The United States, Japan and Pearl Harbor

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Preface

This article grew, as most do, out of the process of trying to answer questions, which, in this case, were raised by an Internet search on Pearl Harbor.

1. Who was the naval officer in command at Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941?
2. Why is Admiral Husband E. Kimmel given no more than a few lines in most history books?

I found answers to both questions, the first is apparent, and the second is answered indirectly by the article.

In addition, I tried to do most of the research using the Internet to see what sources are available. There are a lot, including a large number of primary sources and government documents.

There are a large number of block quotes with in-text citations in the article , usually this is a sign of a lazy author; the quotes are there for clarification in some cases, accuracy in others, and in the interest of justice.

I acknowledge the superb work of The Pearl Harbor Working Group and Pearl Harbor History Associates, and thank them for saving the record of Pearl Harbor at the Pearl Harbor Attack Hearings website, and making it available to all. Additionally, I thank Jake Jaekel, three of the personal accounts are from his website the Pearl Harbor Survivors Association, and are used by permission.

Sir John Keegan is quoted in the article he is the author of *The Second World War* in addition to other works of military history. I am not the same person, nor are we related.

If anyone would like to use this article in their research, please email me.

John Keegan
May 2005

Introduction

December 7, 1941, a day that will live in infamy, why did the Japanese attack Pearl Harbor on that day? Did the Japanese believe that they could strike a blow so devastating to the United States of America that the American people would remain in their self-imposed isolation? These questions have been examined for over 60 years; however, there is one question that has been slightly less examined: what happened to the Naval officer in command at Pearl Harbor after, and as a result, of the Japanese attack? This article examines these questions.

In the course of this examination, it will be seen that the factors of nationalism, ethnocentrism, and paternalism played their roles in both societies resulting in war. A war that could not, because of those factors working in different ways in both the United States and Japan, be avoided. Nationalism and ethnocentrism are present in all countries at some level and are demonstrated in some way. In the case of Japan, they were demonstrated through aggressively expanding into China and Indo-China. They also found their place in America. In the United States, they found, along with the third factor paternalism, expression through the spread of Western Culture throughout East Asia. In addition, they were expressed in the idea that no one, especially not the Japanese, could or would attack United States soil. Thus in the aftermath of Pearl Harbor, the American people were looking for people to blame for their unreadiness to meet the Japanese attack. They found two men, one of which was the naval officer in command at Pearl Harbor on that day, Admiral Husband E. Kimmel.

Setting the Stage

The Beginning of World War II

As important as the attack on Pearl Harbor was and is to the people of the United States of America it did not just happen there were events that preceded, and precipitated the attack. From 1931 onward the Japanese were aggressively expanding their footholds on the continent of Asia. At the expense, chiefly, of the Chinese, who were weakened by the conflict between the Nationalists and the Communists much to the dismay of American and British interests in that part of the world (Liddell Hart, 1971, p 109).

Many people when asked when did World War II begin? Answer September 1, 1939 when Germany invaded Poland. In fact, the war broke out eight years before with the Japanese invasion of Manchuria in 1931. Then, in 1940, after Hitler had conquered France and the Low Countries the Japanese took advantage of France in her weakened condition by getting her to agree to their 'protective' occupation of French Indo-China-now Laos, Cambodia, and Vietnam. The United States would not stand for such aggression from a country they relegated to an inferior role in the Pacific, thus President Roosevelt (armed with the ability to read Japanese diplomatic ciphers since early 1941) demanded, on

July 24, 1941, that all Japanese troops be withdrawn from Indo-China. To give the demand teeth, on July 26, 1941, he issued orders to freeze all Japanese assets in the United States, and placing an embargo on oil supply. Prime Minister Churchill took simultaneous action.

The United States

Looking back, the above action could be seen as President Roosevelt's attempt to bring the United States of America into World War II. However, Roosevelt, if nothing else, was the consummate politician, and there was and is one very important political rule that all presidents try to follow: Never be the first President of the United States to start a war. With this rule in mind, the above action takes on a new appearance. The United States viewed Japan in a very paternalistic manner, in much the same way they viewed the Native Americans in the mid to late 1800s whom they also saw as inferior. Paternalism, in this case, can be defined by the following statement: the Japanese are under developed, but could and should be given the values and belief system of Western Culture, and thus live in the most technologically advanced and civilized society possible. President Roosevelt also knew, as a result of the remarkable code-breaking operation known as Magic, the Japanese had made a decision at the Imperial conference on July 24, 1941 to combine diplomacy with a covert military offensive (Keegan 1989, p 248). Armed with this new information and its paternalistic view of the Japanese the United States prepared itself for a possible offensive.

Japan

The Japanese had feared, since their contact with the Portuguese, Dutch, and British in the Sixteenth Century, a disruption of the carefully ordered social structure on which centuries of internal order had rested. At the Beginning of the Seventeenth Century the Japanese closed their borders to the West. They remain closed for 200 years, until the West armed with new technology forced them open. It was at that point that the Japanese, as John Keegan states in his book *The Second World War*:

> ...Accepted that, if Japan were to remain Japanese, it must join the modern world, but on terms which guaranteed that the processes of modernization were retained in Japanese hands. The technology of the Western world would be bought; but the Japanese would not sell themselves or their society to the West in the course of acquiring it (1989, p 241).

So Japan, from the middle of the Nineteenth Century to 1918 made major progress toward their goal. But, this emulation of the West, and their assistance against Germany in the Great War did not win Japan a place among the great military powers of the world. In addition, the Washington naval treaty of 1922 again put Japan in an inferior position in relation to the United States and Royal Navies in the Pacific Ocean. The treaty set a limit on Japanese capital ships to 3/5 of the United States and Royal Navies. In the years between the wars, this

nation of 60 million people could not produce enough food to feed itself (Keegan, 1989, p 242).

Given the paternalistic view of the West over all, and the United States specifically, and the Japanese fear of the loss of their culture to the Western way of life, and the need for Japan to feed its people, aggressive expansion from the Japanese point of view seemed to be the only option. Asking for help would have reinforced the inferior view of Japan held by the West.

Why did the Japanese attack?

Did the Japanese believe that they could strike a blow so devastating to the United States of America that the American people would remain in their self-imposed isolation? Whatever the Japanese people may have thought of their chances in a war against the United States, it is clear that the architect of the attack on Pearl Harbor, Admiral Isoruku Yamamoto, did not hold much hope for a Japanese victory over the United States in a protracted war as he told Prime Minister, Prince Fumimaro Konoye: "If I am told to fight regardless of the consequences, I shall run wild for the first six months or a year, but I have utterly no confidence for the second or third year…" (Keegan, 1989 p 241). Japan had the time and opportunity for one, possibly two, major quick strikes that would cripple or destroy America's Pacific Fleet. Then, while the US Fleet was rebuilding, Japan could consolidate its holdings, and prepare for a US response. According to Edwin Dorn former Under Secretary Of Defense, both:

> The United States and Japan were pursuing policies that were leading inexorably to war. Japan had occupied Manchuria, was threatening much of Asia and had joined in a tripartite alliance with Italy and Germany…. By late November 1941, civilian and military leaders in the US had concluded that conflict was imminent; the only questions were when and where it would occur (1995, pp 1-2).

