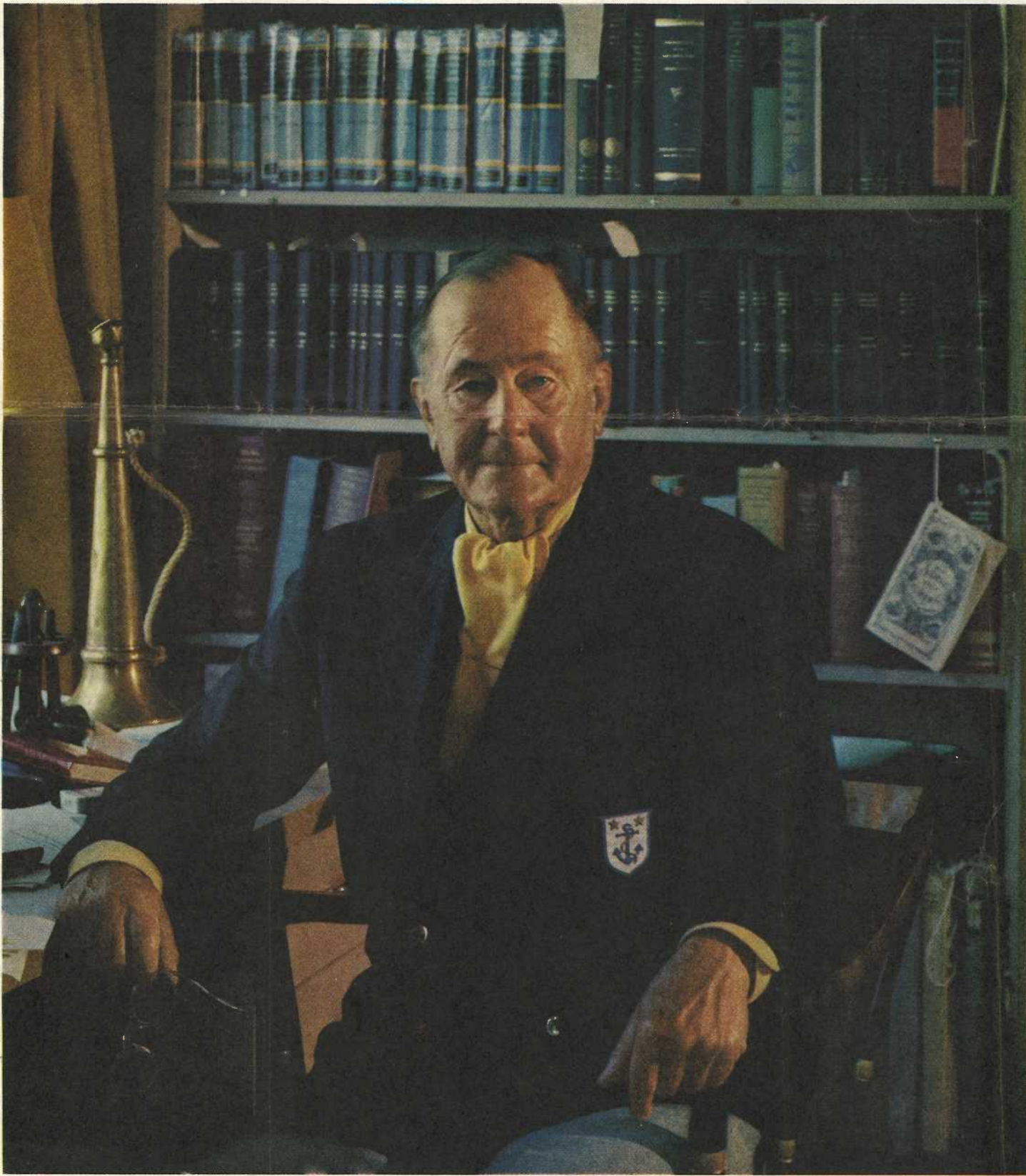


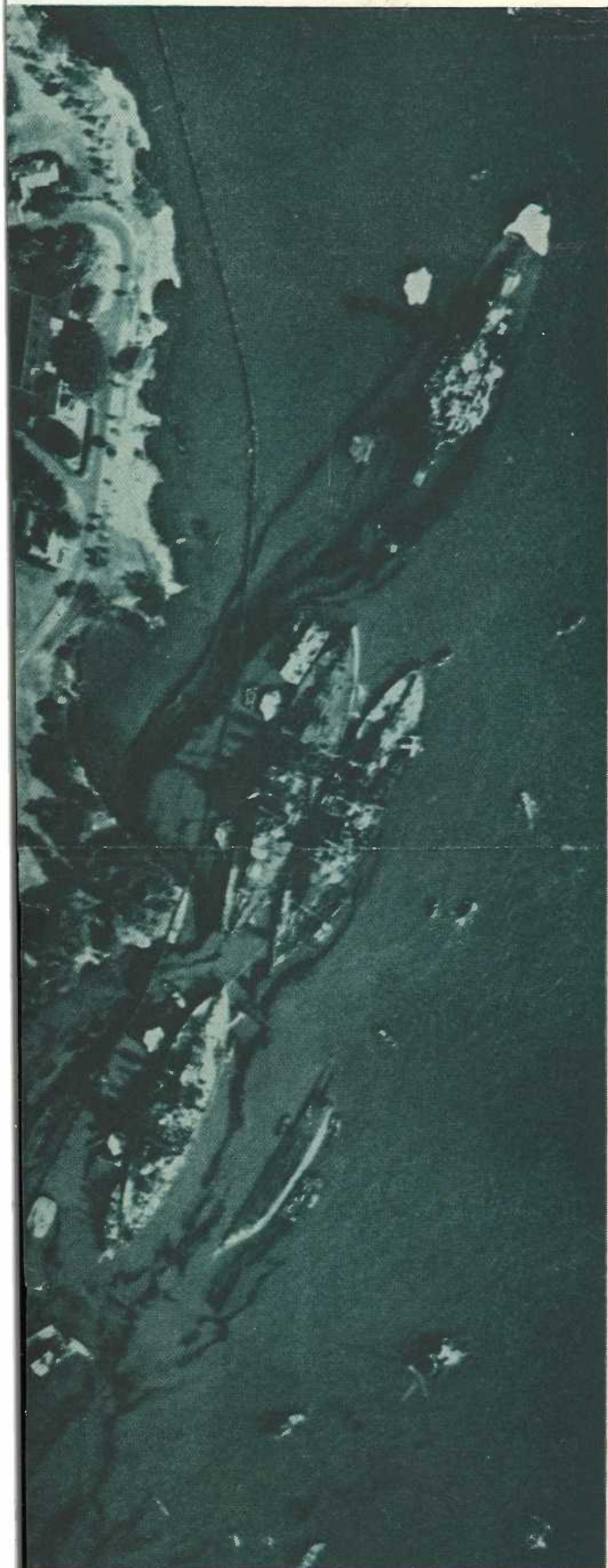
The Lessons of PEARL HARBOR

A distinguished historian re-creates that "day of infamy" and finds in it a warning for the present. By SAMUEL ELIOT MORISON



The author at his summer home in Northeast Harbor, Maine. Behind him is the forty-volume Congressional report upon which Admiral Morison's article is based. Photograph by Arnold Newman.

