

May 24,
1947

A reminder of the greatest disaster in the history of American arms. The battleship Arizona heeling over under Jap bombing.

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Why Were We Caught Napping at Pearl Harbor?

By **SETH W. RICHARDSON**

(General Counsel for the Joint Congressional Investigating Committee)

EVER since the Joint Congressional Committee investigating the Pearl Harbor attack made its final report on July 20, 1946, I have been struck by one outstanding development: There is a very widespread lack of public understanding of what the issue in the investigation was, what the rolling elements were, and, finally, of the real import of the Committee's decision.

Much of this may well be due to the reluctance of many to read the very lengthy report, which necessarily was a voluminous and complex review not only of the facts covered by the Committee's own investigation but also of those involved in the earlier inquiry of the Roberts Committee and the independent investigation of the Army and Navy.

I think the Committee reports—both majority and minority—were able and exhaustive, and what I have to offer here should not be construed as critical. I am advancing a thesis, in the hope of assisting to a better understanding of the record made.

Accordingly, in this article, I shall attempt to simplify the issue and the conclusions reached, against the background of a summation of the facts. I am hopeful that my analysis may focus attention on what I think are the true essentials involved in the Pearl Harbor investigation. I have undertaken this analysis because, upon the retirement of the Hon. William D. Mitchell as General Counsel for the Joint Committee, the Committee invited me to assume the duties of General Counsel and I assisted

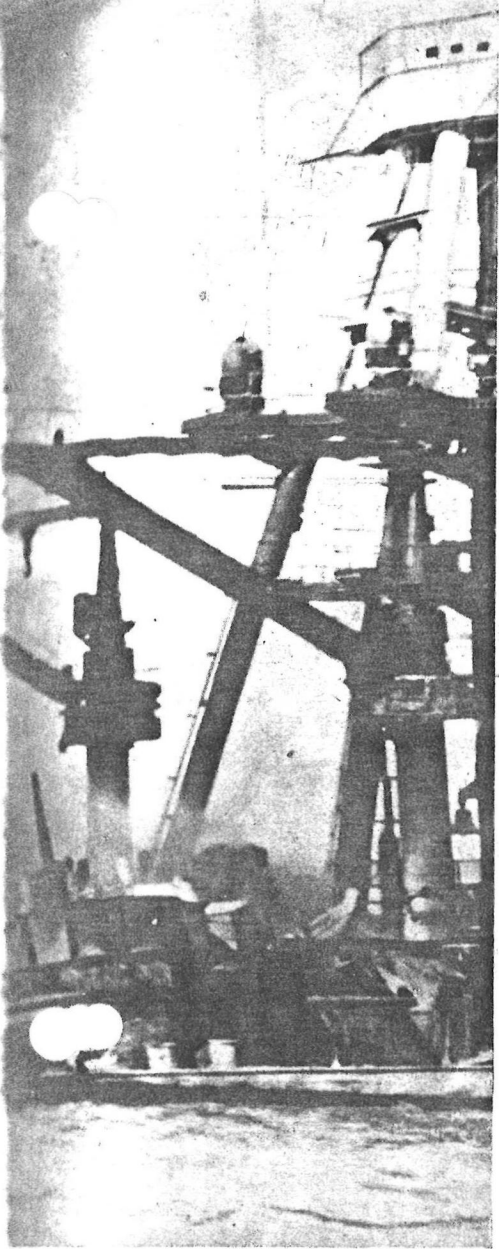
The General Counsel to the Committee that investigated Pearl Harbor offers some startling comment about the high-command state of mind responsible for the disaster.

in that capacity until the report was made. The exhaustive task of preparing the factual basis for the report was the work, largely, of one of my able assistants, Edward P. Morgan. The unique portrayal of the diplomatic history found in Appendix D was the work of my assistant John E. Masten.

Perhaps, after reading my analysis, the reader may be intrigued to test the correctness of my conclusions by his own careful reading of the full reports.

At the outset, it appears to me that the solution to the whole situation may lie in the answers to two very important statements made by the Committee:

The Committee has been intrigued throughout the Pearl Harbor proceedings by one enigmatical and paramount question: Why, with some of the finest intelligence available in our history, with the almost certain knowledge that war was at hand, with plans that contemplated the precise type of attack that was executed by Japan on the morning of December 7—why was it possible for a Pearl Harbor to occur? . . .