The Japanese had three reasons for attacking the United States of American. First, the United States cut off Japan's oil supply, and other strategically important materials. Second, the United States froze all Japanese assets in the country. This meant the Japanese could not use them for anything. Lastly, Japanese nationalism would not allow them to be dictated to by anyone.

The Plan

Before Yamamoto was given the responsibility for planning a strike against the United States, the Japanese plan in case of war with America was to use their main fleet in the south Pacific, and at the same time attack the Philippine Islands. This would cut off a United States advance to relieve their troops in the Philippines. That is the move the Americans expected, and it was reinforced by Japan's occupation of Indo-China. Using the time-honored strategy hit 'em where they ain't looking; Yamamoto devised a surprise attack on Pearl Harbor.

Admiral Isoruku Yamamoto first experienced combat on a cruiser at the battle of Tsushima against the Russians in 1905. As time passed, he came to the conclusion that future naval wars would be fought from the decks of aircraft carriers. Thus, he learned to fly, but by early 1941 Yamamoto was unsure of his grasp of essential air-sea operations. So, like the good naval officer he was, Yamamoto sought the assistance of the best aviator in the Japanese Navy, Minoru Genda, to help him plan the attack.

The overall plan, of which the attack on Pearl Harbor was the centerpiece, took final form in September 1941. In essence, it called for five separate simultaneous operations. "On Z-Day… two small amphibious forces would move against the American outposts of Wake and Guam islands…" (Keegan, 1989, p 253). Those two islands were inside the perimeter surrounding what Japan called the 'Southern Area' later referred to as the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere. In truth, only the Japanese saw prosperity within that defensive perimeter. Another amphibious force would begin landings on the islands of Mindanao and Luzon in the Philippines. That move was based on the old Japanese plan. Those forces were based on Formosa, Okinawa, and the Palau Islands. At the same time, land, sea, and air forces from Indo-China and south China were to strike the islands of Malaya and Molucca part of the Dutch East Indies. The hook on which those four simultaneous operations hung was, of course, Pearl Harbor.

The Pearl Harbor strike force, called the Combined Fleet by the Japanese, consisted of six aircraft carriers, four large and two small, and other assorted vessels. Its goal was to come within 200 miles of Pearl Harbor without being detected, launch and recover its air groups, and leave behind a twisted mass of metal that was the United States Pacific Fleet. To achieve it the Combined Fleet had to overcome two problems. First, Japanese torpedoes were unable to run in Pearl Harbor's Battleship Row, for the water was too shallow. They would have to be modified. Second, but equally important, was the possibility the Combined Fleet could be spotted underway which would bring the success of all the operations into question. To deal with that possibility, Yamamoto and Genda plotted a course that would take the Combined Fleet from the rough waters of the Kurile Islands between Japan and Siberia south-east to a point 200 miles north of Pearl Harbor. That route was far from the commercial shipping lanes. Such a route would lower the odds of the Combined Fleet being detected, for the United States would not be looking for an attack on Pearl Harbor, from its point of view, the Philippines were the most likely target. On November 26, 1941 the Japanese Carrier Strike Force set sail for Pearl Harbor the remaining ships of the Combined Fleet followed a few days later.

Pearl Harbor Before December 7, 1941

The United States

As stated above, the United States viewed Japan in a very paternalistic manner, in much the same way they viewed the Native Americans in the mid to late 1800s whom they also saw as inferior. Paternalism, in this case, can be defined by the

following statement: the Japanese are under developed, but could and should be given the values and belief system of Western culture, and thus live in the most technologically advanced and civilized society possible. This view of the Japanese as inferior started in the 1800s and by the Washington naval treaty of 1922, Japan was expected to play an inferior role in relation to the United States in the Pacific Ocean. The United States expected the Japanese, under their guidance, to meet their need for food and raw materials through trade and mutual cooperation; not through aggressive expansion.

Negotiations

As a result of the Japanese invasion of Indo-China in 1940 and their continued presence in China, President Roosevelt, on July 26, 1941, froze all Japan's assets in America, and stopped selling Japan oil and other raw materials. In April 1941 both sides were talking, but by July the United States knew, as a result of the remarkable code-breaking operation known as Magic, the Japanese had made a decision at the Imperial conference on July 24, 1941 to combine diplomacy with a covert military offensive.

In Washington on November 26, 1941 Secretary of State Cordell Hull handed the Japanese Ambassador a note that laid out four principles that both the United States and Japan should and would follow in their relations with each other and other countries:

1. The principle of inviolability of territorial integrity and sovereignty of each and all nations.
2. The principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries.
3. The principle of equality, including equality of commercial opportunity and treatment.
4. The principle of reliance upon international cooperation and conciliation for the prevention and pacific settlement of controversies and for improvement of international conditions by peaceful methods and processes (Dept. of State Bulletin, Vol. V, No. 129, Dec. 13, 1941).

These principles did nothing more than restate the United States' paternalistic position that Japan should maintain its inferior role in the Pacific. The note also stated "The Government of Japan will withdraw all military, naval, air and police forces from China and from Indo-China" (Dept. of State Bulletin, Vol. V, No. 129, Dec. 13, 1941). This was the same demand that Roosevelt had made on July 24, 1941. The note continued, "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." Thus, as long as the Japanese behaved themselves their assets would be free and trade with the United States would be possible. It was clear that Japan would not change its position.

The United States Readiness for War

The United States in November 1941 was still coming out of the Great Depression and preparing for war. These preparations, wide ranging and slow, started in June 1940 when President Roosevelt appointed two Republicans to defense posts in the cabinet: Henry L. Stimson, Secretary of War and Frank Knox, Secretary of the Navy. The purpose of these appointments was to reinforce national unity. In July a bill signed by President Roosevelt authorized a two-ocean navy. By August 1940, units of the National Guard were induced into federal service, but that was not enough manpower. So, Congress adopted the first peacetime conscription (or draft) in American history. It called for the registration of all men age 21-35 for one year's military service within the United States (Shi, Tindall 1996, p 1223).

America was and is a republic, and in such a system the government can do nothing without debate and that takes time. Thus, the above measures did not just walk through Congress. The House and the Senate had to listen to the American people who were, at the time, divided into two major camps internationalists and isolationists. The internationalists held the best way to defend the United States was to aid Britain and her allies. On the other hand, the isolationists held that Roosevelt was drawing the United States in to a needless war. That war would be in Europe the public did not look East toward Japan.

While the American public may not have been looking to the East the military was, and they put what they saw into war plans. The Joint Army and Navy Basic War Plan-Rainbow No. 5 stated which enemy, in case of war, would be dealt with first:

> Since Germany is the predominant member of the Axis Powers the Atlantic and European area is considered to be the decisive theatre. The principal United States Military effort will be exerted in that theatre and operations of United States forces in other theatres will be conducted in such a manner as to facilitate that effort (Section 4 Paragraph 13 (a)).

This Germany first plan put Japan on the back burner and thus the needs of the Army and Navy in the Pacific. The commanders at Pearl Harbor Admiral Husband E. Kimmel and General Walter C. Short had to make do with about 10% of the overall allotment of men and material. The other 90% were earmarked for Europe.

