

INVESTIGATION OF THE PEARL HARBOR ATTACK

REPORT OF THE JOINT COMMITTEE ON THE INVESTIGATION OF THE PEARL HARBOR ATTACK CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES

PURSUANT TO

S. Con. Res. 27, 79th Congress

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION TO INVESTIGATE THE
ATTACK ON PEARL HARBOR ON DECEMBER
7, 1941, AND EVENTS AND CIRCUM-
STANCES RELATING THERETO

AND

ADDITIONAL VIEWS OF MR. KEEFE

TOGETHER WITH

MINORITY VIEWS OF MR. FERGUSON AND MR. BREWSTER



JULY 20 (legislative day JULY 5), 1946—Ordered to be
printed with illustrations

UNITED STATES
GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE
WASHINGTON : 1946

JOINT COMMITTEE ON THE INVESTIGATION OF THE PEARL
HARBOR ATTACK

Sum
ALBEN W. BARKLEY, Senator from Kentucky, *Chairman*
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WALTER F. GEORGE, Senator from Georgia JOHN W. MURPHY, Representative from
SCOTT W. LUCAS, Senator from Illinois Pennsylvania
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HOMER FERGUSON, Senator from Michi- tive from California
gan FRANK B. KEEFE, Representative from
J. BAYARD CLARK, Representative from Wisconsin
North Carolina

COUNSEL

(Through January 14, 1946)

WILLIAM D. MITCHELL, *General Counsel*
GERHARD A. GESELL, *Chief Assistant Counsel*
JULE M. HANNAFORD, *Assistant Counsel*
JOHN B. MASTEN, *Assistant Counsel*

(After January 14, 1946)

SETH W. RICHARDSON, *General Counsel*
SAMUEL H. KAUFMAN, *Associate General Counsel*
JOHN B. MASTEN, *Assistant Counsel*
EDWARD P. MORGAN, *Assistant Counsel*
LOOAN J. LANE, *Assistant Counsel*

LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL

UNITED STATES SENATE AND
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, D. C., July 20, 1946.

HON. KENNETH MCKELLAR,
President pro tempore of the Senate.

HON. SAM RAYBURN,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

DEAR MR. PRESIDENT AND MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 27 (as extended), Seventy-ninth Congress, first session, the Joint Congressional Committee on the Investigation of the Pearl Harbor Attack has completed its work with a view to a full and complete investigation of the facts relating to the events and circumstances leading up to or following the attack made by Japanese armed forces upon Pearl Harbor in the Territory of Hawaii on December 7, 1941.

The committee has endeavored faithfully to discharge the duties assigned and respectfully submits herewith its report.

Sincerely yours,

ALBEN W. BARKLEY,
Chairman.

JERE COOPER,
Vice Chairman.

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FOREWORD

On Sunday morning, December 7, 1941, the United States and Japan were at peace. Japanese ambassadors were in Washington in conversation with our diplomatic officials looking to a general settlement of differences in the Pacific.

At 7:55 a. m. (Hawaiian time) over 300 Japanese planes launched from 6 aircraft carriers attacked the island of Oahu and the American Pacific Fleet at Pearl Harbor in the Territory of Hawaii. Within a period of less than 2 hours our military and naval forces suffered a total of 3,435 casualties in personnel and the loss of or severe damage to: 188 planes of all types, 8 battleships, 3 light cruisers, and 4 miscellaneous vessels.

The attack was well planned and skillfully executed. The Japanese raiders withdrew from the attack and were recovered by the carriers without the latter being detected, having suffered losses of less than 100 in personnel, 29 planes, and 5 midget submarines which had been dispatched from mother craft that coordinated their attack with that of the planes.

One hour after Japanese air and naval forces had struck the Territory of Hawaii the emissaries of Japan delivered to the Secretary of State a reply to a recent American note, a reply containing no suggestion of attack by Japan upon the United States. With the benefit of information now available it is known that the Japanese military had planned for many weeks the unprovoked and ambitious act of December 7.

The Pyrrhic victory of having executed the attack with surprise, cunning, and deceit belongs to the war lords of Japan whose dreams of conquest were buried in the ashes of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. History will properly place responsibility for Pearl Harbor upon the military clique dominating the people of Japan at the time. Indeed, this responsibility Premier Tojo himself has already assumed.

We come today, over 4 years after the event, not to detract from this responsibility but to record for posterity the facts of the disaster. In another sense we seek to find lessons to avoid pitfalls in the future, to evolve constructive suggestions for the protection of our national security, and to determine whether there were failures in our own military and naval establishments which in any measure may have contributed to the extent and intensity of the disaster.

INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

On November 15, 1945, the Joint Congressional Committee on the Investigation of the Pearl Harbor Attack held its first public hearings pursuant to Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 27, Seventy-ninth Congress, first session, as follows:¹

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

SEPTEMBER 6, 1945

Mr. BARELEY submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was considered, modified, and agreed to

SEPTEMBER 11, 1945

House concurs

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring), That there is hereby established a joint committee on the investigation of the Pearl Harbor attack, to be composed of five Members of the Senate (not more than three of whom shall be members of the majority party), to be appointed by the President pro tempore, and five Members of the House of Representatives (not more than three of whom shall be members of the majority party), to be appointed by the Speaker of the House. Vacancies in the membership of the committee shall not affect the power of the remaining members to execute the functions of the committee, and shall be filled in the same manner as in the case of the original selection. The committee shall select a chairman and a vice chairman from among its members.

SEC. 2. The committee shall make a full and complete investigation of the facts relating to the events and circumstances leading up to or following the attack made by Japanese armed forces upon Pearl Harbor in the Territory of Hawaii on December 7, 1941, and shall report to the Senate and the House of Representatives not later than January 3, 1946, the results of its investigation, together with such recommendations as it may deem advisable.

SEC. 3. The testimony of any person in the armed services, and the fact that such person testified before the joint committee herein provided for, shall not be used against him in any court proceeding, or held against him in examining his military status for credits in the service to which he belongs.

SEC. 4. (a) The committee, or any duly authorized subcommittee thereof, is authorized to sit and act at such places and times during the sessions, recesses, and adjourned periods of the Seventy-ninth Congress (prior to January 3, 1946), to require by subpoena or otherwise the attendance of such witnesses and the production of such books, papers, and documents, to administer such oaths, to take such testimony, to procure such printing and binding, and to make such expenditures as it deems advisable. The cost of stenographic services to report such hearings shall not be in excess of 25 cents per hundred words.

(b) The committee is empowered to appoint and fix the compensation of such experts, consultants, and clerical and stenographic assistants as it deems necessary, but the compensation so fixed shall not exceed the compensation prescribed under the Classification Act of 1923, as amended, for comparable duties.

(c) The expenses of the committee, which shall not exceed \$25,000, shall be paid one-half from the contingent fund of the Senate and one-half from the con-

¹ The authority of the committee is to be found in S. Con. Res. No. 27, 79th Cong., 1st sess., passed by the Senate on September 6, 1945, and concurred in by the House of Representatives on September 11, 1945, and as extended by both Houses under S. Con. Res. No. 49, 79th Cong., 1st sess., and by S. Con. Res. No. 54, 79th Cong., 2d sess.

tingent fund of the House of Representatives, upon vouchers signed by the chairman.

Passed the Senate September 6, 1945.

Attest:

LESLIE L. BIFFLE,
Secretary.

Passed the House of Representatives September 11, 1945.

Attest:

SOUTH TRIMBLE,
Clerk.

On 70 days subsequent to November 15 and prior to and including May 31, 1945, open hearings were conducted in the course of which some 15,000 pages of testimony were taken and a total of 183 exhibits received incident to an examination of 43 witnesses.

Of assistance to the committee and its work were the testimony and exhibits of seven prior investigations concerning the Pearl Harbor attack, including inquiries conducted by the Roberts Commission,² Admiral Thomas C. Hart,³ the Army Pearl Harbor Board,⁴ the Navy Court of Inquiry,⁵ Col. Carter W. Clarke,⁶ Maj. Henry C. Clausen,⁷ and Admiral H. Kent Hewitt.⁸ For purposes of convenient reference there has been set forth in appendix A to this report a statement concerning the scope and character of each of these prior proceedings, the records of which total 9,754 printed pages of testimony from 318 witnesses and the attendant 469 exhibits. The records of these proceedings have been incorporated as exhibits to the record of the committee which encompasses approximately 10,000,000 words.

All witnesses appeared under oath and were afforded the fullest opportunity to offer any and all information which was regarded as having any relationship whatever to the disaster. In the course of examination by committee counsel and the committee members themselves, an effort was made to elicit all facts having an immediate or remote bearing on the tragedy of December 7, 1941. It is believed the committee has succeeded through its record in preserving for posterity the material facts concerning the disaster.

The figures and witnesses in the drama of Pearl Harbor ran the gamut of officials of the executive branch of the Government. The principal personalities in the picture were the President of the United States, Franklin D. Roosevelt; the Secretary of State, Cordell Hull; the Secretary of War, Henry L. Stimson; the Secretary of Navy, Frank Knox; the Chief of Staff, George C. Marshall; the Chief of Naval Operations, Harold R. Stark; the commander in chief of the Pacific Fleet, Husband E. Kimmel; and the commanding general of the Hawaiian Department, Walter C. Short. In appendix B to this report there are set forth the names and positions of the ranking Army and Navy officials in Washington and at Hawaii at the time of the attack along with the principal witnesses in the various proceedings.

The committee's investigation has extended to the files of all pertinent branches of the Government. Instructions in this regard from the President of the United States, Harry S. Truman, to various departments will be found in appendix C to this report. The committee through its counsel requested Miss Grace Tully, custodian of the files of the late President Roosevelt, to furnish the committee all

² For proceedings of the Roberts Commission, see committee exhibit No. 143.

³ For proceedings of the Hart Inquiry, see committee exhibit No. 144.