OFFICIAL U. S. NAVY

Army and Navy air action in the event of a sudden hostile action against Oahu or Fleet units in the Hawaiian area. It stated (in part):

(b) It appears that the most likely and dangerous form of attack on Oahu would be an air attack—launched from carriers.

(e) In a dawn air attack, there is a high probability it could be delivered as a complete surprise, in spite of patrols.

On August 20, 1941, General Martin advised Gen. Walter C. Short by letter that the "most probable avenue of approach" of such an air attack would be in the northwest sector.

Up to that time, Admiral Kimmel and General Short, commanding in Hawaii, had been requesting additional defense equipment, and Washington had been making promises. The thoughts of everybody in the military establishments seemed on Hawaii and Pearl Harbor. But after August, 1941, communications between Hawaii and Washington were practically barren of any reference to an attack on Hawaii or Pearl Harbor. Thus the fear of February had been supplanted by the complaisance of December 7th.

It may be almost categorically stated that every witness interrogated on the point, testified that he was surprised at the attack and thought that any attack—if and when—would come in the Far East, including the Philippines. A witness or two professed foresight which, under careful examination, turned out to be only hindsight.

Admiral Kimmel, in his letter to Admiral Harold R. Stark, Chief of Naval Operations, on December 12, 1941—after the attack—stated: "Briefly, I had considered an air attack on Hawaii as a very remote possibility, particularly at the time it occurred."

In his testimony before the Committee, Admiral Stark said: "In my opinion, the President was not expecting that attack on Hawaii any more than I was. I had gone over the situation with him very carefully. He was expecting it to the southward, and so was I." At another point, Admiral Stark stated: "I know that Marshall was surprised and I know that I was surprised. . . . I thought that the attack would take place in the Far East, from the evidence we had."

Testifying himself, Gen. George C. Marshall, in substance, said: "Our thought was that the Japanese were engaged in a campaign southward from the China Sea, that that would be their operation . . . we thought a blow in the Hawaiian district was most improbable."

Even Admiral Bellinger, who in the March thirty-first Martin-Bellinger report had forecast the precise nature of air-attack peril to Hawaii, and who remained on Admiral Kimmel's staff and had charge of the Fleet air defense when the attack came, was found as surprised as his staff associates.

Virtually everyone was surprised that Japan struck the Fleet at Pearl Harbor at the time that she did. Yet officers, both in Washington and Hawaii, were fully conscious of the danger from air attack; they realized this form of attack on Pearl Harbor by Japan was at least a possibility; and they were adequately informed of the imminence of war.

Throughout my attendance before the Committee, I was more and more struck with the startling impression that, while during the first part of 1941 and through August of that year, both Washington and Hawaii were constantly concerned with the danger of an air attack upon Pearl Harbor, after about August, 1941, and up to the attack on December 7, 1941, the question of present danger to Pearl Harbor from such an attack seems to have faded from the mind of everyone!

During the first part of 1941, communications between the Secretary of the Navy and the Secretary of War, communications between the Chief of Staff and the Army commander in Hawaii, and communications between the Chief of Naval Operations and the Navy commander there, discussed and detailed all possible phases of the peril surrounding Pearl Harbor from an enemy air attack. In the Martin-Bellinger report of March thirty-first, the possibility of an air attack upon Hawaii at dawn was fully outlined. Capt. E. M. Zacharias, USN, testified that he told Admiral Husband E. Kimmel, in February, 1941, the attack would come on a Sunday morning, in all probability.

The Martin-Bellinger report, dated March 31, 1941, was prepared by Admiral P. N. L. Bellinger and Gen. F. L. Martin as a joint estimate covering



INTERNATIONAL

After admitting surprise, General Marshall takes leave of the Committee. Seated, General Short.

There was, during the weeks immediately preceding the attack, an admitted universal condition of mind at Washington and at Hawaii, the result of which seemed to convince everyone that Hawaii was not in danger. I am strongly impressed with the idea that in this universal belief lies the true explanation of practically everything that happened which is relevant to the disaster. It seems obvious to me, from the record, that the actions of the military chiefs with respect to Hawaii, based as they were upon a controlling belief that Hawaii was not in danger, present a clear answer to the question: "Why was it possible for a Pearl Harbor to occur?" The answer is, it seems to me, unescapable. It was possible for Pearl Harbor to occur because the universal awareness of peril which existed during the first eight months of 1941 in some inexplicable way faded out of the mind of everybody by December 7, 1941, when all commands believed Hawaii was not in danger, and complete defensive precautions were therefore not required.

