

Statement of Rear Admiral Husband E. Kimmel, USN (Ret.)
Before the Joint Committee on the Investigation of the
Pear Harbor Attack
6PHA2497-2554
[With emphasis, and annotations by Tom Kimmel]

This is the first opportunity I have had to speak to the representatives of the American people. I propose to give an account of my stewardship as Commander-in-Chief of the Pacific Fleet. My statement has four main parts.

In **Part I**, I shall describe the Pacific Fleet in 1941, its base at Pearl Harbor, its assigned tasks under the War Plans, its program of preparation for war, and the measures I took to provide for its readiness at sea and its security in port.

In **Part II**, I shall set forth the information I had prior to the attack and my conclusions and actions based upon it.

In **Part III**, I shall describe how the Pacific Fleet was deprived of a fighting chance to avert the disaster of December 7, 1941, because the Navy Department withheld information which indicated the probability of an attack at Pearl Harbor at the time it came.

In **Part IV**, I shall outline previous investigations into the Pearl Harbor catastrophe.

PART I

The Condition and Activities of the Pacific Fleet in the Year 1941

I took command of the Pacific Fleet on February 1, 1941. I had served for more than forty years in the Navy. I entered the Naval Academy in 1900 and graduated in the Class of 1904. I went around the world with the Fleet in 1908 as a junior officer. During World War I, I served on Admiral Rodman's Staff. He was in command of the United States battleships operating with the British Grand Fleet. I commanded a Destroyer Division in the Asiatic Fleet, and did additional duty in the Philippines and China from 1923 to 1925. After a tour of duty at the Naval War College and in the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, I commanded a Destroyer Squadron in the Battle Fleet from 1928 to 1930. I was Director of Ship Movements in the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations from 1930 to 1933. I commanded the Battleship NEW YORK in 1933 and 1934, and during the next year served as Chief of Staff to Admiral Craven, Commander, Battleships of the Fleet. I was Budget Officer of the Navy Department from 1935 to 1938. As a Rear Admiral, I commanded a Heavy Cruiser Division of the Scouting Force of the Fleet in 1938. I was Type Commander of the Cruisers in the Battle Force in 1939. I held this position until I was appointed Commander-in-Chief of the Pacific Fleet.

The facts as to my acquaintance with President Roosevelt are briefly stated. Six months after my appointment as Commander-in-Chief, and in June of 1941, I came to Washington on official business and called on the President. This was the first time that I had had any conversation or communication with him since 1918.

My appointment as Commander-in-Chief came as a complete surprise to me. My reactions at the time are stated in a letter to the Chief of Naval Operations dated January 12, 1941:

When I got the news of my prospective assignment, I was perfectly stunned. I hadn't had any intimation that Richardson's relief was even being considered; and even had I known that his relief was being considered, I did not in my wildest dreams really think that I would get the job. Nevertheless, I am prepared to do everything I can when I take over on about the first of February.

When I assumed command, the decision to base the Fleet in the Hawaiian area was a historical fact. The target and base facilities required to train the Fleet for war were in the process of being moved from the West Coast to Hawaii. The Fleet had been practically without gunnery practice for nearly a year due to the previous uncertainty as to the location of the base. Any further uncertainty would have delayed the availability of the mobile facilities to maintain, repair, and train the Fleet. The resulting loss of time in starting intensive training would have been disastrous. This was my view when I took command. My appointment was in no wise contingent upon any acquiescence on my part in a decision already made months before to keep the Fleet in Hawaiian waters.

The Fleet was not ready for war in 1940.¹ I set out to make it ready. This required an intensive training program. In carrying out this program, we were handicapped by the detachment, from time to time, of officers and men in large numbers to meet the demands of the expanding procurement and training agencies on shore, and the supply of trained personnel to man new ships.

My concern about this is reflected in my correspondence in 1941. On February 7, in an official letter to the Chief of Naval Operations, I stated:²

We are forced to operate our ships as they are and the number of men required to man them has been determined by the considered judgment of the best officers we have available. In view of the large numbers of men required for newly commissioned ships, both now and in the future, and in view of the fact that only at sea can men-of-warships be adequately trained, every seagoing ship should be filled to capacity now. In this connection it

1 Record, Testimony Admiral Richardson, page 777.

2 CinC File, P16-3/ (0217).

cannot be too strongly emphasized that stabilization of personnel, both officers and enlisted, will contribute more to the efficiency of the fleet than any other single factor.

On February 16, 1941, I wrote to Admiral Nimitz, Chief of the Bureau of Navigation, now the Bureau of Personnel, that:³

I realize in some degree the necessity for the services of competent personnel under the Bureau of Ordnance. I am, however, faced with a very real situation here in the Fleet. During the past year the detachment of so many competent officers has reduced the number of experienced officers remaining in ships of the Fleet to such a point that I consider it dangerous to make further considerable reductions in our best officer personnel at this time. The Fleet is just now recovering from the heavy officer personnel shake-up which it has experienced. . . .

While I appreciate to some extent the deficiencies of the Bureau of Ordnance and the urgent necessity to remedy them, I must sound a note of warning that we cannot spare any considerable number of qualified officers from the Fleet without assuming an enormous risk. The condition of the Fleet now and in the near future may well be of much greater importance to the nation than the production of a two-ocean Navy by 1946. . . .