The 10% the commanders had were to say the least inadequate to the task. As Admiral Kimmel states in his book *Admiral Kimmel's Story*, "He, [General Short] like myself, was handicapped by personnel and material shortages and the influx of large numbers of untrained officers and enlisted men" (1955, p 8). The War Department allocated the Army in Hawaii 180 flying fortresses, but only 12 were in Hawaii before December 7, 1941, and only six of them could fly (Kimmel 1955, p 14). The fleet had its problems with planes too according to Kimmel:

> The Navy Department allocated about 100 patrol planes to the commandant of the 14th Naval District. He never received a single patrol plane.

> As a consequence, the base defense against air attack was predicated on borrowing fleet patrol planes for distant searches. Under the war plans these fleet patrol planes were earmarked for operations with the fleet thousands of miles from Hawaii should war come. Their primary mission was always connected to fleet operations. They were frequently based on the outlying islands-Midway, Wake, Johnston, and Palmyra. They had to train with the fleet and search areas in which the fleet operated. Under these circumstances, they were available for distant search from Oahu only when and if the fleet did not need them for its own operations, actual or impending. They were not at any time sufficient in number to cover in distance more than one-fourth of the area through which a force could approach Pearl Harbor. And this coverage maintained for a few days only.
>
> Search was to be instituted only when there was information from other sources that a carrier strike against the islands was possible within narrow time limits. This was a makeshift none better was possible with the means at hand (1955, p 15).

The Army and Navy did not have enough planes on hand to carry out search operations according to war plans, which made their need for trained radar operators greater. They also were in short supply. Admiral Kimmel took Army personnel to sea with the fleet so they could be trained as radar operators. He also assigned a naval officer to the Army who had experience in Britain with radar to give any advice and assistance he could in connection with the aircraft warning net in Hawaii (Kimmel 1955, p 9). Sometime shortly there after Army radar was manned and operational. According to Admiral Kimmel:

> General Short informed me his radar was operating and could give 100-mile coverage. In joint Army-Navy drills it did perform satisfactorily. In the period before December 7, I was informed that the Army's radar was manned... (1955, p 9).

Communication Between Washington and Hawaii

The Chief of Naval Operations (CNO) in Washington Admiral Stark, the next step above Kimmel in the chain of command, knew of the shortages of trained men and material in Hawaii. He in turn would have informed Henry Knox Secretary of the Navy (SECNAV). As SECNAV, Knox would have reported to the President; in like manner, intelligence in the form of Magic would have been sent to Admiral Kimmel Commander In Chief, Pacific Fleet (CINC PAC). At least, that was the way it should have worked. But, communication from Hawaii to Washington happened more often and was more useful than communication from Washington to Hawaii. As Admiral Kimmel states:

> The deficiencies of Pearl Harbor as a fleet base were well known in the Navy Department. In an interview with Mr. Roosevelt in June 1941, in Washington, I outlined the weaknesses and concluded with the remark that the only answer was to have the fleet at sea if the Japs ever attacked (1955, p 79).

Admiral Kimmel CINC PAC voiced his concerns to the President himself, but the Germany first plan won the day, as it should. History has shown that to have been the best course of action.

Before the June 1941 meeting with Roosevelt Kimmel wrote an official letter to CNO Stark:

> On 25 May 1941, I wrote an official letter to the Chief of Naval Operations [describing] my need for information of all important developments affecting our foreign relations…. I handed it to the CNO personally, and received his assurance that I would be informed of all important developments as they occurred, and by the quickest secure means available (Kimmel 1955, pp 80-81).

CNO Stark told Admiral Kimmel that he would be kept informed by the quickest secure means available. That statement meant as fast as the bureaucratic system used for code breaking could work. That system, at best, worked at a speed of dead slow.

The commanders in Hawaii were never supplied with the equipment or personnel to decode Japanese intercepted diplomatic messages. These Magic intercepts, then had to be decoded in Washington at the Office of Naval Intelligence (ONI) and sent to Hawaii. The Asiatic Fleet, however, had such equipment and personnel. There were gaps in the information sent to Kimmel. The message of September 24, 1941, for example, a message which Kimmel should have received some time before the attack such that Hawaii crystallized as a point of attack for the Japanese was never sent to him. The message read:

> Strictly secret.
>
> "Henceforth, we would like to have you make reports concerning vessels along the following lines insofar as possible:
>
> "1. The waters (of Pearl Harbor) are to be divided roughly into five sub-areas (We have no objections to your abbreviating as much as you like.)
>
> "Area A. Waters between Ford Island and the Arsenal.
> "Area B. Waters adjacent to the Island south and west of Ford Island. (This area is on the opposite side of the Island from Area A.)
> "Area C. East Loch.
> "Area D. Middle Loch.
> "Area E. West Loch and the communication water routes.
>
> "2. With regard to warships and aircraft carriers, we would like to have you report on those at anchor (these are not so important) tied up at wharves, buoys and in docks. (Designate types and classes briefly. If possible we would like to have you make mention of the fact when there are two or more vessels along side the same wharf.)" (Report Of the Joint Congressional Committee 1946 p 182)

The fact that Admiral Kimmel was never informed of the above message after CNO Admiral Stark told Kimmel that he would be kept informed is, to say the least, odd. The Director of Naval Intelligence Captain Allan G. Kirk thought the message should be sent to Kimmel, according to Edward L. Beach Captain USN (Ret.) in his book *Scapegoats: A Defense of Kimmel and Short at Pearl Harbor*: the above message was read by the ONI in early October 1941. "…It was evaluated by some intelligence officers as the precursor of a possible air attack on the area of interest. …Kirk saw it as such and urged that it be sent to Kimmel" (1995, p 34). But, Rear Admiral Richmond Kelly Turner, director of Navy war plans, objected; Kimmel was never informed. Why?

Communication between Washington and Hawaii clearly had gaps, and taken with the shortages of trained men and material in Hawaii added to the lack of readiness of the United States to respond to the attack. If Kimmel had been informed as he should have been it may have taken the Pacific Fleet less time to recover from the attack. That is all that can be said based on facts. There is no evidence that information known or thought to be critical, at that time, to commanders in Hawaii was withheld by design. It is more likely the bureaucratic system that was and is Washington caused the gaps in information. In such a system the information Admiral Kimmel did get did not point to Hawaii. The war warning message of November 27, 1941 read as follows:

> THIS DESPATCH IS TO BE CONSIDERED A WAR WARNING*. NEGOTIATIONS WITH JAPAN LOOKING TOWARD STABILIZATION OF CONDITIONS IN THE PACIFIC *HAVE CEASED* AND 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 POSSIBLY BORNEO. *EXECUTE AN APPROPRIATE DEFENSIVE DEPLOYMENT PREPARATORY TO CARRYING OUT THE TASKS ASSIGNED IN WPL46*. INFORM DISTRICT AND ARMY AUTHORITIES. A SIMILAR WARNING IS BEING SENT BY WAR DEPARTMENT. SPENAVO INFORM BRITISH. CONTINENTAL DISTRICTS GUAM SAMOA DIRECTED TAKE APPROPRIATE MEASURES AGAINST SABOTAGE." (Report Of the Joint Congressional Committee 1946)

The above message instructed Kimmel to carry out tasks assigned in war plans and watch for sabotage.