Let me illustrate what I mean with respect to the situation in Hawaii, as well as in Washington. One of the sharp criticisms in the report was the so-called lack of unified military control in Hawaii and the lack of effective liaison between Admiral Kimmel and General Short. These criticisms may well be sound. But I feel the real reason why there was neither a unified command nor proper liaison was that neither Admiral Kimmel nor General Short thought Hawaii in any danger. Everything was proceeding as usual. (Continued on Page 76)



INTERNATIONAL

Washington's warnings about a Far East attack did him more harm than good, Kimmel testified.



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Even Admiral Bellinger, who once had forecast the attack precisely, was surprised when it came.

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(Continued from Page 74)

Though the working relationship between stewards and stewardesses varies with individuals, it is in general a healthy one. The girls usually have a better educational background; the men invariably have more experience. Most stewardesses would just as soon work with a man on a long trip, though they think that two girls are a better combination—if the girls can work together. Stewards run the gamut from the misogynists who think that the girls should be left behind with the loading platform to the impressionable who hold that a pretty girl makes any situation more entertaining.

The flight crews—most of them are solid citizens and family men—take a somewhat avuncular attitude toward the girls. This is almost obligatory, as many of the pilots have married one-time stewardesses. The partnership is a fairly equitable one—the captains and pilots out on a run have a sweet young thing to eat dinner with or make a fourth at bridge, and the girls can depend on the flight crews for companionship and as escorts in the various ports of call. Few stewardesses make a practice of going out with the customers;

in foreign cities even an innocent invitation can lead to complications. Gulie has gone out with passengers occasionally, but she usually would rather keep her off-duty time to herself.

Gulie, when she sits down to figure out just what she does and doesn't like about her work, rates the opportunity to travel as the most desirable feature of her job. She also likes her pay, the vacation and the layover periods between runs, and the fact that she meets, if only fleetingly, a lot of interesting people. All this suggests that the happiest airline stewardess would be a gregarious extrovert with a good liver and the soul of a Baedeker tourist. Add a little do-gooder instinct and a lot of patience to this and it is probably not too far from the truth.

Gulie doesn't like cleaning up after rough trips and the fact that her working schedule as a stewardess makes it practically impossible to have any regular social life. A girl who is constantly leaving, at odd hours of the day or night, on trips to some neighboring continent, is apt to be rather discouraging to the average swain. And if the man in a stewardess' life is a flight-crew member, the two may pass in the night

for years without ever being earth-bound together.

Pan American at one time supplied its hostesses with two complete uniforms. Now, in an effort to lengthen that average of ten months in the job, the company makes the girls buy their first uniform. Pan Am gives the girls the second at the end of the first year. The company supplies the purses the girls carry, but they must buy their own blouses and shoes. Pan Am cleans the stewardesses' uniforms.

Just what steps the various airlines will be able to take to keep their stewardesses on the job and out of a home of their own is hard to predict. Possibly a shift will have to be made to young married women who want to work—candidates for Pan Am jobs must now be single. The air-transport industry is too busy keeping ahead of the wolf right now to worry about the problem. But air travel, on the threshold of a tenfold expansion which will, a decade from now, see at least twenty stewardesses working the air lanes for every one now on the job, is going to have to find a way to keep the girls in uniform. A few thousand Gulie Smiths might be the answer. THE END

WHY WERE WE CAUGHT NAPPING AT PEARL HARBOR?

(Continued from Page 21)

I entertain no doubt but that there would have been a single command and full liaison if there had been present the belief that Hawaii stood in immediate peril, since both these officers were experienced, able and courageous.

Radar equipment was vital to a proper defense of the Pearl Harbor base. Yet the record discloses delay after delay in obtaining proper radar equipment, in the acquiring of bases for radar installation and in instructing personnel in the use of the mobile sets finally obtained. To this might be added the curtailment of use of radar on the very morning of the attack, when its operation was ordered to cease entirely at 7:00 A.M., in the face of the fact that in March the Martin-Bellinger report had pointed out dawn as the most dangerous moment! It seems clear to me that all this bungling would never have occurred except for the universal belief that Hawaii was not really imperiled.