While on this subject of personnel, I would like to add that the continued detachment of qualified officers and enlisted men renders it next to impossible for the ships to reach the high state of efficiency demanded by a campaign. This Fleet must be kept ready to fight, and that is impossible unless we stabilize the personnel to a much greater degree than has been done in the past.

On March 3, 1941, Admiral Nimitz, in reply to my letter wrote:⁴

Soon to be superimposed on our Navy ordnance problems through the administration of the Lend-Lease bill is the task of procurement, inspection and delivery of enormous—almost astronomical—quantities of ordnance supplies for the British Navy and any Allies which may survive to fight the dictators. I do not know if you have

³ Personal letter to Admiral Nimitz, February 16, 1941.

⁴ See file letters Admiral Stark to Admiral Kimmel.

been informed of all the new ordnance plants that are being erected in various parts of the country to start from scratch the manufacture of various items of ordnance.

Admiral Nimitz pointed out that these conditions made it necessary to detach trained officer personnel from the Fleet.

In addition, the Aviation Expansion Program required that trained aviation personnel from the Fleet be sent to the mainland to train others. For example, we were required to send from the Fleet to the mainland twelve trained patrol plane crews each month. In the same letter Admiral Nimitz stated:

The situation regarding aviators is not unlike that of Ordnance P. G.'s. In order to build up our aviation we must of necessity have the services of qualified aviators to get all our air training stations going. We know the new aviation officers lack a great deal in being ready to serve the fleet when they first report, and we also know you will do your best to provide the additional training and experience needed.

The naval expansion program required the Fleet to supply large numbers of trained officer and enlisted personnel to man the new ships. The building and procurement program for all classes of naval vessels and material also required naval personnel from the Fleet for inspection and supervisory duties.

The detachment of trained officer and enlisted personnel continued until December 7, 1941. The corresponding need for training new personnel continued. Because of this situation, the man power needs of the Fleet were never satisfied. In a letter to the Chief of Naval Operations dated November 15, 1941, I wrote: "This Fleet requires approximately 9,000 men to fill complements; it can utilize an additional 10,000." More than 50 percent of the officers of the Fleet were newly commissioned reserve officers. With constantly changing personnel, both officers and enlisted men, and the induction of new personnel, there were times when 70 percent of the men on board individual ships had never heard a gun fired. Training and target practice were imperatively needed for every ship's crew and every plane's crew. The men and officers who were detailed to the engine room, to the guns, to the radio, to the ship control, to the lookouts, to the electrical installations, to the fire control for the guns, to the signals, to the commissary, and numerous other billets, had to be trained before they were competent. Unless they were trained, the most modern equipment was useless. Breakdown or inefficiency in any category might well be very costly in time of war.

There were other factors that made the training activities of vital importance. In addition to individual ship training, I had to provide for coordinated training of ships, divisions and squadrons as part of the Fleet as a whole. New weapons and new techniques were an every day product of the war in Europe. New methods had to be

devised, tested, and perfected to meet new threats. For instance, the anti-aircraft defense of large formations had to be improved to meet possible Japanese air tactics in the event of war. Our previous training, chiefly dictated by safety considerations, had been largely confined to individual ship practices in defense against individual attacks. It was now necessary to develop means and methods of countering mass attacks by coordinated fire, in maximum volume, from as many ships as could bring their guns to bear with reasonable prospect of hitting the target and allowing for acceptable hazards to other ships.

Again, the advent of Radar with all of its implications, particularly the necessity for wide extension of existing communication channels required to take full advantage of its latent possibilities, posed an entirely new problem for which no solution was to be found in past experience. We had to visualize and set up new situations in order even to indicate a solution. It was only through wide experience, covering a period of months and crowding in as much work as possible, that the new apparatus could be utilized to its fullest potential. We were handicapped by the few ships equipped with this device, making it all the more important that advantage be taken of every opportunity that could be stolen from the few days or weeks that might remain to us prior to actual hostilities.

Radar, also, gave promise of completely revolutionizing the art of night warfare. This possibility was especially important as it was known that the Japanese attached great importance to night action. Measures, such as steaming and maneuvering in complete darkness in large and complex formations, with abridged accent on safety, had to be perfected. Most of this program was, for us, experimental because large scale and complicated maneuvering at night was new to our Navy.

In addition to all this, we needed all the time we could get to try out and perfect the operations we had set up for the opening phases of the war, if it came, against Japan. These operations too, were largely new and untried, and handicapped by lack of facilities and personnel, particularly in the case of amphibious landings. These exercises gave birth to the Fast Carrier Task Force, later found so effective in the prosecution of the war.

Our training activities were not just "routine training" or "peacetime" training. They were intensified training activities indispensable to the creation of fighting efficiency in the Fleet.

At the same time, the ships needed substantial repair and maintenance work. We had before us, and I believe I accomplished, the task of preparing practically every ship to a high degree of material readiness. The engines and motive equipment were overhauled and re-tuned. The ship's crew engaged in many tasks of installation, repair and alteration to the limit of their ability while in port. This included the installation of splinter protection, degaussing, the installation of listening gear, and in general, the application to the Fleet so far as the supplies were available, of the lessons of war in the Atlantic and Mediterranean. On April 4, 1941, the Chief of Naval Operations advised me

by dispatch "to strip ship in accordance with orders."⁵ This operation alone consumed considerable time for every ship in port.

On May 26, 1941, the Navy Department promulgated its Basic War Plan. This plan set forth the Navy's tasks under the Joint Army and Navy Basic War Plan which had been drawn up after staff conversations with the British in February and March of 1941.