Pearl Harbor December 7, 1941

Japan

The attack that started at 07:55 with the first of two waves was unique in its size and scope in naval aviation. Sailing from Japan to Pearl Harbor by a route that would take the Japanese Fleet through rough seas and well outside commercial shipping lanes the Japanese had reached the point north of Pearl Harbor where

their strike force could be launched. The planes of the first wave dive-bombed and strafed Navy and Army airfields to keep US fighters and other planes on the ground. At the same time, low-flying torpedo planes attacked warships moored on both sides of Ford Island and at the Navy Yard's 1010 Dock. Shortly after 08:00, bombers dropped their armor-piercing bombs on Battleship Row. In 30 minutes, the first wave had completed its task; it headed back to the fleet. Then, about 15 minutes later, the second wave came on. Again, it dive-bombed, strafed, and machine-gunned anything the first wave missed. By 09:45, the second wave turned out to sea back to its carriers; behind them a twisted mass of metal that was the United States Pacific Fleet.

United States

It was a Sunday and like most mornings in Hawaii, it was beautiful. Some men were on liberty and some were sleeping-in after all it was Sunday in paradise. The Pacific Fleet was in harbor for the weekend; except for its three aircraft carriers. The *Enterprise* and the *Lexington* were at sea on their way back to port having delivered planes to Wake and Midway islands. The *Saratoga* was in San Diego under going refit. The band of the *Arizona* was among those sleeping-in for they had taken second place in a battle of bands the night before. Thus, they were lost along with the *Arizona*.

No one had any idea what was going to happen, nor that the day they were about to start would make history. At 07:00, Army Private Joseph McDonald was manning the switchboard at the Information Center Fort Shafter waiting for his replacement to finish breakfast. Some time after 07:00:

> [T]he switchboard buzzed. He inserted the plug into the phone and answered. It was the northern radar station Opana. An excited voice that he could hardly hear asked if the plotters were still around. McDonald said no. The voice from Opana said, "There are a large number of planes coming in from the north 3 points east." Joseph replied," I am not sure what to do there is nobody here." At that point, the connection was broken. (Pvt. George Elliott made this call) McDonald looked at the clock to time the message and saw a Lieutenant from the Air Corps sitting at the plotting table. He walked in and said, "I just received a call from 6QN Opana reporting a large number of planes coming in from the north 3 points east." The Lieutenant said that there was nothing to get excited about. McDonald returned to the switchboard and called the man back on the Opana radar unit. McDonald relayed the Lieutenant's lack of concern. The voice at Opana was coming in stronger now. He recognized the voice as his friend Joseph Lockard. Pvt. Lockard was excited and stated that a large number of planes were heading fast towards Oahu." Hey Mac there is a heck of a big flight of planes coming in and the whole scope is covered." McDonald told Joseph Lockard to hold on. McDonald, infected by his friend's excitement returned to the plotting table. McDonald said, "Sir, this is the first call that I have ever received like this. This sounds serious! Do you think that we ought to do something about it? Shall I call back the

> plotters?" The Lieutenant said that it was probably a flight from the states. Pvt. Lockard asked to talk directly with the Lieutenant. The Lieutenant took the phone and my father could hear "Well don't worry about it" (Account of Joseph P McDonald Pearl Harbor Attack December 7, 1941).

That flight was, in fact, the first wave of the Japanese attack. They had taken a route from the Kurile Islands between Japan and Siberia southeast to a point 200 miles north of Pearl Harbor and launched the flight that was picked up on radar. The Lieutenant made a misjudgment. The flight approached Pearl Harbor from the north. The flight of B17s coming from the mainland would have come in from the east and would not have been so large. In fact, the expected flight of B17s numbered only twelve planes. This junior officer did not think it possible that the Japanese would attack United States soil. Thus, he did not report the approaching planes up the chain of command.

Private McDonald asked the Lieutenant if he should recall the plotters or call Wheeler Field he was told, "Don't worry about it." McDonald was still concerned:

> He knew that the Lieutenant was inexperienced in the information center's operations as it was only his second day there. McDonald was pretty sure that it was serious. A number of times he grabbed the line for Wheeler Field. McDonald then thought that he could be court marshaled for going around the Lieutenant. Who would listen to a private anyway? At about 7:45 McDonald's replacement arrived. My father was exhausted after working over 14 hours yet the communication from Opana kept gnawing on his mind. He thought that he would call Wheeler from the orderly tent. He passed by the orderly tent and saw the Sergeant using the phone. He returned to his tent to tell his tent mate Pvt. Richard Schimmel "Shim the Japs are coming". McDonald sat on his bunk and recounted the call from the Opana radar. A few moments later, they could hear the drone of planes. Their tent was on a hill overlooking Pearl Harbor. Finally, they could see the planes coming over. There were a lot of them and they seemed to play follow the leader. They were flying in single file. Finally, the lead plane dived and the others followed. They could hear the loud roar of explosions and [see] black smoke (Account of Joseph P McDonald Pearl Harbor Attack December 7, 1941).

Elsewhere that morning Gordon E. Jones got up early and put on his best white uniform. Jones recalled:

> My brother Earl had the weekend duty and I had to stay on the base. He was looking forward to playing baseball before going on watch. We had not gone to breakfast yet and some of the men were still asleep. Others were getting ready to go on watch at our seaplane hangar or on the launching ramp to guard the aircraft. A few men were waiting for the motor launch to take them out to the four aircraft that were tied up to the buoys in the bay so they could relieve the aircraft crews for breakfast. Others were getting ready to attend Sunday worship services (Gordon E. Jones Kaneohe VP-14).

Jones and his brother were unaware that almost at the same time, they were starting their day; radar had picked up Japanese aircraft approaching Pearl Harbor.

07:55 The Attack

At the Naval Hospital Pearl Harbor, LT Ruth Erickson, NC (Nurse Corps), USN had worked the 15:00–22:00 shift Saturday December 6; Sunday was her day off. Erickson and a few friends went to breakfast, and were talking over coffee she recalled:

> Suddenly we heard planes roaring overhead and we said, "The `fly boys' are really busy at Ford Island this morning." The island was directly across the channel from the hospital. We didn't think too much about it since the reserves were often there for weekend training. We no sooner got those words out when we started to hear noises that were foreign to us (LT Ruth Erickson, NC (Nurse Corps), USN 1999).

The Lieutenant ran to the nearest window, as she remembered:

> Right then there was a plane flying directly over the top of our quarters, a one-story structure. The rising sun under the wing of the plane denoted the enemy. Had I known the pilot, one could almost see his features around his goggles. He was obviously saving his ammunition for the ships. Just down the row, all the ships were sitting there--the [battleships] *California* (BB-44), the *Arizona* (BB-39), the *Oklahoma* (BB-37), and others (LT Ruth Erickson, NC (Nurse Corps), USN 1999).

Erickson was able to make her way back to her quarters. Her heart was racing as she recalled:

> [T]he telephone was ringing, the chief nurse, Gertrude Arnest, was saying, "Girls, get into your uniforms at once, this is the real thing!"
>
> I was in my room by that time changing into uniform. It was getting dusky, almost like evening. Smoke was rising from burning ships.
>
> I dashed across the street, through a shrapnel shower, got into the lanai and just stood still for a second as were a couple of doctors. I felt like I were frozen to the ground, but it was only a split second. I ran to the orthopedic dressing room but it was locked. A corpsmen ran to the OD's [Officer-of-the-Day's] desk for the keys. It seemed like an eternity before he returned and the room was opened. We drew water into every container we could find and set up the instrument boiler. Fortunately, we still had electricity and water. Dr. [CDR Clyde W.] Brunson, the chief of medicine was making sick call when the bombing started. When he was finished, he was to play golf...a phrase never to be uttered again (LT Ruth Erickson, NC (Nurse Corps), USN 1999).