The Lessons of PEARL HARBOR



"Battleship Row" shortly after the attack. *Arizona* (top), *West Virginia* (center, right) and *Oklahoma* (bottom, capsized) sank only minutes after the raid began. Japan's surprise blow had wiped out the Pacific Battle Fleet as an offensive unit.

1. What Happened at Pearl on 7 December 1941

Twenty years have now elapsed since the greatest military disaster in American history, the surprise Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. The news of it, coming over the radio on that Sunday, was so astounding that practically every American now thirty years old or over can remember what he was doing when he heard it.

The facts are fairly well known and agreed upon; but the question of why it happened has been the subject of several official investigations, the published reports of which fill more than forty volumes of print; and the subsequent myths and legends could fill as many more.

Let us first review what happened, next inquire into why the Japanese did it, then try to assess responsibility for the surprise—if it was a surprise—at Washington and Pearl Harbor, not forgetting Manila, and finally, review some of the myths that have sprung up about it.

Washington had sent a "war warning" on 27 November to the top Navy and Army commanders on Oahu—to Adm. Husband E. Kimmel, commander in chief of the Pacific Fleet, whose headquarters overlooked Pearl Harbor, where the bulk of that fleet was based; and to Lt. Gen. Walter C. Short, commanding all Army forces in the Hawaiian Islands. Neither officer was particularly impressed by the warning for reasons that we shall relate shortly.

Admiral Kimmel on 14 October had ordered any strange submarine approaching the entrance to Pearl Harbor to be sunk, and warned his entire fleet that "a single submarine attack may indicate the presence of a considerable surface force probably composed of fast ships accompanied by a carrier." But when that submarine appeared, in the early hours of 7 December, almost everyone who heard about it dragged his feet.

At 3:45 A.M. 7 December, *USS Condor*, a minesweeper off the entrance to Pearl Harbor, sighted the periscope of a two-man midget submarine and passed the word by blinker to destroyer *Ward*, also on patrol. But nobody relayed the sighting report to naval headquarters. *Ward* located the sub, which she sank by gunfire at 6:45 A.M. Her commanding officer promptly reported this, but owing to delays in communications, the Pacific Fleet duty officer, the naval-district commander, and the air-operations officer at Ford Island were still discussing these contacts over the telephone when the bombs began to drop.

The Army, responsible for six mobile radar stations, which were spotted around the coast of Oahu, lost an even better chance to alert Pearl Harbor. These Army radars were still being operated on Sundays between four A.M. and seven A.M., and only to train radar operators, not with any idea of detecting any strange aircraft. The radar set located at Opana on the northern point of Oahu was manned on 7 December by Privates Joe Lockard and George Elliott. Between 6:45 and seven A.M. they tracked what we now know to have been two Japanese planes, reconnoitering ahead of the attack group. They reported this to the radio information center at Fort Shafter, near Honolulu, but the duty officer, an inexperienced lieutenant, merely ordered them to secure for the day. Being eager to learn, however, they continued to work the radar. Presently they saw on the screen "something completely out of the ordinary"—blips indicating an enormous flight of planes. The flight was then 137 miles north approaching at 182 mph. The boys again called the duty officer, who told them to "forget it."

At 7:40 this first Japanese attack wave—forty torpedo bombers, forty-nine high-level bombers, fifty-one dive bombers and forty-three fighters—sighted the Oahu coast line. By 7:50 they were over Pearl Harbor, ready to strike the moored battleships and murder their crews. At that moment in Washington the Japanese ambassadors were getting ready to call on Secretary of State Cordell Hull and break off diplomatic relations.

On board the American ships, only about one in four of the machine guns was fully manned. The main and five-inch batteries were not manned, nor were the plotting rooms, directors and ammunition supply; ready ammunition was in locked boxes, and the officer of the deck had the keys. Among the seventy combat ships and twenty-four auxiliaries in the harbor, only one destroyer was under way.

A few seconds before or after 7:55—nobody could remember which—the attack began. The air suddenly seemed filled with strange planes, but so unprepared mentally were our armed forces that nobody, for seconds or even minutes, recognized the planes as Japanese, despite their conspicuous red "meat-ball" markings. Most people assumed that this was an air drill, and thought it too realistic. It was not until 7:58 that Rear Adm. P. N. L. Bellinger, commanding the Navy's air arm, broadcast a message that shook the United States as nothing since the firing on Fort Sumter: AIR RAID, PEARL HARBOR—THIS IS NO DRILL.

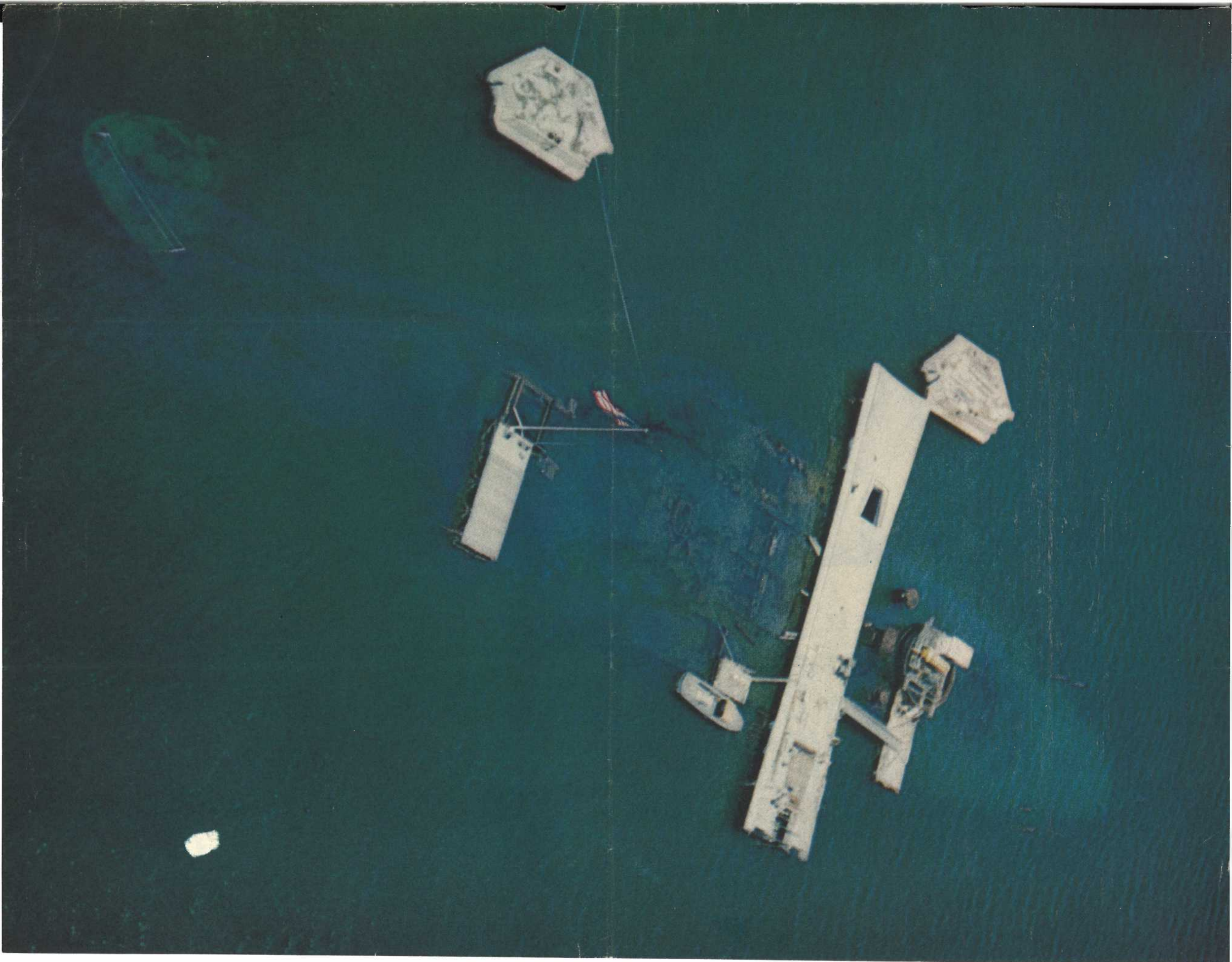
First object of the Japanese aviators was to sink the eight battleships, which (except *Pennsylvania* in dry dock at the Navy yard) were moored, singly or in pairs, to massive quays a short distance off Ford Island. The Japanese aviators knew just where to find them and exactly how to sink them. Sixteen "Kate" torpedo bombers launched torpedoes from low altitudes—forty to 100 feet above the water. Almost simultaneously, "Val" dive bombers began combing "Battleship Row," dropping conventional bombs and converted sixteen-inch armor-piercing shells, which penetrated the decks and exploded below.