In February and March of 1941, Great Britain and the United States had staff conversations. The report of these conversations under date of March 27, 1941, bore the short title "ABC-1."⁶ On the basis of these, the Army and Navy prepared the Joint Army and Navy Basic War Plan. This joint plan was approved by the Secretary of the Navy on May 28, and by the Secretary of War on June 2, 1941. It bore the short title "Rainbow No. 5."⁷ On the basis of the Joint Army and Navy Basic War Plan, the Navy Department promulgated the Navy Basic War Plan on May 26, 1941. This plan bore the short title "WPL-46."⁸ The Pacific Fleet was directed to prepare its own war plan supporting the Basic Navy War Plan. This was done. The War Plan of the Pacific Fleet was distributed on July 25, 1941,⁹ and thereafter on September 9, 1941, approved by the Chief of Naval Operations.¹⁰ This plan bore the short title, "WPPac-46."

The Joint Army-Navy War Plan primarily emphasized the defeat of Germany. Admiral R. K. Turner, War Plans Officer for the Chief of Naval Operations in 1941, in his testimony before Admiral Hart, described the objectives of the War Plan in these words:¹¹

The plan contemplated a major effort on the part of both the principal Associated Powers against Germany, initially. It was felt in the Navy Department, that there might be a possibility of war with Japan without the involvement of Germany, but at some length and over a considerable period this matter was discussed and it was determined that in such a case the United States would, if possible, initiate efforts to bring Germany into the war against us in order that we would be enabled to give strong support to the United Kingdom in Europe. We felt that it was incumbent on our side to defeat Germany, to launch our principal efforts against Germany first, and to conduct a limited offensive in the Central Pacific, and a strictly defensive effort in the Asiatic.

5. Dispatch, OPNAV to CinCPac, April 4, 1941, 041700.

6. Exhibit 49.

7. Official letter CNO to CinCPac, April 3, 1941, serial 038612.

8. Official letter CNO, May 26, 1941, Serial 060512.

9. Official letter CinCPac, July 25, 1941, Serial 063W.

10. Official letter CNO to CinCPac, September 9, 1941, Serial 098912.

11. Hart Testimony, Admiral R. K. Turner, page 251, 252, question 19.

In accordance with this statement of principles, the Basic War Plan of the Army and Navy, Rainbow No. 5, provided in section 4, paragraph 13(a):

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

Again, section 4, paragraph 13(d) of the plan provided:

Even if Japan were not initially to enter the war on the side of the Axis Powers, it would still be necessary for the Associated Powers to deploy their forces in a manner to guard against Japanese intervention. If Japan does enter the war, the Military strategy in the Far East will be defensive. The United States does not intend to add to its present Military strength in the Far East but will employ the United States Pacific Fleet offensively in the manner best calculated to weaken Japanese economic power, and to support the defense of the Malay Barrier by diverting Japanese strength away from Malasia [sic]. The United States intends so to augment its forces in the Atlantic and Mediterranean areas that the British Commonwealth will be in a position to release the necessary forces for the Far East.

The following tasks were assigned the United States Pacific Fleet in section one, paragraph 3212 of the Navy Basic War Plan, W. P. L. 46:

a. TASK

Support the forces of the Associated Powers in the Far East by diverting enemy strength away from the Malay Barrier, through the denial and capture of positions in the Marshalls, and through raids on enemy sea communications and positions;

b. TASK

Prepare to capture and establish control over the Caroline and Marshall Island area, and to establish an advanced Fleet Base in Truk;

c. TASK

Destroy Axis sea communications by capturing or destroying vessels trading directly or indirectly with the enemy;

d. TASK

Support British Naval forces in the area south of the Equator as far west as longitude 155° east;

e. TASK

Defend Samoa in Category "D";

f. TASK

Defend Guam in Category "F";

g. TASK

Protect the sea communications of the Associated Powers by escorting, covering, and patrolling as required by circumstances, and by destroying enemy raiding forces (See Part III, Chapter V, Section I);

h. TASK

Protect the territory of the Associated Powers in the Pacific area and prevent the extension of enemy military power into the Western Hemisphere by destroying hostile expeditions and by supporting land and air forces in denying the enemy the use of land positions in that hemisphere;

i. TASK

Cover the operations of the Naval Coastal Frontier Forces;

j. TASK

Establish Fleet control zones, defining their limits from time to time as circumstances require;

k. TASK

Route shipping of Associated Powers within the Fleet control zones.

These tasks were to be carried out in "the Pacific Area." The Pacific Area included the ocean areas from the coast of North and South America westward to a short distance from the coast of Australia, and north of the Equator to a line extending to the westward of the Marianas up to latitude 33° north, where the area was extended to include the reaches of the ocean all the way to the Asiatic continent and from about 700 off the coast of South America south of the Equator, to a short distance from the Australian coast.

It was this vast expanse which I had to consider the prospective theatre of operations for my forces. It was in this area that the Pacific Fleet was to divert enemy strength by the denial and capture of positions in the Marshalls, destroy Axis sea communications and protect the territory of the Associated Powers. To build the Fleet into a fighting machine capable of meeting these assigned tasks, and to solve the manifold problems of supply and logistics required considerable planning.

It became apparent soon after I took command that the existing organization of the U. S. Fleet was not a proper one to meet the tasks which would be required in a Pacific war. Early in 1941, therefore, the vessels of the Pacific Fleet were reorganized into three Task Forces, including one fast carrier Task Force, one amphibious Task Force and one battleship Task Force. In their operations at sea, these Task Forces were operated under wartime conditions. Fueling at sea, a requirement for long-range operations, was stressed.