Meanwhile aboard USS West Virginia, Forest M. Jones was on the upper Fire Control level above the navigation deck when, as he recalled:

> We saw them coming and knew they were Japs.... As they came across the harbor, we could see they were torpedo planes. I was a first class petty officer at that time and was in charge of the 5"/25 anti-aircraft directors. My

crew and I immediately manned our battle stations in the gun directors before the general alarm was sounded. About that, time torpedoes started exploding against the side of the ship. We couldn't get power to the gun directors or establish communications with the ant-aircraft guns. Realizing that our gun directors were inoperable, I elected to take my two crews to the anti-aircraft gun deck level and help place the 5" guns in operation.

A gunner's mate and boatswain mate from the gun crew divisions were working to get the guns into operation. I detailed two of my crew to man the fuse setting mechanisms of two of the guns. Two other crewmen worked with me removing 5" ammunition stored in the topside ready service boxes. By this time torpedo, damage and fire forced the abandonment of the guns and adjacent ready service boxes on the port side of the ship. When removing ammunition from one of the ready service boxes, a large bomb struck the top of the ship's cage mast and would have struck the ready service box where we were removing ammunition, but it was deflected by the heavy metal coaming of the Signal Bridge.

I then went back to the Navigation Bridge to see if there had been any communications from the many shipmates that were trapped below decks without any means of escape except for the long escape tube between the Central Station an the Navigation Bridge. Along with a couple other shipmates, we helped at least thirty shipmates up an out of the escape tube. Captain Bennion was still alive but fatally wounded from bomb shrapnel that hit the No. 2 turret of the inboard battleship, the Tennessee.

Joe Paul, along with an unknown fireman, manned a 40' motor launch, assisted in taking wounded to the Hospital Point, and also recovered bodies from the harbor. It was a very sad and long day. (Forest M. Jones USS West Virginia)

The above four personal accounts are snapshots of what many men and women were experiencing during the attack. All the men and women that were under attack stepped up and did what had to be done—nothing less than their duty; and went beyond its call. As SECNAV, Knox stated in his report just days after the attack:

> The fighting spirit of the crews aboard ship and ashore was superb. Gun crews remained at their station with their guns in action until they slid into the water from the Oklahoma's deck or were driven overboard by fires on other ships. Men ashore manned every available small boat and carried on rescue work saving the lives of the men who were driven overboard while the heaviest fighting was going on. Some of the crew of the Utah, swept from the deck of the ship as she capsized, were rescued by destroyers leaving the harbor to engage in an attack on the enemy forces. Although clad only in their underclothes, they insisted on joining the crews of the destroyers, which rescued them and went to sea….
>
> …Once action was joined the courage, determination and resourcefulness of the armed services and of the civilian employees left nothing to be desired. Individually and collectively, the bravery of the defense was superb. In single unit combat, the American pursuit planes proved

> themselves superior to the Japanese and the American personnel in the air demonstrated distinct superiority over the Japanese (Report By The Secretary Of The Navy To The President December 14, 1941).

Because of the attack Navy and Marine Corps losses were in the thousands 2,117 officers and enlisted men killed, 876 were wounded; another 960 were reported as missing in Knox's press statement of December 6, 1942. The Dorn report of December 1995 put total US losses at 2,403 dead (1,177 of whom are entombed in the Arizona), and 1,178 wounded. Losses on that scale raised many questions from the Government and the American people some that have yet to be answered.

Aftermath

Investigations

SECNAV Knox was sent to Pearl Harbor on December 8 1941 to report on the aftermath of the attack. The United States was at war and questions such as what happened, how—and why needed investigation. In the paternalistic view of the United States, the Japanese were not able to execute such an operation unique in its size and scope in naval aviation. It was beyond the means of the United States in 1941, so civilian and military leaders did not see the possibility of such an attack from the Japanese. The SECNAV's investigation was the first of nine that were held from 1941—1946. Five of the nine stand out and are discussed here. The other four are referred to, to provide context.

SECNAV

Knox completed his report in six days, and submitted it to President Roosevelt on December 14, 1941. It outlined the state of unreadiness of both Army and Navy forces in Hawaii. Knox stated:

> There was no attempt by either Admiral Kimmel or General Short to alibi the lack of a state of readiness for the air attack. Both admitted they did not expect it and had taken no adequate measures to meet one if it came. Both Kimmel and Short evidently regarded an air attack as 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. Neither the Army nor the Navy Commander expected that an attack would be made by the Japanese while negotiations were still proceeding in Washington. Both felt that if any surprise attack was attempted it would be made in the Far East (Report By The Secretary Of The Navy To The President December 14, 1941).

Until November 27, 1941, Admiral Kimmel knew that talks with the Japanese were on going, and intelligence in the form of Magic that Admiral Kimmel did get from Washington did not point to Pearl Harbor as a possible area of attack by Japan. The war-warning message did not list Hawaii at all. Kimmel carried out the

tasks as assigned to his command under war plans given the shortages of trained men and material in Hawaii to the best of his ability. Those shortages were known to CNO Admiral Stark and SECNAV Knox and the President. Admiral Kimmel was relieved of command on December 16, 1941.

Roberts Commission

Four days after Knox submitted his report to the President, Roosevelt called into being the Roberts Commission to investigate and report the facts relating to the attack made by Japanese armed forces upon Pearl Harbor in the territory of Hawaii on December 7, 1941. After nearly six weeks of investigation, on January 23, 1942 the Commission submitted its report to Roosevelt. Among the report's stranger findings are the following:

> 13. There were deficiencies in personnel, weapons, equipment, and facilities to maintain all the defenses on a war footing for extended periods of time. But these deficiencies should not have affected the decision of the responsible commanders as to the state of readiness to be prescribed (Roberts Commission).

The above statement was and is wrong in that shortages as listed above had to affect decisions made by Kimmel. If, for example, he had the number of planes required to carry out search operations according to war plans Kimmel would have done so. Instead, because of the shortages, he had to make adjustments based on the personnel, weapons, and equipment available. Adjustments meant there would be possible gaps in readiness.

The report also states:

> 17. In the light of the warnings and directions to take appropriate action, transmitted to both commanders between November 27 and December 7, and the obligation under the system of coordination then in effect for joint cooperative action on their part, 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. The attitude of each, that he was not required to inform him (Roberts Commission).

This judgment was and is also wrong. Kimmel and Short did, in fact, consult and confer with each other respecting the meaning and intent of the warnings, and the appropriate measures of defense required by the imminence of hostilities. According to Admiral Kimmel:

> My relations with General Short, which were once the subject of considerable confusion in the public mind, have now been clarified by exhaustive investigations. I need not labor it. It has been established that our official and social relations were friendly, that we frequently conferred on official matters of common interest and invariably did so when either of us received messages which had any bearing on the development of the United States-Japanese situation, or on our several plans in preparing for war (1955, pp 9–10).