The greatest damage suffered by our ships during the attack was from aerial torpedoes. Yet provision for torpedo nets and baffles for the Fleet in harbor received only the most generalized and delayed consideration. It is impossible to believe that these essential protections would not have been promptly available if there had been a proper fear of real danger.

The evidence discloses that the anti-aircraft batteries were not manned and the ammunition for them was in depots long distances away from the batteries themselves. There was also disinclination to bring the ammunition out because it might get dirty in transmission. Obviously these batteries and this ammunition would have been ready if there had been a belief in peril. The fault was in the mind, not in the equipment!

The most vital defense equipment necessary for the Pearl Harbor base was a sufficient number of long-distance patrol planes to permit constant

360-degree offshore patrol to a distance of at least 700 miles. At least 150 planes would have been necessary for such an operation. Such a patrol was almost the only real protection the base could have had against an enemy air attack. Yet at the time of the attack, the Army, upon which lay the basic duty to defend the base, had only twelve long-distance patrol planes, and six out of the twelve were out of commission. The record discloses that between January 1 and November, 30, 1941, nearly 1200 such planes passed through the allocation control of the Army and Navy chiefs at Washington, but were sent elsewhere than to Hawaii.

The point is important, because the only long-distance patrol planes at Hawaii, except the twelve just mentioned, were the sixty patrol planes assigned to the Pacific Fleet. Admiral Kimmel, in order to make even a partial long-distance patrol, so essential to the defense of the base, would have had to use the patrol planes of the Fleet. Yet under the existing War Plan, Kimmel was directed, upon the beginning of hostilities, to send the Fleet on a raid against the Marshall Islands. In order to carry out such an operation, it was essential that his patrol planes be ready to accompany the Fleet. Use of them for extensive patrol would have put a larger number of them in the shop for repair, with the result that the Fleet might not have been able to sail under the War Plan. Since Kimmel did not expect an attack upon Hawaii, he solved his dilemma by deciding against wearing out his planes in unnecessary patrols. He wanted to have them ready when the war came elsewhere.

I fully agree that the military authorities in Washington acted in good faith in sending their hundreds of patrol planes where they thought the exigency of the situation necessitated. But Hawaii was not in their thoughts! It is inconceivable that only twelve would have been sent to Hawaii for vital base defense, except for the belief that Hawaii was not in danger. This seems demonstrated by the fact that there were three times as many such patrol planes sent to the Philippines as were sent to Hawaii. Thus the

failure to conduct the essential long-distance patrol, the No. 1 defense for Pearl Harbor, was, I think, due to this general prevailing belief.

Specific critical reference was made by the Committee to the sudden absence of radio information with respect to the whereabouts of the Japanese carriers beginning about November twenty-eighth. The Committee felt that such radio silence should have been given more weight by the military authorities, yet the casual remark of Admiral Kimmel to a subordinate, "Do you think they may be coming around Diamond Head?" shows that the radio silence was without present portent to Admiral Kimmel.

The Mori message was an intercepted radiotelephone conversation between a person in Honolulu named Mori and an individual in Japan. It discussed flights of airplanes from Honolulu, use of searchlights, ships present at Pearl Harbor. It also made reference to various flowers, which indicated an open code, the significance of which was not known.

When this dispatch was intercepted, Colonel George W. Bicknell communicated it to General Short on the evening of December sixth. Upon reading it, General Short indicated, testified Colonel Bicknell, that perhaps he, Bicknell, was "too intelligence-conscious"—that the message seemed quite in order and was nothing to be excited about. The FBI representative in Honolulu regarded the message as highly suspicious.

The remarks of General Short would not possibly have been made if General Short had presently feared an attack. At no time, for months before the attack, did any inquiry from Hawaii to Washington, or from Washington to Hawaii, indicate serious apprehensions for Pearl Harbor.

The foregoing recitals, while not exhaustive, illustrate typical things done or not done, and which were made the subject of criticism in the Committee report. I submit that each of them had its roots in the universal belief that Hawaii was not in danger.