The operating schedule was so arranged that there was always at least one of these Task Forces, and usually two, at sea. Frequently, during Fleet maneuvers the entire Fleet was at sea. Periods in port were of course necessary for all ships. At no time during 1941 were all of the ships of the Fleet in Pearl Harbor. It was recognized that the Pacific Fleet was inferior to the Japanese Fleet in every category of fighting ship.¹² No one in authority expected that the Pacific Fleet could meet the Japanese head on.

Admiral King's official report "Our Navy at War" transmitted to the Secretary of the Navy on March 27, 1944, completely dispelled previous public misconceptions about the strength of the Pacific Fleet prior to Pearl Harbor. Admiral King stated:

Had we not suffered those losses (at Pearl Harbor), however, our fleet could not have proceeded to Manila as many people supposed and there relieved our hard pressed forces. Such an undertaking at that time, with the means at hand to carry it out and support it, would have been disastrous.

Japan, at the outbreak of hostilities, had nine aircraft carriers in commission and operating. We had three carriers in the Pacific and those did not have their full quota of planes.¹³ Although the battleships of the Fleet were all approximately the same age as the heavy ships of the Japanese Navy, our ships were particularly deficient in short-range antiaircraft weapons.

The fuel problem affected every decision. At this time both the reserve stocks in the Hawaiian area and the facilities for getting fuel from storage tanks into combatant ships were not adequate. **The Pacific Fleet had only eleven tankers. Of these, only four had the speed and mixed cargo characteristics suitable for fueling other ships at sea.** It required from 24 to 36 hours to refuel a task force in Pearl Harbor. Shortly after I organized the Fleet in three major task forces, I attempted to keep two of the three forces at sea and only one in Pearl Harbor. I quickly found that fuel deliveries were falling behind consumption. The reserves were being depleted at a time when it was imperative to increase them. **It was this fact, and this alone, which made it necessary to have two task forces simultaneously in Pearl Harbor at certain periods.** It was not advisable, unless an attack on Pearl Harbor was known to be imminent, to keep the Fleet at sea and fuel it

¹²See Joint Memorandum, Chief of Staff and Chief of Naval Operations November 5, 1941, Exhibit 16

¹³See Exhibit 86, also record page 4840, also personal letter Admiral Kimmel to Admiral Stark, August 22, 1941

by sending detachments into Pearl Harbor at night even if there had been adequate fuel reserves in port. Operations at sea would have been then restricted to a small area. The increase in submarine risk would have been unjustified.

A destroyer at full power exhausts its fuel in 30 to 40 hours, at medium speed in four to six days. War experience has proven the necessity of fueling destroyers every third day, and heavy ships about every fifth day to keep a fighting reserve on board. To have kept the entire Fleet at sea for long periods would have required not 11 tankers but approximately 75, with at least one-third of them equipped for underway delivery. I did not have adequate reserves. There were no facilities for delivering stored reserves to the ships at a rate which would permit fueling more than about one-fourth of the Fleet in any one 24-hour day or one-eighth of it in any one period of darkness. To keep the Fleet at sea and exhaust our resources only to find that such expenditures were unnecessary, or still worse, to have the entire Fleet short of fuel when action was joined, were contingencies too grave to be accepted on indefinite information or conjecture.

We had one newly commissioned Navy troop transport in the Pacific and a handful of partially trained marines at San Diego. These, with the marines stationed at Pearl Harbor and the outlying islands, constituted our landing force.

On May 24, 1941, Admiral Stark wrote me that he had "an overall limit of thirty days to prepare and have ready an expedition of 25,000 men to sail for, and to take the Azores." In connection with this proposed expedition in May and June of 1941, practically all the trained and equipped marines on the West Coast, several small transports, and some other small craft, were transferred from the Pacific to the Atlantic.¹⁴ They were never returned.

In April and May of 1941, one aircraft carrier, three battleships, four cruisers, and eighteen destroyers were detached from the Pacific Fleet and transferred to the Atlantic.¹⁵ In a letter to me on April 19, 1941, Admiral Stark advised me of this proposed transfer. He described the Fleet units to be detached as "the first echelon of the Battle of the Atlantic." He added: "I am telling you; not arguing with you." This transfer took away approximately one-fourth of the fighting ships of the Pacific Fleet and resulted in a striking reduction in its power. The details of the transfer must have been quickly known in Japan.

When I was in Washington in June 1941, it was seriously proposed to transfer from the Pacific to the Atlantic an additional detachment to consist of three battleships, four cruisers, two squadrons of destroyers, and a carrier, I opposed this strenuously. The transfer was not made.

The tasks assigned to the Pacific Fleet under the War Plans indicate that it was not based in the Hawaiian area for the sole purpose of defending Pearl Harbor. The War Plans required Fleet action far from the Hawaiian Islands. They did not contemplate that

¹⁴ Dispatch, OPNAV to CinCPAC, May 24, 1941, 242130.

¹⁵ See dispatch, OPNAV to CinCPAC, May 13, 1941, 032019; CinCPac to OPNAV, May 15, 1941, 150625.

the resources of the Fleet were to be devoted exclusively or even primarily for the defense of Hawaii.