We can hardly imagine the consternation that this sudden onslaught created among sailors on board and ashore. Yet the bluejackets' reaction, against hopeless odds, was superb. Between explosions, one could hear sailors knocking the padlocks off ready ammunition chests.

Oklahoma, outboard of the southernmost pair of battleships, was struck by three torpedoes before she had a chance to fight back. The senior officer on board ordered "Abandon ship" almost immediately, and by 8:15 she had rolled completely over, losing 415 officers and men out of 1354 on board. *Maryland*, inboard of her, suffered only two bomb hits and the loss of four men. *West Virginia*, outboard of the next pair on Battleship Row, took six or seven torpedoes and two bombs. Ensign Leo Brooks, officer of the deck, ordered, "Away fire and rescue party," when he heard the first bombs fall on Ford Island. This brought everyone topside on the double and saved hundreds of lives. Prompt counterflooding then corrected her twenty-eight-degree list and allowed her to settle on the bottom almost upright. She lost 105 killed out of 1500 on board. *Tennessee*, inboard of *West Virginia*, lost only five killed.

Arizona, torn apart by torpedo and bomb explosions within one minute of the attack's beginning, lost 1103 officers and men killed out of 1400 on board. The wreck has never been formally decommissioned, and every day a color guard

Today: Oil still seeps from *Arizona*, a tomb for hundreds of her crew. Above the surface, scaffolding marks the site of a permanent memorial now under construction.



raises and lowers the ensign on the stub of her mast which still extends above the surface where she sank.

On *Nevada*, at the northern end of the row, the color guard had begun making morning colors and the band had struck up *The Star-Spangled Banner* just before the attack. And in spite of two strafing runs by Japanese planes, nobody broke ranks until the band had finished playing the national anthem. By that time a torpedo had torn a hole in her side forty-five by thirty feet, and her young acting skipper, Lt. Cmdr. Francis Thomas, got his ship under way and beached her off Waipio Point to prevent her sinking. She lost fifty officers and men killed.

Thus, in half an hour the Japanese bombers accomplished their most important objective, wrecking the battle force of the Pacific Fleet beyond any possibility of offensive action within a year. They also knocked out almost half the military planes on Oahu. Army Air Force had 231 aircraft on Oahu before the attack, but only 166 at its close, half of them damaged. Navy and Marine Corps lost ninety-six out of 150.

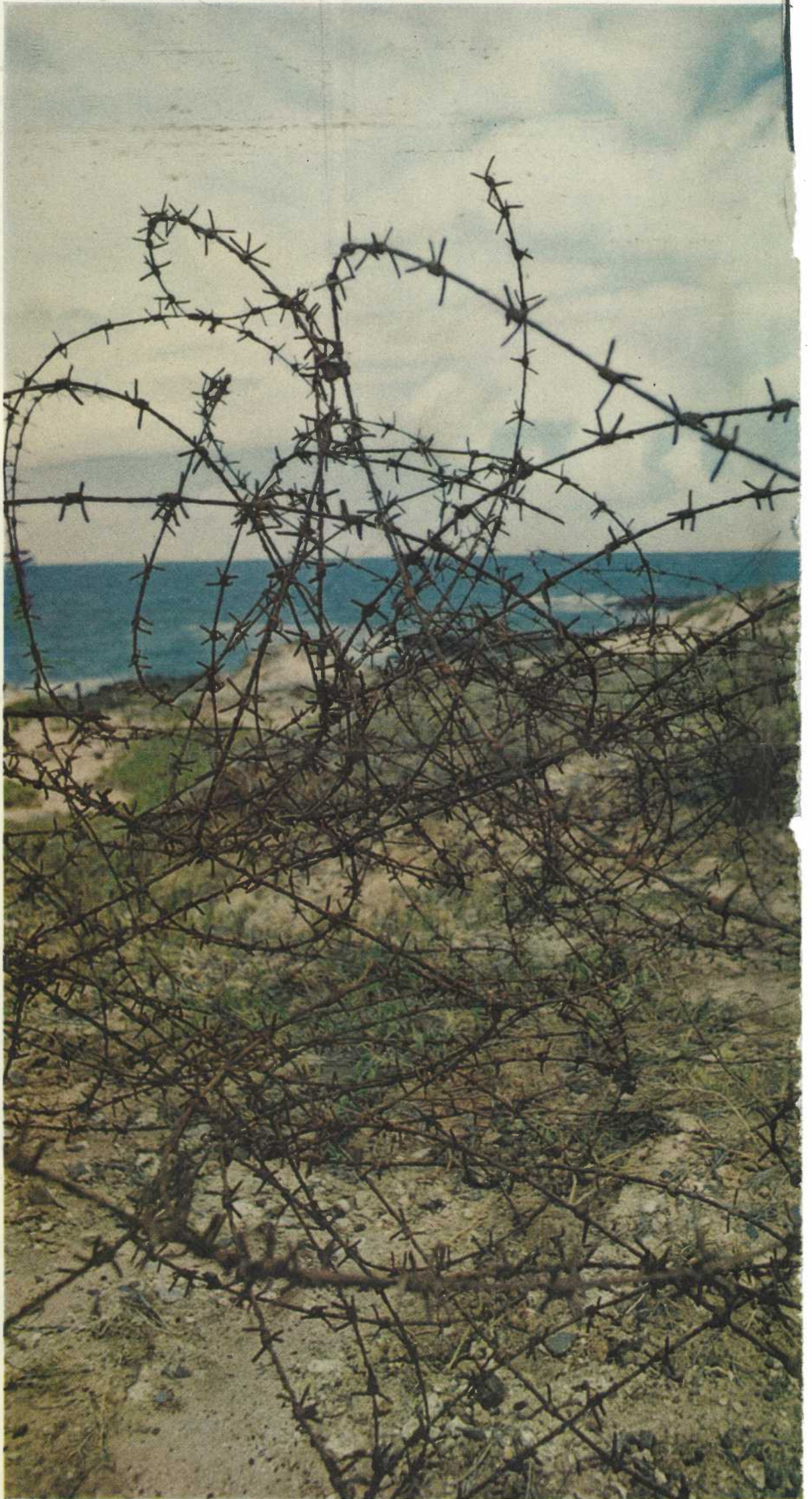
When the second Japanese attack wave of 130 bombers and forty fighters appeared at 8:40, it was met by a hot barrage of antiaircraft fire and inflicted little additional damage. At 9:45 all Japanese planes over Oahu rendezvoused and returned to their carriers. Some seventy-four of these were shot full of holes, but only eight fighters and twenty bombers had been shot down, and one more fighter crash-landed on the island of Niihau. A devastating two hours was over. The Navy had lost more than 2000 officers and men killed and 710 wounded, about thrice as many battle deaths as in the two previous wars of 1898 and 1917-18. The Army and Marine Corps together lost 327 killed and 433 wounded. In addition some seventy civilians were killed.