Thus, the charge of dereliction of duty was baseless. It should have been clear to the Roberts Commission that Admiral Kimmel did all that he could. More than likely, it is a function of time that caused the Roberts Commission to conclude what they did. Kimmel did testify before the Commission, and either was not questioned about his relations with General Short, or his testimony was discounted and rejected. In any case, the investigation of the Roberts Commission was undertaken too soon after the attack to be objective and have all important information made available to them.

Hart Inquiry

Two years after the Roberts Commission's findings were published SECNAV Knox directed Admiral Thomas C. Hart, US Navy, Retired to Examine witnesses for the purpose of recording and preserving testimony pertinent to the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor in the following letter dated February 12, 1944:

> … Whereas, on 7 December 1941, Japanese armed forces made an attack against Army and Navy installations and ships of the United States Pacific Fleet at Pearl Harbor, Oahu, Territory of Hawaii, which attack was a complete surprise to the commanders of the said installations and ships, and
>
> Whereas, regrettable loss of life and extensive damage resulted from the said attack, and
>
> Whereas, certain members of the naval forces, who have knowledge pertinent to the foregoing matters, are now or soon may be on dangerous assignments at great distances from the United States, and
>
> Whereas, it is now deemed necessary, in order to prevent evidence being lost by death or unavoidable absence of those certain members of the naval forces, that their testimony, pertinent to the aforesaid Japanese attack be recorded and preserved,
>
> I hereby detail you to examine such members of the naval forces thought to have knowledge of facts pertinent to the said surprise attack and fully record the testimony given thereby. Under the authority of Title 5, Section 93, of the U. S. Code, you are authorized and directed to administer an oath to any witness called by you to testify or depose in the course of this examination into the subject-named matter.
>
> In view of the fact that Rear Admiral Husband E. Kimmel; U. S. Navy, Retired, was, on 7 December 1941, serving on active duty as the commander-in-chief, U. S. Pacific Fleet, with the rank of Admiral, U. S. Navy, and [A(2)] therefore, has an interest in the matter into which this examination is being made, you will notify him of the times and places of the meetings to be had and that he has the right to be present, to have counsel, to introduce, examine, and cross-examine witnesses, to introduce matter pertinent to the examination and to testify or declare in his own behalf at his own request.
>
> Upon completion of the examination you will submit a complete record of all the testimony taken, including any documents introduced therein, to the Secretary of the Navy.

> The provisions of Sections 733 and 734, Naval Courts and Boards, will govern the proceedings of this examination, in so far as such provisions are applicable thereto.
>
> The necessary clerical assistance to aid you in recording the testimony will be furnished you upon your request by the appropriate command in the area in which meetings are held.
>
> (SGD) FRANK KNOX.
>
> (Precept for an Examination of Witnesses and the Taking of Testimony Pertinent to the Japanese Attack on Pearl Harbor, Territory of Hawaii)

The Hart Inquiry heard testimony from 40 witnesses during a four-month period from February 22-June 15, 1944. Admiral Hart informed Admiral Kimmel in a letter dated February 17, 1944

> … In compliance with the portion of reference (a) above quoted, you are hereby advised that the first meeting of the examination will occur at 0930 a. m. on Tuesday, 22 February 1944 in room 2744, Navy Department, Washington, D. C. You have the right to be present at that and subsequent meetings, to have counsel, to introduce, examine, and cross-examine witnesses, to introduce matter pertinent to the examination and to testify or declare in your own behalf at your own request (Hart Inquiry Exhibit No. 1).

Kimmel was kept informed throughout the inquiry, but he was concerned as to how his testimony would be used. In correspondence with SECNAV Knox, Kimmel concluded that his fate was in the hands of the SECNAV. “To Kimmel, the proceedings smacked too much of the Roberts Commission, which had declared him guilty without trial or opportunity to defend himself, and then made a public announcement of its accusatory findings to the nation” (Beach, 1995 p 119). Given the conclusions of the Roberts Commission, Kimmel mistrusted the SECNAV’s assurance that the inquiry would be run by the book. Thus, Kimmel chose not to take part in the investigation.

The Hart Inquiry reached no findings of fact nor drew any conclusions. It simply compiled and put on record testimony. Of the 40 witnesses, three stand out Richmond Kelly Turner, William F. Halsey, and L. F. Safford. Both Turner and Halsey testified that Kimmel did not have the men or material in Hawaii to carry out offensive operations. In answer to question 13, Turner testified in part:

> It was realized that Admiral Kimmel did not have at hand all the material and men and organizations to proceed immediately with a strong offensive to the Gilberts or the Marshalls. The Navy Department was making every effort to try to set up base materiel and organizations that would permit Admiral Kimmel, in the course of a comparatively short time, to initiate such an offensive. Admiral Kimmel, whether in writing or orally, I don't recall, expressed the view that he did not have the forces suitable for conducting an offensive in the immediate future. There was no disagreement in the Department with such a view… (Hart Inquiry Testimony Richmond K. Turner, Vice Admiral, USN*).*

Shortages as stated above made the need for full intelligence information in Hawaii greater. In answer to the following question:

> 51. Q. Did you feel, at that time, that all necessary steps were taken to apprise the Commander-in-Chief, Pacific Fleet of the apprehension of the Chief of Naval Operations as to a surprise air attack on Oahu?

Turner testified:

> A. There was no specific warning sent out against attack on the Fleet here at the time the war warnings were dispatched. The only measures that we estimated specifically the Japanese would take were the general forms of his major attack, which was on Malay, the Philippines, and possibly Borneo, initially. That is, it was the major movement with which we were concerned in the Department. It was against policy-rightly, so, I believe-to be too specific in details as to tactical matters. The idea was that we would give the Commanders-in-Chief general tasks, provide them with full information, and assign to them forces adequate for executing those tasks. We looked to the officers in the field to decide all tactical matters and methods. We did not wish to hamper them with detailed instructions concerning matters within their own fields of action. This was particularly important in the case of the Pacific and Asiatic Commands, which are so far distant from Washington that the officers there can never be adequately advised as to events and conditions (Hart Inquiry Testimony Richmond K. Turner, Vice Admiral, USN*).*

If the idea was to give Kimmel full information; then why did Turner, who was director of Navy war plans, object to sending the message of September 24, 1941 to Kimmel? The Director of Naval Intelligence Captain Allan G. Kirk thought the message should be sent to Kimmel. Admiral Hart never questioned Turner on the point, and did not call Captain Kirk to testify. Nor did Hart call CNO Stark, who stated to Kimmel that Kimmel would be kept informed. Turner's objection should have been over ruled by the CNO.

Admiral William F. Halsey Commander of the carrier that launched the raid on Tokyo was called by Admiral Hart. In answer to the following question:

> 54. Q. Sir, did you feel, at that time, that the sum total of the Commander-in-Chief's intelligence reports was at all adequate? In other words, did you feel that the Commander-in-Chief was fairly well informed as to what the Japs were doing or did you feel that you were operating in the dark there?

Halsey testified:

> A. I did not feel that we were well informed on what the Japs were doing and I felt that we were operating in the dark. I had the personal feeling, entirely personal, that they knew a lot more in Washington than we knew out there and that we should have been informed (Hart Inquiry Testimony William F. Halsey, Jr., Admiral, USN).