A Naval Base exists primarily for the support of the Fleet. The Naval Court of Inquiry in paragraph VIII of its findings states:

A Naval Base exists solely for the support of the Fleet, The fundamental requirement that the strategic freedom of action of the Fleet must be assured demands that the defense of a permanent Naval Base be so effectively provided for and conducted as to remove any anxiety of the Fleet in regard to the security of the Base, or for that of the vessels within its limits To superimpose upon these essentials the further requirement that the seagoing personnel shall have the additional responsibility for security from hostile action while within the limits of a permanent Naval Base, is to challenge a fundamental concept of naval warfare.

This principle has long been recognized by both the Army and the Navy. In the "Joint Action Army and Navy, 1935" the responsibility for the defense of Pearl Harbor was vested in the Army. That specifically provided: "Strategic freedom of action of the Fleet must be assured. The Fleet must have no anxiety in regard to the security of its base."

When I took command of the Fleet, the exchange of letters between the Secretary of War and the Secretary of the Navy¹⁶ indicated that the provisions of the agreement would be carried out and that existing deficiencies in the defense of Pearl Harbor would be corrected. However, it was never my disposition to assume that high echelon agreements or correspondence were panaceas. At all times in 1941 I was concerned with the security of the Fleet Base at Pearl Harbor. I did everything within my power to strengthen and improve the Base defense.

Pearl Harbor was the only refueling, replacement, and repair point for ships operating in the Hawaiian area. Lahaina Roads off the Hawaiian Island of Maui could not be used as an operating Base. About a month before I took command, Admiral Richardson issued orders that no ship was to be anchored at Lahaina because it was not safe against submarine attack. I agreed with and continued those orders in effect.

Pearl Harbor had but one entrance. Because of the topography of the Island and the narrowness of the channel, the capital ships were obliged to move in and out in single file. We had frequent training in this maneuver even at night under war conditions without lights. To complete a sortie of the Fleet required at least three hours. The danger that the channel would be blocked was always present.

¹⁶ Exhibit 10.

The defense of such a base before the outbreak of hostilities is quite different from its defense in war. During hostilities, when the Fleet is not required to wait until the potential enemy commits the first overt act, our own offensive operations protect the Base.

Pearl Harbor was included within an area defined as the Hawaiian Coastal Frontier in Annex 1, page 9, Joint Army and Navy War Plan, Rainbow 5.¹⁷ The defense of the Hawaiian Coastal Frontier, which included Oahu and all the land and sea areas required for the defense of Oahu, was entrusted by this plan to the **Commanders of the Hawaiian Coastal Frontier**, who were designated as follows:¹⁸

Army - The Commanding General Hawaiian Department

Navy - The Commandant, 14th Naval District, who is designated as the Commander, Hawaiian Naval Coastal Frontier. This officer also commands the assigned Naval local defense force and will arrange for its joint tactical and strategic employment in cooperation with the Army.

The local Naval Base Defense Forces under the Commandant of the 14th Naval District were negligible. On October 17, 1941, the Commandant wrote requesting the Navy Department to send a number of small fast craft, equipped with listening gear and depth charges, and two squadrons of patrol planes. He said:¹⁹

The only increment that has been made to these forces during the past year, exclusive of net vessels, is the USS SACRAMENTO which has no batteries, to speak of, with which the vessel can fight, and no speed with which she can run.

I forwarded the Commandant's letter with the following endorsement:²⁰

There is a possibility that the reluctance or inability of the Department to furnish the Commandant, 14th Naval District, with forces adequate to his needs may be predicated upon a conception that, in an emergency, vessels of the United States Pacific Fleet, may always be diverted for these purposes. If such be the case, the premise is so false as to hardly warrant refutation. A fleet, tied to its base by diversions to other purposes of light forces necessary for

¹⁷ Exhibit 44, item 3, page 3.

¹⁸ Exhibit 44; item 3, page 3.

¹⁹ Official letter Coml4 to CNO, October 17, 1941, ND 14 (01084); See Exhibit 46, Naval Court of Inquiry.

²⁰ COMinCH 1st endorsement to COM 14 letter A16-1/ND14. See Exhibit 46, Naval Court of Inquiry.

its security at sea is, in a real sense, no fleet at all. Moreover, this Fleet has been assigned, in the event of war, certain definite tasks, the vigorous prosecution of which requires not only all the units now assigned but as many more as can possibly be made available. The necessities of the case clearly warrant extraordinary measures in meeting the Commandant's needs.

The Commanders of the Hawaiian Coastal Frontier, General Short, and Admiral Bloch, had no means to conduct distant air reconnaissance from the Island of Oahu. The War Department had allocated on paper 180 flying fortresses to the Hawaiian Department, General Short had only twelve of those planes in Hawaii prior to the attack of which but six were in flying condition.

The Navy Department had allocated on paper 100 odd patrol planes to the Commandant of the 14th Naval District. He never received a single patrol plane.

As a consequence, the Base defense against air attack was predicated on borrowing Fleet patrol planes for distant searches. Under the war plans these Fleet patrol planes were earmarked for operations with the Fleet thousands of miles from Hawaii when war broke out. Their primary mission was always connected with Fleet operations. They were frequently based on the outlying islands - Midway, Wake, Johnston, and Palmyra. They had to train with the Fleet and search areas in which the Fleet operated. Under these circumstances, they were available for distant search from Oahu, only when and if the Fleet did not need them for its own operations, actual or impending. They were not at any time sufficient in number to conduct distant searches from Pearl Harbor as a regular routine.