2. Why Did Japan Do It?

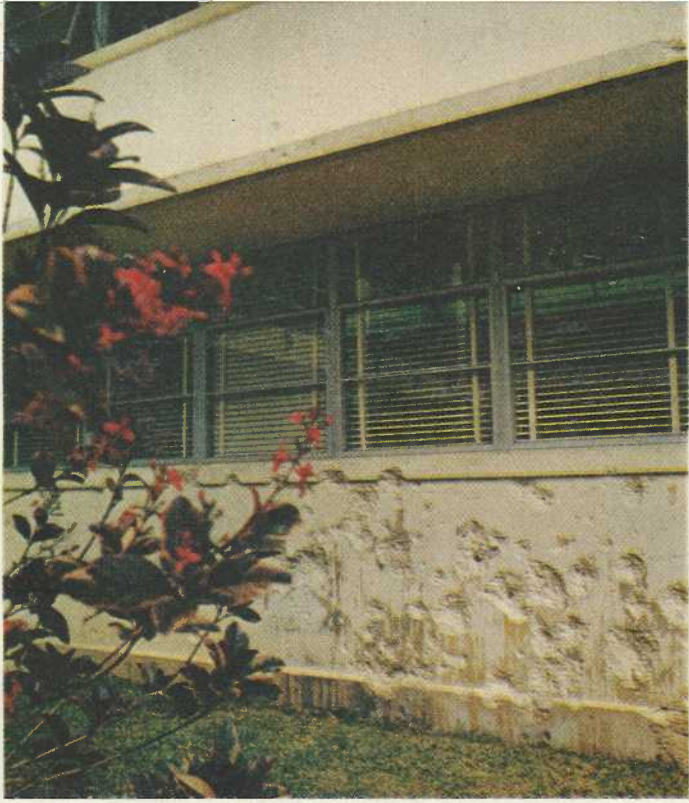
The attack on Pearl Harbor was but a part—and not the most important part—of a comprehensive Japanese plan for the Greater East Asia War. Formulated bit by bit, this plan was finally brought together at an Imperial Conference on 6 September 1941. The real objective was the populous islands of Southeast Asia, rich in natural resources and strategic materials, possession of which would enable the Japanese to dominate East Asia and finally the world. The scheme was based on the expectation that both England and Russia would shortly be defeated by Hitler—as France and The Netherlands already had been—and hence be unable to protect their Far Eastern colonies. Thus, the only country capable of interfering with Japan's plan for massive conquest was the United States, and the only armed forces that the Japanese feared were the United States Pacific Fleet at Pearl Harbor and the B-17's of the Army Air Force in the Philippines. These, therefore, must be destroyed at the outset.

Japan would then invade Luzon, Guam, Thailand, Hong Kong and British Malaya, proceed at her leisure to conquer the Netherlands East Indies and various island groups in the Pacific, and—if Britain resisted—Burma, India and Australia. After that it would be easy to throw Chiang Kai-shek out of China and take over that vast country. It was the boldest scheme of conquest in modern times, not excepting Hitler's; and *it very nearly succeeded*.

Adm. Isoroku Yamamoto was the author of the Pearl Harbor attack plan, and his enthusiasm won the consent of the Naval General Staff. On



Barbed wire, to turn back invaders who never came, rusts away at Kaena Point.

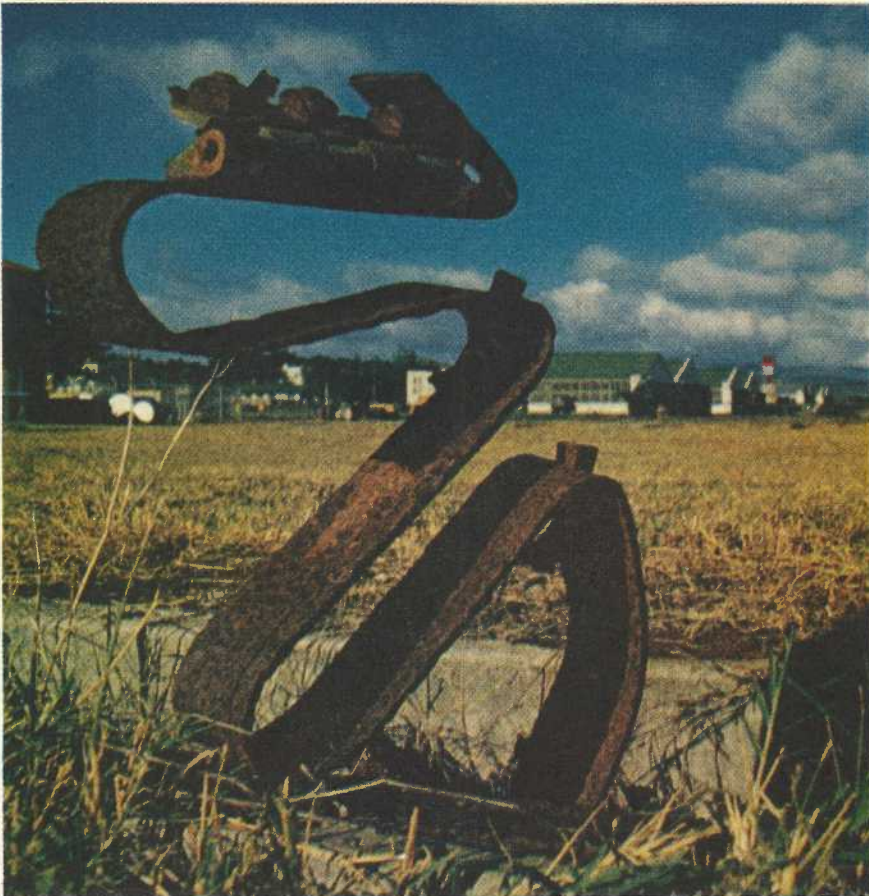


A bullet-riddled HQ building at Hickam Field, where 158 soldiers were killed by Japanese aircraft.