One of the most significant recitals in the record was the tale of the interception at Washington of the so-called Japanese "bomb plot" messages, mes-

(Continued on Page 78)

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(Continued from Page 76)

sages which it is now universally conceded actually mapped and detailed Pearl Harbor for a future air attack. The "bomb-plot" messages were dispatches sent by the Tokyo War Office to the Japanese consulate in Honolulu. The first one was dated September 24, 1941, and read as follows:

Strictly secret.

Henceforth, we would like to have you make reports concerning vessels along the following lines in so far 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 alongside the same wharf.)

This message was followed by a later intercepted and decoded message from the Tokyo War Office to the Honolulu consul on November 15, 1941, which read as follows:

As relations between Japan and the United States are most critical, make your "ships-in-harbor report" irregular, but at a rate of twice

a week. Although you already are no doubt aware, please take extra care to maintain secrecy.

Thereafter another intercept dated November twentieth, reading as follows:

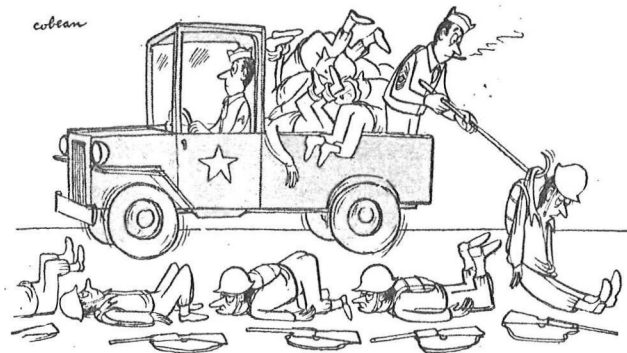
Please investigate comprehensively the Fleet bases in the neighborhood of the Hawaiian military reservation.

Thereafter another intercept of November twenty-ninth, stating:

We have been receiving reports from you on ship movements, but in future will you also report even when there are no movements?

These were all of this type of message which were decoded *before* the attack. After the attack, however, additional messages intercepted *before* the attack, but which, unfortunately, were not decoded until *after* the attack, make it perfectly certain that the messages quoted above were concerned with a contemplated Japanese air attack upon the Pearl Harbor base.

These "bomb-plot" messages were received at Washington weeks before the attack, and made so little impression there that it was difficult to find any officer who remembered receiving them! Admiral Stark didn't remember ever seeing them. Yet obviously if Washington had thought that Hawaii stood in danger of attack, it is inconceivable that these messages would not have received adequate attention and would not have been at once transmitted to Hawaii. No one can ade-



Double Take

A P O S T W A R A N E C D O T E

BASIC training for the infantry was tough anywhere, especially on raw recruits used to going every place by automobile. It seemed particularly rugged at Camp Blanding, Florida, under a blazing Southern sun. A ten-mile hike in a Florida summer with a thirty-pound pack on your back seemed like fifty. To make it worse on the rookies, we had a company C. O. who was one of the toughest Regular Army ex-sergeants who ever bucked for a commission.

It was the captain's hard-boiled rule that every man must finish every march even if he had to be carried. There was no stopping at the side of the road for a breather. The only way a man could leave formation was to pass out cold, flat on his face. Even then, he was picked up by a truck and carried

along to finish the march when he revived.

One particularly muggy August day the men were dropping like flies. The captain seemed to take each case as an insult; he was tired himself, and getting madder by the mile. Then Private Jones keeled over—another fainting heat victim, out like a lamp.

"Hey, Jones," the captain yelled at the unconscious man, "you can't drop out in the middle of the road! Get over to the side where the truck can pick you up!"

He plodded on. Three miles later the captain let out a roar of anger. He had just realized what happened in response to his command: The unconscious Jones had got up, trotted briskly to the side of the road and settled his unconscious self comfortably in the shade.

—R. A. BRIGGS.

quately estimate, today, what the effect upon the decisions of Kimmel and Short might have been if Washington had sent on this information. Yet no attention seems to have been paid to these Japanese dispatches in Washington, and the information was never sent to either Kimmel or Short!