The local defense plan against air attack, submitted to the War and Navy Departments, clearly provided that effective distant air reconnaissance from Oahu could not be made as a routine matter. It was only to be instituted when there was information from other sources that a carrier strike against the islands was probable within narrow time limits.²¹ This was a makeshift plan, but none better was possible with the means at hand.

The Commandant of the 14th Naval District wrote letters to the Chief of Naval Operations on December 30, 1940,²² May 7, 1941,²³ and October 17, 1941* pointing out that he had no planes and that he needed planes. Each of his letters was strongly and favorably endorsed by the Commander-in-Chief of the Fleet. On November 25, 1941, two weeks before the attack, the Chief of Naval Operations informed the Commandant:²⁴

²¹ Exhibit 44, item 8, page 4.

²² Letter from COM 14 to CNO, December 30, 1940, ND14(629), exhibit 28, Naval Court of Inquiry.

²³ Letter from COM14 to CNO, May 7, 1941, Exhibit 41, Naval Court of Inquiry (ND14).

* See Footnote 20.

²⁴ CNO to CinCPac and Com 14, November 25, 1941, serial 0135412.

The Department has no additional airplanes available for assignment to the 14th Naval District. Allocations of new aircraft squadrons which become available in the near future will be determined by the requirements of the strategic situation as it develops.

Under my standing orders I placed the guns of the Fleet at the disposal of the local antiaircraft defense. My Security Order 2 CL 41²⁵ prescribed a plan for berthing ships in sectors to develop in each sector the maximum antiaircraft fire. I designated the Commandant of the 14th Naval District Naval Base Defense Officer because he was permanently stationed in Pearl Harbor and would always be familiar with local conditions. I delegated to him the duty of advising the Senior Officer Present afloat (exclusive of the Commander-in-Chief), what condition of readiness to maintain in the ships in port. This was a flexible system designed to use the Fleet's resources in port in the Base defense.

In addition, I issued standing orders for all ships that ammunition for all antiaircraft guns, 5", 3", 1.1 and 50 caliber, be kept available in the ready ammunition boxes at the guns at all times, day and night. These orders also required that there be on board at all times a sufficient number of trained personnel to man completely all the guns of the anti-aircraft battery. All double bottom and lower deck compartments of the ships in harbor were to be kept closed except when work required they be temporarily opened. No higher state of material readiness could long be continued without serious reduction in the morale and physical condition of men and the accomplishment of necessary work on the ships.

At the time of the attack, the orders in effect required that one-fourth to one-half of the antiaircraft guns, depending upon the type of ships, be manned at all times in port. At the time of the attack, the guns were so manned. Admiral Inglis has testified that on the morning of the attack, all the antiaircraft batteries on all the ships were manned and firing within four to seven minutes.²⁶ The men of the Fleet on December 7, 1941, made the transition from peace to war with speed and courage.

In his letter to the Secretary of War on January 24, 1941, the Secretary of the Navy listed an air torpedo plane attack as one of the possible forms of hostile action against Pearl Harbor. Subsequently, the Chief of Naval Operations forwarded to the Fleet and the Commandant, 14th Naval District, detailed technical advice which practically eliminated from consideration an air torpedo plane attack as a serious danger to ships moored in the shallow waters of Pearl Harbor.

The depth of water in Pearl Harbor is 30 feet or less, except in the channels where it was generally 40 feet. The Chief of Naval Operations on February 15, 1941, wrote to me on the subject of anti-torpedo baffles for protection against torpedo plane attacks on Pearl Harbor stating:²⁷

²⁵ Exhibit 44, item 12.

²⁶ Record, page 124.

²⁷ Official letter, CNO to CinCPAC, February 15, 1941, Serial 09330, exhibit 49, Naval Court of Inquiry.

Consideration has been given to the installation of A/T (anti-torpedo) baffles within Pearl Harbor for protection against torpedo plane attack. It is considered that the relatively shallow depth of water limits the need for anti-torpedo nets in Pearl Harbor. In addition, the congestion and the necessity for maneuvering room limit the practicability of the present type of baffles. . . .

A minimum depth of water of 75' may be assumed necessary to successfully drop torpedoes from planes. 150' of water is desired. The maximum height planes at present experimentally drop torpedoes is 250'. Launching speeds are between 120 and 150 knots. The desirable height for dropping is 60' or less. About 200 yards of torpedo run is necessary before the exploding device is armed but this may be altered.

In the same letter he underlined the fact that the depths of water in which torpedoes were launched in the successful attacks at Taranto were between 14 and 15 fathoms, that is, 84 feet to 90 feet of water. A letter of similar tenor was sent by the Chief of Naval Operations to the Commandants of various naval districts, including the 14th Naval District.²⁸

On June 13, 1941, the Chief of Naval Operations sent another letter on the same subject to the Commandants of the various Naval Districts, including the Commandant of the 14th Naval District a copy of which was sent to me.²⁹ After reading this letter, my Staff and I, as well as the Commandant of the 14th Naval District, believed that the danger of a successful airplane torpedo attack on Pearl Harbor was negligible.