The hulk of *Utah*, destroyed at her berth at Ford Island (background).

A twisted door jamb, part of a gasoline enclosure, remains near a runway at Wheeler Field, hard hit by dive bombers in 1941.



13 September 1941 specific training for it began. Plans and preparations were kept so secret that nobody in the Japanese Government, except the emperor, Premier Tojo and Foreign Minister Togo, knew anything about it. On 5 November Admiral Yamamoto set 8 December (which would be the 7th in American time) as the date, owing to information from Lt. Cmdr. Suguru Suzuki—who visited Pearl Harbor as a civilian tourist in late October—that Admiral Kimmel always moored the battle fleet in Pearl Harbor over weekends. The location and movement of every ship was dispatched weekly—and later, thrice weekly—by a Japanese naval ensign acting as assistant to the consul at Honolulu.

The Japanese striking force, under Vice Adm. Chuichi Nagumo, comprised Japan's six biggest aircraft carriers with 423 planes on board, two battleships, three cruisers, nine destroyers, three submarines, and eight oil tankers and supply ships. It sortied from the inland Sea of Japan in echelons so that no Allied observer noted anything unusual. By 22 November the ships had rendezvoused in a desolate bay of the Kurile Islands. Thence they sailed on 25 November—west longitude, or Hawaiian date, which I am using from now on—and followed an unfrequented northern route. Radio operators listened eagerly to the commercial broadcasts from Honolulu for hints that the Americans suspected something; they heard nothing but the usual jazz, soap opera and routine news. The skies were scanned for snooping planes, but none appeared; and at dusk on 6 December, it seemed certain that the striking force was undetected.

Course now was shaped due south, and through a night of thick overcast the striking force charged forward at twenty-six knots. Heavy cruisers *Tone* and *Chikuma* thrust ahead to catapult two reconnaissance float planes, which Privates Lockard and Elliott saw on their radar screen at 6:45. These planes reported all plums in Pearl Harbor to be ripe for the picking. Nagumo reached his launching point, about 275 miles north of Pearl Harbor, at six A.M. The first attack was launched without mishap, and the 183 planes orbited waiting for their strike commander, Capt. Mitsuo Fuchida, to give the word to go.

We already know what happened next.

No Japanese had any compunction about playing dirty ball, according to western standards—striking a treacherous blow on a nation with which Japanese diplomats were still negotiating. Faith in plighted word is no part of totalitarian ethics, whether Nazi, Communist or, as in Japan's case, merely militarist.

One cannot help admiring the tactical skill, the secrecy and the precision with which the Japanese Navy performed its treacherous mission. Yet the strategy which dictated it was so bad as to be considered, after the event, almost imbecile. It was based on the supposed necessity for Japan to eliminate the menace of the Pacific Fleet on the left flank of her southward-moving forces of conquest. But as Admiral Kimmel wrote to Adm. Harold R. Stark, Chief of Naval operations, on 2 December, the Pacific Fleet was so deficient in auxiliaries that if war were declared next day it could not even start west from Pearl Harbor before February of 1942. Nor could it have reached the Philippines, after occupying key points in the Marshalls and Carolines, before midsummer. Such a "menace," 4500 miles from Japan's line of advance, was no menace at all; her war lords might as logically have said that America itself was a menace and must be destroyed.



The National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific, in Punchbowl Crater overlooking Honolulu, is the burial place of 14,000 American servicemen. The 112-acre site was dedicated September 2, 1949.

A principal reason why Washington and Pearl Harbor were caught unawares was their inability to imagine that Japan would do anything so suicidal. But Ambassador Joseph Grew in Tokyo warned Washington on 3 November 1941 against "any possible misconception of the capacity of Japan to rush into a suicidal conflict with the United States. National sanity would dictate against such an event, but Japanese sanity cannot be measured by our own standards of logic. . . . Japan's resort to (war) measures . . . may come with dramatic and dangerous suddenness."

Mr. Grew's warning fell on deaf ears. Dr. Stanley Hornbeck, Far Eastern expert of the Department of State, in a memorandum to the Secretary dated 27 November—two days after the Japanese carrier force sailed for Pearl Harbor—predicted Japan would "endeavor to avoid attacking or being attacked by the United States."

3. *Why Was Washington Surprised?*

Ever since 1940 Army and Navy cryptographers in Washington had been decrypting and translating documents sent in Japan's secret diplomatic "purple" code. But nowhere in this secret correspondence was an attack on Pearl Harbor mentioned, or even hinted. Tojo's message of 22 November to his Washington ambassador, for instance, said that the twenty-ninth was the deadline for preserving peace by negotiation. "After that, things are automatically going to happen."

But what things? He did not even inform his ambassadors what to expect.

Intelligence from consular offices, observers and friendly powers in the Far East, starting in mid-November, indicated a massive southward move of Japanese transports and combatant ships. That is what the Japanese wanted us to know. Thus, everyone in Washington "in the know" expected war in the Far East but was uncertain exactly where. Admiral Stark's "war warning" message of 27 November to Admiral Kimmel mentioned Thailand, Malaya, and the Philippines as possible targets, but not Hawaii.