During the same critical period before the attack, Washington intercepted the so-called "deadline" messages, in which Japan, in directions to its ambassadors at Washington, finally fixed November twenty-eighth as "the time things will automatically begin to happen," if settlement had not been consummated with Secretary Hull. If Washington had not been obsessed with the belief that things would not "happen" at Pearl Harbor, it is impossible to believe that Washington would not have acted upon this information, backed up as it was by the so-called "Berlin" message from the Tokyo war office that "war might break out sooner than anyone might dream." Except for the obsession of safety at Pearl Harbor, how could Washington have failed to connect the ominous "deadline" date of November twenty-eighth with the carriers' radio silence, which began about that same date? This was the period when the carriers were actually sailing to attack Pearl Harbor. Things were "automatically" happening.

This brings us to the so-called "warning messages," which consisted of messages sent to Hawaii on November twenty-fourth and November twenty-seventh, the most important of which read as follows:

(November 24) (Stark to Kimmel)

Chances of favorable outcome of negotiations with Japan very doubtful X This situation coupled with statements of Japanese Government and movements their naval and military forces indicate in our opinion that a surprise aggressive movement in any direction including attack on Philippines or Guam is a possibility X Chief of Staff has seen this dispatch concurs and requests action (address)ees to inform senior Army officers their areas X Utmost secrecy necessary in order not to complicate an already tense situation in precipitate Japanese action X Guam will be informed separately

(November 27) (Marshall to Short)

Negotiations with Japan appear to be terminated to all practical purposes with only the barest possibilities that the Japanese Government might come back and offer to continue period Japanese future action unpredictable but hostile action possible at any moment period If hostilities cannot comma repeat cannot comma be avoided the United States desires that Japan commit the first overt act period This policy should not comma repeat not comma be construed as restricting you to a course of action that might jeopardize your defense period Prior to hostile Japanese action you are directed to undertake such reconnaissance and other measures as you deem necessary but these measures should be carried out so as not comma repeat not comma to alarm civil population or disclose intent period Report measures taken period Should hostilities occur you will carry out the tasks assigned in Rainbow Five so far as they pertain to Japan period Limit dissemination of this highly secret information to minimum essential officers

On November twenty-seventh came a message from Admiral Stark to Admiral Kimmel, reading as follows:

This dispatch is to be considered a war warning X Negotiations with Japan looking toward stabilization of conditions in the Pacific have ceased and an aggressive move by Japan is expected within the next few days X The number and equipment of Japanese troops and the organization of naval task forces indicate an amphibious expedition against either the Philippines Thai or Kra

Peninsula or possibly Borneo X Execute an appropriate defensive deployment preparatory to carrying out the tasks assigned in WPL 46 X Inform District and Army authorities X A similar warning is being sent by War Department X Spnavo inform British X Continental Districts Guam Samoa directed take appropriate measures against sabotage X

It is startlingly significant to observe that neither Hawaii nor Pearl Harbor is mentioned, either in these dispatches or any others, as a possible point of attack! Obviously everybody believed that an attack, if and when, would come somewhere else.

Admiral Kimmel testified that these messages did him more harm than good, because their natural import was that the attack would come in the Far East, and this import coincided with his own present belief. Secretary of War Henry L. Stimson and Adm. Richmond Kelly Turner asserted that they prepared these messages for the respective departments with the intention of alerting Hawaii! Surely if Mr. Stimson or Admiral Turner had had any real idea or purpose to alert Hawaii, then these messages would have also mentioned Hawaii or Pearl Harbor as well as the Far East. Actually, the Navy message was primarily meant for Admiral Hart in the Philippines, to whom it had a real meaning. It meant little to Kimmel at Pearl Harbor. Note that it told him to get ready to move under War Plan 46. This meant a raid on the Marshalls, not a defense of Pearl Harbor.

Then we come to the famous "thirteen part" message. War was impending, codes were being burned, hostilities were believed imminent, and Secretary Hull had presented to the Japanese a note which the Japanese called an ultimatum. Clearly the Japanese reply to the Hull note was of supreme importance. We first intercepted the Japanese dispatch forecasting a fourteen-part message on December sixth. We received the first thirteen parts by 9:00 on Saturday night, December sixth. It went to the President, who "thought it meant war," but did nothing about it except to phone Admiral Stark. It went to Secretary Knox, who did nothing except to phone Secretary Stimson. Stimson called a meeting for 10:00 A.M., Sunday, thirteen hours later. It was presented to Admirals McIntyre, Turner and Beardsley, and nothing was done about it by any of them. None of the responsible officers of either the Army or Navy staff were present awaiting the receipt of the fourteenth part when it came in on Sunday morning. Following it came the extraordinary message directing the delivery of the entire dispatch to the Secretary of State at 1:00 P.M.