The Naval Court of Inquiry concluded that the torpedoes launched by the Japanese in the shallow water of Pearl Harbor constituted, in effect, a secret weapon in the category of the robot bomb, which was unknown to the best professional opinion in Great Britain and the United States at the time.³⁰ The Secretary, in his endorsement to that report, stated that the Navy Department had information from British sources that aircraft torpedoes were successfully launched in 42 feet of water in the year 1940. Such information was never supplied to me. [But see www.pearlharbor911attacks.com for Professor Gannon's "research in Naval Attaché reports from London--documents in the National Archives at College Park, MD, that stand outside the usually consulted Pearl Harbor collection--revealing that Stark's operations people knew in July 1941 that the Royal Navy Fleet Air Arm had made a fin modification to its 18-inch Mark XII aerial torpedo that enabled it to be dropped in water as shallow as 24 feet. Use of the shallow

²⁸ CNO to several commandants, February 17, 1941, Serial 010230, exhibit 54, Naval Court of Inquiry.

²⁹ CNO to several commandants, June 13, 1941, Serial 055730, exhibit 55, Naval Court of Inquiry.

³⁰ Naval Court of Inquiry, Finding XV.

water torpedo had been made in Royal Navy air attacks on various Italian harbors in the Mediterranean during 1940 and the first month of 1941.

“This was extraordinary new information: namely, that shallow water torpedoes were possible, that they existed, and, what was more, that they had been proved effective in battle. This knowledge, which was in the hands of the Navy Department five months before the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, was *withheld* from Admiral Kimmel. Had it been sent forward alarm bells would have sounded insistently in Kimmel's staff offices.

“But the knowledge was deep-sixed--until found by a historian 60 years later.

“Shamefully, when, in October 1945, Admiral Kimmel, while preparing his testimony before the Joint Congressional Hearings that began that year, asked to see intelligence reports of British aerial torpedo developments prior to December 7, he was denied *even then* the 1941 description of the shallow water Mark XII.

“What the British had accomplished, the Japanese could accomplish, too-and did. But it was Kimmel who would be hung out to dry for Washington's failure to understand that fact, and to communicate it to Hawaii.”]

In any event, the Navy Department apparently decided that torpedo baffles in Pearl Harbor were not required and exhibited no concern at their absence.

In his letter to me of February 15, 1941, the Chief of Naval Operations stated, in effect, that existing torpedo nets were so cumbersome that their installation in Pearl Harbor would interfere with the movement of ships and the ability of the Fleet to get away on short notice. He stated:

There is apparently a great need for the development of a light efficient torpedo net which could be laid temporarily and quickly within protective harbors and which can be readily removed.

The Fleet did not have facilities in Hawaii to manufacture anti-torpedo nets or baffles. If the light efficient net described by the Chief of Naval Operations was ever developed by the Navy Department in 1941, we never heard of it or received it. Admiral King, in his endorsement to the record of the Naval Court tersely stated: “The decision not to install torpedo baffles appears to have been made by the Navy Department.”

My relations with General Short, which were once the subject of considerable confusion in the public mind, have now been clarified by exhaustive investigations. The Committee has all the evidence on this subject. [But see www.pearlharbor911attacks.com for Admiral Kimmel's 1962 writing, *Facts about Pearl Harbor*, which chronicles J. Edgar Hoover's secret 1942 contribution to the “infamous lie” that Kimmel and Short were not on speaking terms.] I need not labor it. It has been established that our official and social relations were friendly, that we frequently conferred on official matters of

common interest and invariably did so when either of us received messages which had any bearing on the development of the United States—Japanese situation, or on our several plans in preparing for war. As the Naval Court of Inquiry summarized the matter:³¹

Each was mindful of his own responsibility and of the responsibilities vested in the other. Each was informed of measures being undertaken by the other in the defense of the Base to a degree sufficient for all useful purposes.

General Short and I were not "opposite numbers" in the sense that our total concerns and duties were co-extensive. The responsibilities of the Fleet under War Plans were far flung and offensive. Those of the Hawaiian Department were local and defensive. Because I was interested in the security of the Fleet and the Hawaiian Islands, I gave General Short all the assistance I could, even in connection with local defensive measures which were exclusively under the Army's control. The Aircraft Warning Service is a case in point. I took Army personnel to sea with the Fleet so that they could be trained as radar operators. I assigned to the Army a Naval Officer, who had experience in Britain with radar, to give any advice and assistance he could in connection with the aircraft warning net in Hawaii. General Short informed me his radar was operating and could give a 100-mile coverage. In joint Army-Navy drills it did perform satisfactorily. In the period before December 7, I was informed that the Army's radar was manned. It was so manned. It was only the day before the attack that some subordinate Army Officer gave the permission to shut down at 7 a. m. on Sunday. Even despite this, one of the stations was operating after 7 a. m. on the morning of December 7, and obtained information both, about the incoming and outgoing planes. This information was not passed on to the Navy.

My relations with my Staff, Task Force Commanders and Senior Flag Officers were excellent. This is another subject dealt with exhaustively in the testimony of previous investigations now before the Committee. My Staff was composed of superior officers whose records in the war have demonstrated their abilities. I was accessible to them. We had full and frank discussions about the various decisions which it was my responsibility to make. **The so-called "war warning" dispatch I also discussed with the Senior Task Force Commanders, Admiral Pye (Commander of Task Force One), Admiral Halsey (Commander of Task Force Two), Admiral Brown (Commander of Task Force Three), Admiral Calhoun (Commander, Base Force), and Admiral Bloch, the Commandant of the 14th Naval District. I did not personally show that dispatch or discuss it with Admiral Newton or Admiral Bellinger. The orders sending Admiral Newton to Midway were issued by me to Admiral Brown who was in command of Task Force 3,³² and under whom Admiral Newton served. Admirals Newton and Brown conferred before the former set out to Midway.³³ Admiral Newton proceeded under complete war conditions. As for Admiral Bellinger, he served directly under Admirals**

³¹ Naval Court of Inquiry finding IV.