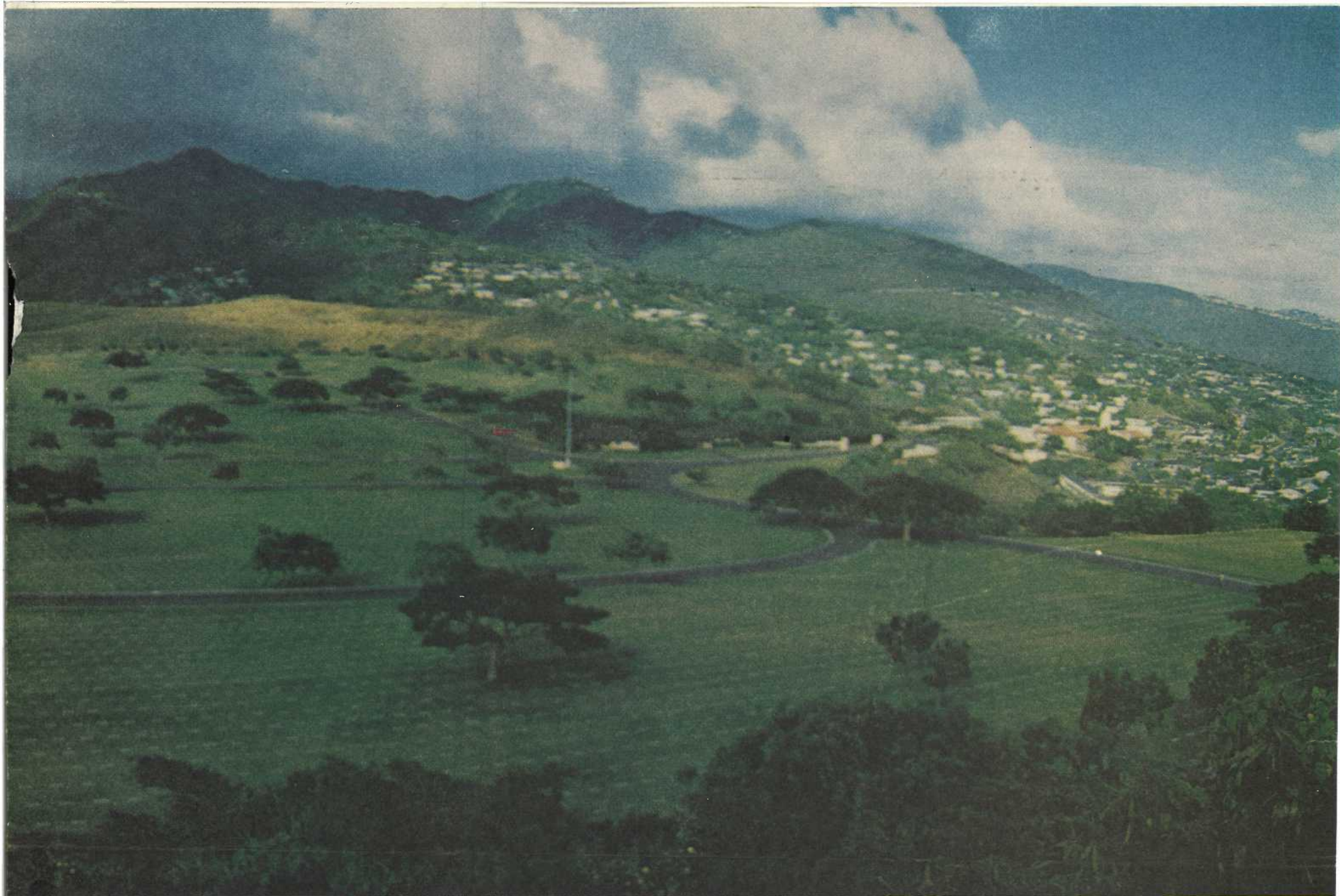
In retrospect, there was one decrypted dispatch which might have tipped off Washington. This was the so-called "berthing order" from Tokyo on 24 September to the Japanese consul at Honolulu to report not only ship movements in and out of Pearl Harbor but exactly where each ship in harbor was anchored or moored. The consul duly obliged, and at least one of his reports was intercepted and translated at Washington. After the event, it seems almost incredible that nobody thought this worth forwarding to Admiral Kimmel—Pearl Harbor possessed no machine for decrypting the Japanese purple code. But before the event it appeared to be only one of scores of such orders which for over a year past had been sent to Japanese consuls in major seaports of the non-Axis world. Even Capt. Theodore S. Wilkinson, Director of Naval Intelligence, did not notice its sig-

nificance; he thought it merely indicated Japan's desire to know what ships were ready to sortie, if we declared war. And Rear Adm. Richmond Kelly Turner, the highly opinionated Director of War Plans, was concentrating on the European theater, in which he expected the Navy to be deeply engaged shortly. He did not even notice the berthing-plan document.

Washington, moreover, was determined that the United States would not begin a war with Japan. That was the meaning of a passage in the diary of Secretary of War Henry L. Stimson, recording the cabinet meeting of 25 November, after it was known that Tojo had set a deadline for peaceful settlement. The President predicted that "we are likely to be attacked perhaps (as soon as) next Monday. . . . The question was how we should maneuver them into the position of firing the first shot without allowing too much danger to ourselves." This has been made much of by those trying to prove a conspiracy between F.D.R. and his cabinet to get us into war. Stimson's use of the verb "maneuver" was unfortunate, but his intent is clear: We would not provoke the Japanese by an overt act; peace would continue unless they chose to strike us. Abraham Lincoln's attitude about Fort Sumter was identical.

On Saturday, 6 December, Tokyo began transmitting to its Washington embassy in purple code a long note for the State Department, breaking diplomatic relations. Army Intelligence had the

Photographs by Phil Bath



first thirteen parts decrypted, translated and in the hands of Brig. Gen. Sherman Miles, head of Army Intelligence, and Captain Wilkinson, at 10:30 P.M. These thirteen parts were a long rehash of Japanese-American relations, accusing us of war-mongering in East Asia. President Roosevelt also read them that evening and exclaimed, "This means war!" But the note gave no hint of an attack on Hawaii. Gen. George C. Marshall, Army Chief of Staff, and Admiral Stark were out that evening and could not be located.

Admirals Stark and Turner were in the former's office at 9:15 A.M. Sunday, 7 December, when Captain Wilkinson and Cmdr. Arthur McCollum, head of the Far East Section of Navy Intelligence, brought in the translation of Part 14, the "snapper" which broke off diplomatic relations; but even Part 14 did not declare war or threaten immediate attack. And about an hour later Commander McCollum brought in the "time of delivery" message, an order from Tokyo to its ambassadors to destroy all coding machines after presenting the fourteen-part note to Secretary Hull at one P.M. That was an odd hour for a diplomatic meeting.

McCollum and his opposite number in Army Intelligence, Col. Rufus S. Bratton, and Lt. Cmdr. Alwin D. Kramer figured it out from a time chart on the wall. One P.M. in Washington was 7:30 A.M. at Pearl Harbor. That might be only a coincidence, but it might also mean an attack there and there only—for one P.M. in

Washington would still be night at Manila and Guam. Wilkinson suggested that Admiral Stark at once call Admiral Kimmel on the telephone. Stark demurred, feeling that since the Army was responsible for the defense of Hawaii, Marshall should do it. Marshall, contacted on his return from his Sunday-morning horseback ride, came into Stark's office about 11:30. In tense silence he read all fourteen parts, agreed that they meant immediate war, and that Pearl Harbor and Manila should be alerted at once. Marshall's communicator said he could get the word to Pearl in twenty minutes. Rear Adm. Leigh Noyes, Director of Naval Communications, offered to send it through Navy channels. Stark declined (again, Navy-Army punctilio), and the message, filed at noon—6:30 A.M. in Hawaii—was so delayed by routine clogging of Army channels that it was finally given to Western Union and reached General Short many hours later, after the attack was over. It was an innocuous message, concluding, "Just what significance the hour set may have we do not know, but be on the alert accordingly"; it could hardly have helped much.