⁴ For proceedings of the Army Pearl Harbor Board, see committee exhibit No. 145.

⁵ For proceedings of the Navy Court of Inquiry, see committee exhibit No. 146.

⁶ For proceedings of the Clarke investigation, see committee exhibit No. 147.

⁷ For report of investigation conducted by Major Clausen, see committee exhibit No. 148.

⁸ For proceedings of the Hewitt inquiry, see committee exhibit No. 149.

papers in these files for the year 1941 relating to Japan, the imminence of war in the Pacific, and the general Far Eastern developments. She furnished such papers in response to this request as she considered might be involved and stood ready to testify before the committee at any time.

All parties in interest have attested to the fact that they have been afforded a full, fair, and impartial public hearing before the committee. All witnesses who retained counsel—Admiral Stark, Admiral Kimmel, and General Short—were given the opportunity to be examined by their counsel if they so desired, and to submit questions to committee counsel to be asked other witnesses.

The following action was not taken by the committee for the reasons indicated:

(1) Former Secretary of War Henry L. Stimson was not called before the committee as a witness for the reason that his health would not permit. Mr. Stimson did, however, submit a statement under oath for the committee's consideration and the answers supplied by him to interrogatories propounded were considered by the committee. He supplied the portions of his personal diary requested by committee counsel and informed the committee that the portions of his diary now in evidence are the only portions thereof having any relationship to the Pearl Harbor investigation.

(2) Former Ambassador to Japan Joseph Grew appeared before the committee as a witness and testified to material appearing in his personal diary having a relationship to the events and circumstances of the Pearl Harbor attack. On the basis of his personal representation that no additional material pertinent to the subject of the committee's inquiry appeared in his diary beyond that to which he had testified, the committee did not formally request or otherwise seek to require the production of Mr. Grew's complete diary.

(3) A request by one member of the committee for the appearance of the former Prime Minister of England, Mr. Winston Churchill, was disapproved by a majority of the committee. At the time Mr. Churchill was a guest in the United States and it was not felt that he should with propriety be requested to appear as a witness.

(4) A request by one member of the committee for production by the State Department of all papers relating to the so-called Tyler Kent case was disapproved by a majority of the committee. The State Department had advised that these papers were in no way pertinent to the subject of the committee's inquiry, and, additionally, members of the committee had discussed the question with Mr. Kent who advised that he possessed no facts that would in any way have relationship to the Pearl Harbor attack.

Former Secretary of State Cordell Hull appeared before the committee but was forced to retire by reason of failing health before completion of the examination by all members of the committee. Mr. Hull subsequently responded to interrogatories propounded by the committee.

The committee has conceived its duty to be not only that of indicating the nature and scope of responsibility for the disaster but also of recording the pertinent considerations relating to the greatest defeat in our military and naval history. Only through a reasonable amount of detail is it possible to place events and responsibilities in their proper perspective and give to the Nation a genuine appreciation of the salient facts concerning Pearl Harbor. For this reason our report is

of somewhat greater length than was initially believed necessary. It is to be recalled in this connection, however, that the over-all record of the committee comprehends some ten million words. It was felt therefore that the story of the antecedent, contemporaneous, and succeeding events attending the disaster could not be properly encompassed within a report any more concise than that herewith submitted.

We believe there is much to be learned of a constructive character as a result of the Japanese attack from the standpoint of legislation and, additionally, for guidance in avoiding the possibility of another military disaster such as Pearl Harbor. Accordingly, in the section devoted to recommendations there are set forth, in addition to the recommendations proper, a series of principles, based on errors revealed by the investigation, which are being commended to our military and naval services for their consideration and possible assistance.

Our report does not purport to set forth or refer to all of the enormous volume of testimony and evidence adduced in the course of the Pearl Harbor investigation. It is believed, however, that the material facts relevant to the disaster have been outlined in the report. The committee's record and the records of all prior investigations have been printed and are available for review and study. It is to be borne in mind that the findings and conclusions are based on the facts presently in our record after an exhaustive investigation.

We desire to acknowledge particular gratitude to those who have acted as counsel to the committee for their excellent work during the course of the investigation and for their magnificent assistance in compiling the facts for the committee in order that we might draw our conclusions, which are necessarily those of the committee only.

In the following pages an effort has been made to present a review of the diplomatic and historical setting of the Pearl Harbor attack followed by a picture of the Japanese attack itself. Set forth thereafter are separate treatments of responsibilities in Hawaii on the one hand and responsibilities in Washington on the other. Situations existing in our Army and Navy establishments having a proximate or causative relationship to the disaster have been distinguished from those which, while not to be condoned, are regarded as having no direct or reasonable bearing on the conditions prevailing at Hawaii, preceding and in the wake of the Japanese attack on Sunday morning, December 7, 1941. To assist in following and better appreciating the story of the attack there has been outlined in appendix F the geographical considerations and military installations playing a role in and relating to the disaster.

Throughout the report italics have been freely employed to facilitate reading and to bring out more clearly matters regarded as of particular importance.