Halsey had the feeling that he and Kimmel were in the dark. He believed Kimmel demanded more information from Washington.

On the point of surprise attack by Japan, Halsey testified in part:

> [W]e felt sure that they would pull something like that, but we thought it would take place in the Far East rather than Honolulu, except by submarines, which was the gist of the conversation. We underestimated

their ability to operate carriers, or we did not give it enough consideration (Hart Inquiry Testimony William F. Halsey, Jr., Admiral, USN).

Again, the Far East was thought to be the likely target, and Halsey's statement of underestimation showed the paternalistic view of the Japanese held before the attack.

L. F. Safford was the officer in charge of Communication Intelligence in December 1941. Safford testified, in answer to the following:

> 6. Q. To what special branch of intelligence were the duties of the main station at Pearl Harbor confined?
>
> A. To the dispositions and plans of naval forces in the Pacific Ocean and to surveillance over Japanese naval communications. We expected that this would prevent the Fleet being surprised as the Russians had been at Port Arthur. These duties were prescribed in the current War Plans (WPDNC-8: Appendix IV; Art. 4-25) approved March 1940, and by dispatches and letters of instruction issued by the Chief of Naval Operations. These duties did not include surveillance over Diplomatic communications of any sort. The personnel of this Unit had about four or five years of C. I. experience on the average. The officers included our best, and six or seven had had previous C. I. duty in the Asiatic C. I. Unit (Hart Inquiry Testimony L. F. Safford, Captain, USN).

The above were the station's stated duties. Safford was clear that those duties did not include surveillance over diplomatic communications of any sort. Thus, the Pacific Fleet was dependant on ONI for Magic, that is, diplomatic intercepts. The Asiatic Fleet, however, had such equipment and personnel. Safford testified, in answer to the following:

> 7. Q. To what special branch of intelligence were the duties of the main station at Corregidor confined?
>
> A. The Asiatic Unit was at the disposal of the Commander-in-Chief, U. S. Asiatic Fleet to use as he saw fit. During 1940 and early 1941, this Unit was mostly concerned with Japanese Diplomatic communications, but in October or November, 1941, it shifted its main attention to Japanese Naval communications. The personnel of this Unit had about two or three years of C. I. experience on the average, and the officers were young, enthusiastic, and capable (Hart Inquiry Testimony L. F. Safford, Captain, USN).

The Asiatic Fleet was responsible for Japanese diplomatic intercepts, and the Pacific Fleet was given the responsibility for surveillance over Japanese naval communications. How was it, then, that the message of September 24, 1941 was not sent to Kimmel? It was clearly Magic; therefore, outside the ability of the Pearl Harbor station to decode. The Asiatic Fleet had such ability, but did not send the message directly to CINC PAC. Instead, it was sent to ONI in Washington; where the message was not sent to CINC PAC. That was an intelligence failure of the first magnitude. Even if, as it seems likely, the message was misconstrued; it should have been sent to CINC PAC for his information.

Why was the message misconstrued? Because of the overall view of the United States that the Philippines were the most likely Japanese target; due to their paternalistic underestimation of the Japanese ability to operate carriers. Two days before the Japanese Fleet put to sea, as Safford testified in part:

> On November 24, 1941, we learned that November 29, 1941, Tokyo time 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 Southwest Pacific would begin on that date, because, at that time, Hawaii was out of our minds (Hart Inquiry Testimony L. F. Safford, Captain, USN).

Then, eight days later, as Safford testified, on December 7 1941:

> Finally, at 10:15 a.m. (Washington time), December 7, 1941, we received positive information from the Signal Intelligence 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. 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. Kramer appended a note to this effect to the paper sent over from S. I. S. before presenting it to the Secretary of the Navy. I do not know whether or not a copy of this note was appended to the paper given to Admiral Stark (Hart Inquiry Testimony L. F. Safford, Captain, USN).

It is unclear just how the above information indicated the attack on Pearl Harbor. If it did and SECNAV had it; how did it not get to Kimmel before the attack? That was another intelligence failure of the first magnitude.

Naval Court of Inquiry

This was the fifth investigation into the attack; held almost at the same time as The Army Pearl Harbor Board, which met from July 20–October 20, 1944. The Naval Court of Inquiry met from July 24–October 19, 1944. The Court did reach findings of fact and drew conclusions. The most damning of which was leveled at CNO Stark and stated:

> Based on Findings XVIII and XIX, the Court is of the opinion that Admiral Harold R. Stark, U.S.N., Chief of Naval Operations and responsible for the operations of the Fleet, 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 (Report of Naval Court of Inquiry, October 19, 1944).

The September 24, 1941 message could be added to the above, but at the time, Magic was still Top Secret, and could not be made public. The Court also

concluded that there was a basis for the belief that an attack would come in the Far East:

> Based on Finding XVII, the Court is of the opinion that, although 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 (Report of Naval Court of Inquiry, October 19, 1944).

Kimmel made judgments based on the information available to him, and according to the Court based on Finding VI:

> [T]he deficiencies in personnel and material which existed during 1941, had a direct adverse bearing upon the effectiveness of the defense of Pearl Harbor on and prior to 7 December (Report of Naval Court of Inquiry, October 19, 1944).

That conclusion is the polar opposite of the Roberts Commission, as stated above, on the same point. Even if Kimmel was at full readiness, the Fleet could not, as a matter of law, take any offensive action without being attacked first:

> Based on Finding III, the Court is of the opinion that the Constitutional requirement that, prior to a declaration of war by the Congress, no blow may be struck until after a hostile attack has been delivered; prevented the Commander-in-Chief, Pacific Fleet, from taking offensive action as a means of defense in the event of Japanese vessels or planes appearing [in] the Hawaiian area (Report of Naval Court of Inquiry, October 19, 1944).

Thus, if Kimmel had all the information he should have had the best the Fleet could have done would to have been at sea. Moreover, if planes had spotted the Japanese Fleet; the Pacific Fleet would have suffered losses in any case whether it attacked first or not.

The Joint Congressional Committee

This was the ninth and last investigation into the events surrounding Pearl Harbor. The three that came before The Joint Congressional Committee, which met from November 15, 1945–May 23, 1946, are The Clarke Investigation August 4–September 20, 1944, Clausen Investigation January 24-September 12, 1945, and Hewitt Inquiry May 14–July 11, 1945. The findings of all nine investigations are in the pages of The Joint Congressional Committee Report.

The Report itself is divided in two parts Majority and Minority findings. It is the most comprehensive of the fact-finding efforts. The findings of the Committee and associated material alone are about 700,000 words. In all, the Report consists of some twenty-three million words. The Committee's conclusions support some of

the findings of the eight earlier investigations, and reject others. The Majority Report states in Conclusion 8 the following:

> Specifically, the Hawaiian commands failed:
> (a) To discharge their responsibilities in the light of the warnings received from Washington, other information possessed by them, and the principle of command by mutual cooperation
> (b) To integrate and coordinate their facilities for defense and to alert properly the Army and Navy establishments in Hawaii particularly in the light of the warnings and intelligence available to them during the period November 27 to December 7, 1941.
> (c) To effect liaison on a basis designed to acquaint each of them with the operations of the other, which was necessary to their joint security, and to exchange fully all significant intelligence
> (d) To maintain a more effective reconnaissance within the limits of their equipment.
> (e) To effect a state of readiness throughout the Army and Navy establishments designed to meet all possible attacks.
> (f) To employ the facilities, materiel, and personnel at their command, which were adequate at least to have greatly minimized the effects of the attack, in repelling the Japanese raiders
> (g) To appreciate the significance of intelligence and other information available to them (Report Of the Joint Congressional Committee 1946).

