940.

Halsey, William F., Admiral

Commander of the carrier, *Enterprise*; Cmdr., U.S. 3rd Fleet in Pacific
(June 1944–Nov. 1945); Admiral of the Fleet, 1945.

Kimmel, Husband E., Rear Admiral

CincPac and CincUS.

Kingman, Howard F., Rear Admiral

District Intelligence Officer of 14th Naval District.

Kitts, III, W.A., Rear Admiral

Fleet Gunnery Officer (on Admiral Kimmel's staff).

Layton, E.T. Captain

Fleet Intelligence Officer and Combat Intelligence Officer, U.S. Pacific
Fleet.

Mayfield, Irving H., Captain

District Intelligence Officer 14th Naval District.

McCormick, L.D., Rear Admiral

Assistant Chief of Staff and Operations Officer for CincPac.

McMorris, C.H., Rear Admiral

Operations Officer on staff of Commander Scouting Force; War Plans Officer for CincPac.

Newton, J.H., Admiral

Commander of the carrier *Lexington*.

Outerbridge, William Woodward, Lieutenant

Commanding Officer, USS *Ward*.

Pye, W.S., Vice Admiral

Comdr. Battle Force; Comdr. Task Force One; Senior Officer in Pearl Harbor.

Ramsey, L.C., Captain

Operations officer to Adm. Bellinger (Adm. Bellinger in command of Pat. Wing 2 and Pat. Wing's Hawaiian Area); Comdr. Task Force Nine; aviation liaison officer to cooperate with Com14; Comdr. Naval Base Defense Air Force.

Rochefort, Joseph J., Commander

Assistant Operations Officer; Force Intelligence Officer for Scouting Force Commander; Officer in charge of combat intelligence 14th Naval District.

Withers, Thomas, Rear Admiral

Commander Submarines, Pacific.

PEARL HARBOR (1941)—ARMY

Elliott, George E., Sergeant

Opana radar station.

Emmons, Delos C., Major General

Commanding General, GHQ Air Force; participant in U.S.-British conversations (London) August 1940; Chief of Army's War Plans Division, participant in U.S.-British conversation (London) August 1940.

Friedman, William

Head of Army's Signal Intelligence Service, founded 1930.

Lockard, Joseph. L., Private (later Lieutenant)

Opana radar station.

Phillips, W.C., Colonel

Chief of Staff (for General Short).

Short, Walter C., Major General

Commanding General, Hawaiian Department.

Smith, William W., Rear Admiral

Chief of Staff to CincPac.

Strong, George V., Major General

Chief of Army's War Plans Division; participant in U.S.-British conversations (London) August 1940.

Taylor, W.G., Commander

Adviser to Army on radar.

Tyler, Kermit A., Lieutenant (later Lieutenant Colonel)

Aircraft Warning Center.

INVESTIGATORS AND HISTORIANS

Abbazia, Patrick

Author of *Mr. Roosevelt's Navy: The Private War of the Atlantic Fleet, 1939-1942*, 1975.

Blum, John Morton

Biographer of Henry J. Morgenthau, Jr.

Sherwood, Robert

FDR speech writer.

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