4. *Why Was Pearl Harbor Surprised?*

Now the strangest thing about the surprise at Pearl Harbor is the fact that during the first ten months of 1941 both Army and Navy commands there considered a surprise air attack on the fleet a distinct possibility, even a probability. And they

had been warned from Washington to be on the alert during weekends. The basic United States war plan, issued 26 May, envisaged the possibility of a surprise attack on the fleet at Pearl. Admiral Kimmel's operation plan of 21 July predicted that the initial action would be "possibly raids or straight attacks on Wake, Midway, or other . . . outlying possessions." And we have already quoted his warning to his fleet. Yet the possibility seemed to fade from everyone's mind.

What, then, was the reason for this "unwarranted feeling of immunity from attack," as Fleet Adm. Ernest J. King later described the state of mind at Hawaii on 7 December? The main reason was that Pearl received the same information that Washington did about the press of Japanese shipping moving southward. As Kimmel's intelligence officer testified, "We saw this movement growing; we had reports from shore observers in China, assistant Naval attachés, merchant skippers, consular authorities, that they had seen these ships loading and going out . . . in a convoy, and the entire movement was noted as going south."

Thus Stark's "war warning" message of 27 November, floating like a chip on this spate of intelligence, conveyed to Kimmel and Short that Washington expected war about to break somewhere in the Far East, but not at Pearl Harbor, and that the only thing of immediate concern to them was to protect airplanes and military installations from local sabotage. General Short

even notified General Miles that he had alerted the Army planes against sabotage only; and although that message went to Brig. Gen. Leonard T. Gerow, assistant chief of staff, and General Marshall, neither took any exception to it. For Washington, as we have seen, was as vague and uncertain about what was going to happen—and where—as Pearl Harbor itself.

Even so, because a surprise raid on the fleet, although improbable, was still a possibility, the commanders at Hawaii should have taken some precaution, such as widening the scope of the very meager air searches out of Pearl Harbor. Kimmel and Short should at least have communicated the 27 November war warning to their air commanders, Rear Admiral Bellinger and Maj. Gen. Frederick Martin. After 27 November, air search was increased from the Panama Canal Zone, and—I have been told—from San Diego and Bremerton, but not from Oahu. Admiral Kimmel did send air reinforcements to Wake and Midway Islands by carrier; but apart from that, everything in Oahu followed peacetime routine.

Secretary Stimson later wrote that General Short was “like a sentinel on duty in the face of the enemy,” who is supposed always to be on the

command in chief of the Asiatic Fleet, sent his two cruisers and most of his destroyers from Manila Bay to harbors in southern Philippines or Borneo. General MacArthur, commanding general of the Philippine Department, ordered all B-17's around Manila to be flown to Del Monte, Mindanao, for safety from a surprise attack; but by 7 December only half of them had left.

News of the Pearl Harbor attack reached Admiral Hart's headquarters in Manila at 2:30 A.M. 8 December East longitude date, which was eight A.M. 7 December, Hawaiian time. His deployment southward was almost complete, and there was nothing he could do but alert the Asiatic Fleet to prepare for air attack. General MacArthur got the word about an hour later, and official confirmation came from Washington at 5:30 A.M. At dawn a flight of planes from a small Japanese carrier attacked the U.S. seaplane tender *William B. Preston* in Davao Gulf, opening the war in the Philippines. And at 9:30 bombers from Formosa struck Baguio and Tuguegarao airfield in northern Luzon. So there was no possible doubt that we were at war with Japan or that the Philippines were on their list for conquest.

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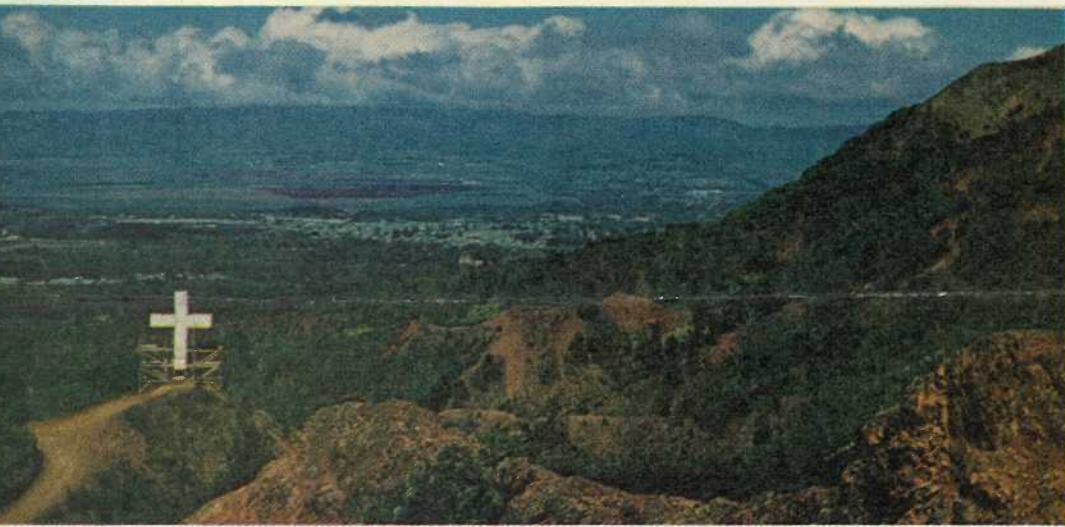
cluding the presidential administration, Congress, and many leaders of the Armed Forces, to face the probability of a Japanese blitzkrieg and to prepare for it. How secure we felt, that Sunday morning, with the Pacific Fleet at Pearl as a “deterrent,” and the B-17's in the Philippines! What an education in military preparedness and military intelligence the Japanese gave us on that “day of infamy,” as President Roosevelt called it!

6. *The Investigations and the Myths*

A disaster so unexpected and appalling required investigation and gave rise to myths, many of which are still firmly believed by a considerable number of people. The President promptly sent to Pearl Harbor a commission of two generals and two admirals, with Justice Owen J. Roberts of the Supreme Court as chairman, to investigate the attack on the spot. They reported early in 1942 that Admiral Kimmel and General Short “failed properly to evaluate the seriousness of the situation”; that their “errors of judgment were the effective causes for the success of the attack.” During the war there were one Army and two Navy investigations. Finally came the Joint Congressional investigation, which spent seventy days hearing testimony between November, 1945, and May, 1946, covered every political, diplomatic and military phase of the approach of war with Japan at Washington and Pearl Harbor—but not Manila—and published 39 volumes of documents and testimony. The 500-page report of this committee blamed Kimmel and Short for “errors of judgment . . . not derelictions of duty,” and also condemned War Plans and Intelligence divisions of the War and Navy departments for not acting promptly on the one P.M. hint Sunday morning.