These conclusions seem to take into account the fact that the Hawaiian commanders did not have all necessary intelligence. Conclusion 11 states in part 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. Since they indicated a particular interest in the Pacific Fleet's base this intelligence should have been appreciated and supplied to the Hawaiian commanders for their assistance, along with other information available to them, in making their estimate of the situation (Report Of the Joint Congressional Committee 1946).

The lack of all necessary intelligence led to most of the failures of the Hawaiian commands. The others have been refuted by Kimmel, Hart Inquiry Testimony, and the conclusions of the Naval Court of Inquiry.

1. The failure of the Hawaiian commands to discharge their responsibilities in the light of the warnings received from Washington, other information possessed by them, and the principle of command by mutual cooperation. Kimmel refutes this , as does the Naval Court of Inquiry Conclusion 5: Admiral Kimmel and Lieut. General Short were personal friends. They met frequently, both socially and officially. Their relations were cordial and cooperative in every respect and, in general, this was true as regards their subordinates. They frequently conferred with each other on official matters

> of common interest, and invariably did so when messages were received by either which had any bearing, on the development of the United States-Japanese situation, or on their several plans in preparing for war. Each was mindful of his own responsibility and of the responsibilities vested in the other. Each was informed of measures being undertaken by the other in the defense of the Base to a degree sufficient for all useful purposes (Report of Naval Court of Inquiry, October 19, 1944).

2. The failure of the Hawaiian commands to maintain a more effective reconnaissance within the limits of their equipment. Again, this is refuted, as Kimmel states:

   > Search was to be instituted only when there was information from other sources that a carrier strike against the islands was possible within narrow time limits. This was a makeshift none better was possible with the means at hand (1955, p 15).

Kimmel's decision found support in the Naval Court of Inquiry Conclusion 13 stating in part:

> The Commander-in-Chief, Pacific Fleet, for definite and sound reasons and after making provision for such reconnaissance in case of emergency, specifically ordered that no routine long-range reconnaissance be undertaken and assumed full responsibility for this action. The omission of this reconnaissance was not due to oversight or neglect. It was the result of a military decision, reached after much deliberation and consultation with experienced officers, and after weighing the information at hand and all the factors involved (Report of Naval Court of Inquiry, October 19, 1944).

More effective reconnaissance within the limits of their equipment required all necessary intelligence, which the Hawaiian commanders did not have. It is unclear how the Hawaiian commanders could have done more within the limits of their equipment.

Conclusion 17 of the Minority Report seems, not only, to question Conclusion 8 of the Majority Report, but also the Germany first strategy:

> High authorities in Washington failed to allocate to the Hawaiian commanders the material which the latter often declared to be necessary to defense and often requested, and no requirements of defense or war in the Atlantic did or could excuse these authorities for their failures in this respect (Minority Report Of the Joint Congressional Committee 1946)

The questioning of the Germany first strategy would seem to clear Kimmel of any major mistakes. It is unclear whether a Japan first strategy would have worked; it did not happen.

Conclusions

The Unanswered Question

After reviewing the mountain of evidence in books, government documents, personal accounts, and the nine investigations, the one clear conclusion is that

no definitive conclusions were drawn in any of the nine investigations, which is why there were nine investigations. If any one of them was definitive in their conclusions there would have been less than nine. The Report of the Joint Congressional Committee on the Investigation of the Pearl Harbor Attack July 16, 1946 is comprehensive, but not definitive. Many of the Report's conclusions lack strong evidence, and are refuted by earlier investigations and Kimmel himself the Report gives no evidence to resolve the conflicts. Thus, one must choose which conclusions from the nine investigations to accept.

The problem was and is none of the nine investigations has the legal force of a court-martial verdict. SECNAV Knox should have convened a court-martial. Kimmel requested a court-martial in order to clear his name. The Roberts Commission charged Kimmel with "dereliction of duty," which should have caused SECNAV to convene a court-martial. Some have said that "dereliction of duty" was not then a court-martial offense, and Kimmel was not charged with "neglect of duty" which was a court-martial offense. "Dereliction of duty" and "neglect of duty" mean the same thing; thus Kimmel was charged with a court-martial offense by the Roberts Commission. All the above leads to the following conclusions:

1. Kimmel was charged with a court-martial offense by the Roberts Commission.
2. A court-martial should have been convened by SECNAV.
3. By not convening a court-martial the Navy denied Kimmel the right to "due process."

The other eight investigations, in that case, are just window dressing, and have no weight. None of their conclusions, in terms of responsibility, are real in a legal sense. A fact that the government could not have overlooked, which leaves the question: Why was no court-martial convened? There is no answer; only conjecture and each can be dismissed:

1. Magic intercepts had to remain secret.
    a. Granted, however, the Magic evidence could have been presented to a court-martial in closed session.
2. There simply were not sufficient grounds to sustain a successful prosecution.
    a. Then there were not sufficient grounds to sustain the charge of "dereliction of duty;" thus it never should have been leveled.
3. The government feared bringing charges because a court-martial would have put other senior military and civilian leaders in a bad light.
    a. This could have been true, but is never a reason not to look for the truth.
4. There was a war on, and for the good of the nation all possible distractions had to be put aside.
    a. There was time for eight investigations into the Pearl Harbor Attack during the war; thus there was time to convene a court-martial. It would have, in all probability, saved time.

b. The nation was at war to protect its way of life, which must include the rights of citizens none more basic than the right to "due process."

While, the investigations may have been just window dressing, and have no weight, and none of their conclusions, in terms of responsibility, are real in a legal sense that does not make them useless. The investigations are valuable in that they are official records of their time, and that they exist is a testament to the importance of the event they investigated.

Paternalism

Paternalism was a factor in the underestimation and misjudgment of the Japanese ability and skill to attack United States soil. As stated above, Paternalism, in this case, can be defined by the following statement: the Japanese are under developed, but could and should be given the values and belief system of Western culture, and thus live in the most technologically advanced and civilized society possible. The inferior view the above statement implies was evident in the following areas:

1. The Germany first strategy; Japan was a lesser threat.
2. Misallocation of men and material leading to shortages, which in turn, had a direct adverse bearing upon the effectiveness of the defense of Pearl Harbor on and prior to December 7, 1941.
3. Underestimation of their ability to operate carriers, no one thought the Japanese could attack Pearl Harbor; thus intelligence that pointed to Pearl Harbor was overlooked.

The above was not only, the view of the government, but also of the American people as well; thus they should have blamed themselves for their unreadiness to meet the Japanese attack.

Last Words

Admiral Husband E. Kimmel was no more nor less responsible for the misjudgments that led up to the Attack on Pearl Harbor than every other Naval officer or civilian leader, or citizen. He served his country with honor, and earned better treatment from it than he received.

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