No responsible officer who was in a position of authority was present to receive this message. It came in before 8:00 on Sunday morning, and no one did anything about it until Admiral Stark saw it about 10:00 A.M. and then thought nothing of it and did nothing about it. Then, belatedly, Col. Rufus Bratton decided to contact General Marshall. General Marshall came to his office as soon as he could after being notified. The minute he saw the message he appreciated its possible significance and tried to act by sending an alerting message to all our Pacific posts, including Hawaii. But it was too late; the message was not delivered in time. The delay and carelessness in handling this whole fourteen-part message, as well as the 1:00 message, so far as Pearl Harbor is concerned, can be explained

..take 5"

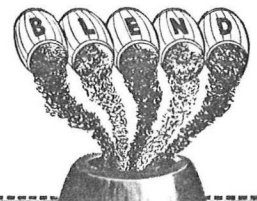
When fish don't bite for Freddie White, His Revelation still tastes right. And though the fish remain alive, He'll just sit back, relax, take five.



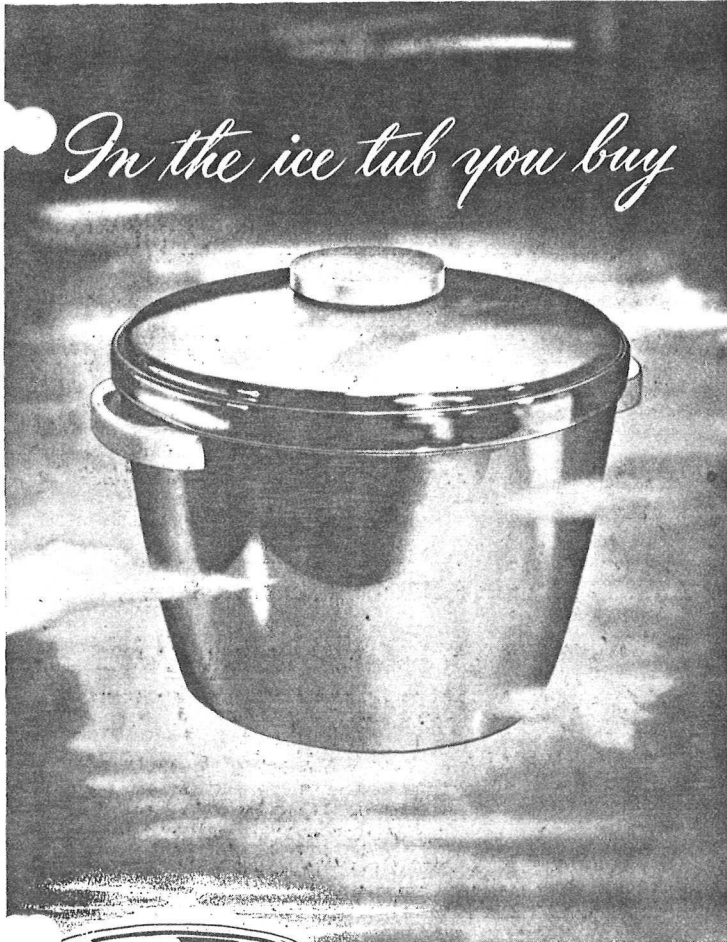
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only on the theory of complaisance. The explanation is not that the officers involved were not earnest and patriotic. The explanation is that they did not think Hawaii was in any present danger, despite the fact that "1:00 P.M." in Washington was "dawn" in Hawaii—and dawn was the fatal time under the Martin-Bellinger appraisal—the deadline date was gone and the Japanese carriers were "lost."

I found nothing in the record to indicate that an attack on Hawaii was considered desirable, or was wanted, by the high commands, as an "incident" to get us into the war with Germany. The change from appreciation of danger to Pearl Harbor to supreme confidence that Pearl Harbor was safe apparently did not come out of connivance or intent. Whatever may have been transpiring in the Atlantic or Far East areas concerning such "incidents" has, in my opinion, no relation to the attitude toward Pearl Harbor and Hawaii prior to the attack.