In addition there were numbers of personal investigations, of which the most bizarre was that of the astrologer who pretended to have predicted the attack. Certain Army officers early in 1942 became so interested in this man's story that they appealed to Vannevar Bush, and he appointed Harlow Shapley, the Harvard astronomer, to investigate. Shapley called on the astrologer, who had a sheet of figures before him which Shapley recognized as a table of natural sines. With their help, the astrologer said, he had been working out a prediction of the Pearl Harbor attack; but as the Government would give him no money to help in the mathematical calculations, he didn't get it finished until 8 December! His line of reasoning went something like this: Pluto, the ninth planet of the solar system, had been recently discovered; nine is a mystic number; Pluto was a god of the underworld, which suggested ants; ants build conical hills, which suggested Fujiyama; therefore, something sinister was being plotted under the shadow of Fuji; and if he had only been given help, his tables would have proved that this was to be an air attack on Pearl Harbor.

Although the congressional committee repudiated the charge that the President and his advisers “tricked, provoked, incited, cajoled or coerced Japan into attacking this Nation, so that a declaration of war might more easily be obtained from Congress,” that did not satisfy everyone. The “Roosevelt Conspiracy” theory seems to have been hatched in the purlieu of the *Chicago Tribune*. During the war, and frequently later, that journal declared that the Japanese attack was instigated by the President, owing to his disappointment over Hitler's refusal to “bite” at the short-of-war policy of helping Britain; that the date and target of the attack were known to him but concealed from the theater commanders.



A commemorative cross stands in Kole Kole Pass, through which attacking bombers approached Schofield Barracks and Wheeler Field (background).

alert. The comparison was inexact. A sentinel walking his beat has one first duty, to guard against intrusion or surprise. Pearl Harbor lay more than 2000 miles from the nearest point—Jaluit in the Marshalls—where the enemy was known to be, and the Hawaiian commanders had very pressing training and administrative duties. If any U. S. commands could fairly be compared with a sentinel, they were Gen. Douglas MacArthur's and Adm. Thomas Hart's at Manila.

5. *Surprise in the Philippines*

The debacle in the Philippines was never investigated, and many of its aspects are still a matter of controversy. But these facts stand out. In spite of the Asiatic Fleet's having a purple-code machine, which enabled it to crack all the secret Japanese messages, and in spite of General MacArthur's having nine hours' warning that Japan had assaulted Pearl Harbor, his planes were caught grounded at noon. Yet General MacArthur became a national hero, while General Short and Admiral Kimmel were retired under a cloud.

Both commanders in the Philippines took the 27 November war warning seriously and stepped up air search. Admiral Hart, the taut, wiry com-

mander in chief of the Asiatic Fleet, sent his two cruisers and most of his destroyers from Manila Bay to harbors in southern Philippines or Borneo. General MacArthur, commanding general of the Philippine Department, ordered all B-17's around Manila to be flown to Del Monte, Mindanao, for safety from a surprise attack; but by 7 December only half of them had left.

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Nevertheless, at 11:30 almost all B-17's and

fighter planes in Luzon were “safely” grounded on the complex of airfields about Manila. The ground crews then began loading the bombers with bombs for a raid on Formosa, and the pilots went to lunch. Thus, when twenty-seven Japanese bombers appeared over Clark field at about 12:15 P.M., their delighted pilots found the B-17's all lined up like sitting ducks, dropped their bombs from about 22,000 feet altitude and were off and away, unscathed. Then came more bombers and strafers—192 in all—to pound the airfields. Total losses to our side were seventeen B-17's, leaving only one in Luzon; fifty-six fighter planes and twenty-five miscellaneous aircraft; many installations destroyed; 80 men killed and 150 wounded—at a cost to the enemy of only seven fighters. On the first day of war, despite ample warning, the Far Eastern Air Force as an effective combat unit had been wiped out.

Thus, if the surprise at Washington remains incomprehensible to some and the surprise at Pearl Harbor incomprehensible to others, even less comprehensible is the surprise in the Philippines, nine hours after word had reached Manila that we were at war with Japan. Yet the basic fault lay in the inability of the American people, in-

One month after the war, the *Tribune* printed an article by John T. Flynn giving the full-fledged conspiracy theory. In 1947 there appeared a 400-page book by George Morgenstern, a former *Tribune* reporter, called *Pearl Harbor, the Story of the Secret War*. This was followed by Charles A. Beard's *President Roosevelt and the Coming of the War* (1948) and Rear Adm. Robert A. Theobald's *The Final Secret of Pearl Harbor* (1954), all highly selective in their facts, wrong-headed in their interpretations, and almost as wild in their reasoning as the astrologer's.

Even if one believes the late President of the United States capable of so horrible a gambit, a little reflection would indicate that he could not possibly have carried it off. He needed the connivance of Secretaries Hull, Stimson and Knox, Generals Marshall, Gerow and Miles, Admirals Stark, Turner and Wilkinson—all loyal and honorable men who would never have lent themselves to such monstrous deception. More reflection might suggest that if Roosevelt and his "service pets," as Morgenstern calls these officers, had schemed to get us into the war, their purpose would have been better served by warning the Hawaiian commanders in time to get the fleet out to sea. Even a frustrated attempt to strike Pearl Harbor would have been sufficient *casus belli* to satisfy the most isolationist congressman.

Justice Roberts's commission spiked several of the earlier Pearl Harbor myths, such as the story that Kimmel and Short were not on speaking terms and the charge that half the men in the armed forces were drunk. Others, such as suppressed reports of sighting of the Japanese carriers by *USS Boise* or an Australian ship, were proved to be false.

In conclusion, Kimmel and Short are to be blamed for not scanning the horizon, as it were, after the war warning. But they were no more to blame than officers in Washington—especially Admirals Stark and Turner, and Generals Marshall and Gerow. It was the setup at Washington and at Pearl, not individual stupidity, which confused what was going on. No one person knew the whole intelligence picture; no one person was responsible for the defense of Pearl Harbor; too many people assumed that others were taking precautions that they failed to take.

Since World War II the methods of obtaining military intelligence and, what is more important, of evaluating it and seeing that the proper people get it have been vastly improved. But we were surprised by the North Koreans in June of 1950, surprised when China entered the war later that year, surprised by the utter failure of the attempt this year to invade Cuba, and surprised by many, fortunately short-of-war, moves by Khrushchev. In a cold war such as the one in which we are now engaged, it is vitally important to find out not only the capabilities of our potential enemy but also his intentions. THE END

The writer is greatly indebted to Mrs. Roberta Wohlstetter for permission to read her yet unpublished study *Warning and Decision at Pearl Harbor* and to Walter Lord's *Day of Infamy* (1957) for many facts that he did not encounter when he made his first study of Pearl Harbor for *The Rising Sun in the Pacific* (1948). That volume and this article are based largely on Congress's Pearl Harbor Report of 1946.

Right: Mitsuo Fuchida, who has become a Christian, led the attack force of 353 fighters and bombers. Photograph by Fred Lyon.