The remaining question is: Why was everybody so sure Hawaii was safe?

The record indicates that the belief that Hawaii would not be attacked was based on the following premises:

1. That Hawaii was so far distant from Japan as to make the danger negligible.
2. That the Japanese Navy did not possess sufficient naval skill to operate a task force of sufficient strength to make such an attack.
3. That Japanese military aviation did not have sufficient technical skill to carry out such an attack.
4. That the danger of the destruction of such a task force through premature discovery, with fatal injury to the strength of the main Japanese fleet, made such an expedition too extreme a gamble.

Obviously most of these reasons commit the unpardonable mistake of underestimating one's adversary. In addition thereto it was thought that, since Japan had designs on various countries in the Far East, including the Philippines, a direct attack on those places was much more feasible than one on Pearl Harbor. This conclusion is undoubtedly the reason for the frequent mention in the Washington dispatches, prior to the attack, of these Far Eastern points of likely attack.

It was also suggested that more equipment had gone to Hawaii than to any other of our Pacific bases, and that it was believed Hawaii was invulnerable. It has always seemed to me that the claim of provision for sufficient defense equipment at Pearl Harbor was, in fact, largely lip service, as the evidence with respect to radar and long-distance patrol planes demonstrates.

Finally exploring the question of whether the belief that Hawaii was safe was excusable, let me present a number of conceded facts, at all times well known either in Washington or in Hawaii, or in both places. These might be called "indirect" evidence.

There was always present the danger of a possible destruction or crippling of the Fleet itself, the destruction of the base and a wiping out of its vital fuel supply. A destruction of our airplane reserves might have immobilized the Fleet. Indeed, Hawaii might have fallen into Japanese hands. Our essential Pacific defense agency was the Pacific Fleet. Moreover, we knew the reputation of Japan for sneak attacks, and the one place in the entire Pacific where a sneak attack could vitally hurt us was Pearl Harbor. The submarine activities about Hawaii during the fall of 1941 were known. The

radar itself actually disclosed the approaching planes an hour before the attack. Both Washington and Hawaii knew of the significant carrier-fleet radio silence. The "bomb-plot" and the "deadline" messages had been received and decoded. Military and diplomatic codes were being burned. It was obvious that if the Japanese were to attack Pearl Harbor, absolute secrecy would have been essential. There was no secrecy with respect to contemplated attacks in the Far East, for the Japanese ships and convoys were there already in open movement.

No wonder the Committee propounded its query, "Why was it possible for Pearl Harbor to occur?" How could the universal military belief that Hawaii was not in danger so occupy the minds of our military chiefs that not one of them is on record, *before the attack*, as offering any warning of present peril to our Fleet and Hawaii? The reader may make his own answer.

It is, of course, impossible to impose the obligation on military chiefs of always forecasting possible "surprise" attacks. However, where such an attack has been made, it is proper to consider the actual conditions known to

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TO A CHILD
AT PRAYER

I, who know the meaning of each word,
Ask only that your prayerfulness bestow
Upon this mind, whose inner sight is blurred,
The faith which you so beautifully know.

—CATHERINE HAYDON JACOBS.

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exist in order to fix ultimate responsibility. High military leaders do have the duty of using skilled military foresight. This is an uncapable burden of military leadership. The imminence of war was everywhere recognized. The enemy could only be Japan. The prize was our Fleet. The Fleet was at Pearl Harbor. Espionage was rampant. Japan had started two wars with surprise attacks.

What the Committee, therefore, had to decide, in reality, was whether the belief that Hawaii was not in peril was reasonably justified. I have no personal judgment in that regard to express here. I think that the Committee, in effect, found that the military commands at Hawaii and Washington should not have been surprised by the attack on Hawaii; that the danger should have been fully appreciated.

In thus analyzing the Committee reports, I do not care to indulge in any criticism of individuals. That was the Committee's prerogative. But responsibility for what occurred at Pearl Harbor should rest upon the shoulders of those members of the high commands who had the power to act appropriately for the defense of the base and the Fleet, and in the light of what they knew, or should have known, of the perils surrounding Pearl Harbor. They apparently acted under a comprehensive belief. Perhaps the public is as well qualified as anyone to evaluate that belief, and such evaluation may well supply the answer to the whole Pearl Harbor disaster.

THE END