³² Secret dispatch, CinCPac to COMTASKFOR 3, COM14, December 4, 1941, 040237.

³³ Hart investigation, Testimony Admiral Newton, page 320, question 45.

Bloch and Brown, who were familiar with all important developments. I was fully aware of the conditions in Admiral Bellinger's patrol plane force, knew and had approved his schedule of operations. Had I seen any need for him to change his course of action, I would have issued orders to him to that effect directly.

A description of the measures I took for the security of Fleet Units at sea remains to be given. The Naval Court of Inquiry has described them as follows:³⁴

The task forces operating at sea were screened defensively by aircraft and destroyers. Torpedo defense batteries were manned day and night, ammunition was at hand, and depth charges were ready for use. Watertight integrity was maintained, horizon and surface battle lookouts were kept posted, the ships steamed darkened at night, and the use of the radio was restricted to a minimum.¹¹

The Court concluded;

It is a fact that the precautions taken by Admiral Kimmel for the security of his Fleet while at sea were adequate and effective.

In summary, the Pacific Fleet in 1941 established and maintained the highest degree of security measures at sea and in port consistent with our assigned mission of intensive preparation for war. We had our difficulties with shifting personnel and an exposed and inadequately defended Base. We had much to do in preparing a Fleet then unready for war. We were proud of having a hard job to do. Admiral Hewitt, in his report to the Secretary, made this finding which has never been made public.³⁵

Throughout his incumbency as Commander-in-Chief Pacific Fleet, Admiral Kimmel was energetic, indefatigable, resourceful and positive in his efforts to prepare the Fleet for war.

We maintained as a regular procedure a high state of daily alertness which, within a very short time, could be intensified to deal with a particular hazard when and if it developed. We needed one thing which our own resources could not make available to us. That vital need was the information available in Washington from the intercepted dispatches which told when and where Japan would probably strike. I did not get this information.

³⁴ Naval Court of Inquiry, finding X.

³⁵ Hewitt report, conclusion 25, page 779.

PART II

Information Received and Actions Taken

In this part of my statement, I shall describe the information available to me prior to the attack and the actions which I took upon the basis of that information. I shall deal with the following topics:

First, the information furnished to me by the Navy Department prior to October 16, 1941;

Second, the dispatches sent to me by the Navy Department from October 16, 1941 to and including November 27, 1941;

Third, the meaning of the so-called war warning dispatch of November 27, and related information;

Fourth, my decisions and actions from November 27 to the time of the attack.

1. Information and Dispatches, January- October 1941.

In February 1941 when I became Commander-in-Chief, I was somewhat familiar with the tense situation in the Pacific. During the year 1941, I received dispatches and letters from the Chief of Naval Operations which might be broadly described as "war warnings." On January 21, 1941, he sent a dispatch to the Commander-in-Chief³⁶ which stated:

The international situation continues to deteriorate. It now appears to me that if war eventuates its general character will be according to plan DOG my memorandum to the Secretary. If this estimate proves correct I contemplate ordering mobilization according to plan RAINBOW THREE with following modifications Atlantic Fleet principal concentration New England and Canada execute all tasks except affirm expect early reinforcement from Pacific and much stronger British Isles detachment. Pacific Fleet waiting attitude or execute assigned tasks in Area eastward of 160 degrees east depending on action by Japan. Asiatic Fleet cannot expect early reinforcement alert status or carry out tasks according to circumstances.

³⁶ Dispatch CNO to CinCUS, January 21, 1941, 212155.

On February 3, 1941, the Chief of Naval Operations sent me a dispatch from the United States Naval Attaché in London, which stated:³⁷

I have been officially informed that Japanese are apparently planning an offensive on a large scale presumed against Indo-China Malay Peninsula or the Dutch East Indies no doubt to be coordinated with attack on Great Britain approximately February 10. It is definite that the Jap and German relations are becoming most intimate and that the Japs are conducting a hatred campaign against the British even in ordinarily pro-English press also two large Japanese merchant vessel sailings have been cancelled. Reports believed reliable state that all Jap shipping being called home to be taken over by the government. Request your knowledge of this. The Japanese mediating Thai Indo-China scene meeting aboard Jap cruiser. Price of umpire's services unreliably reported to be bases on the west coast of Siam that are usable by light craft for cutting Singapore communications via the Malacca Straits.

On July 3, 1941, the Chief of Naval Operations sent me a dispatch which stated:³⁸

The unmistakable deduction from information from numerous sources is that the Japanese Government has determined upon its future policy which is supported by all principal Japanese political and military groups. This policy probably involves war in the near future. An advance against the British and Dutch cannot be entirely ruled out. However, CNO holds the opinion that Jap activity in the south will be for the present confine to seizure and development of Naval, Army and Air Bases in Indo-China

The dispatch predicted that Japan's major military effort would be against Russian maritime provinces. It also stated that all Japanese vessels in United States Atlantic ports had been ordered to be west of the Panama Canal by the first of August.

On July 3, 1941, the Chief of Naval Operations sent me another dispatch.³⁹ This reported that the Japanese Government had issued orders that certain Japanese vessels in the North Atlantic and Caribbean areas pass through the Panama Canal to the Pacific. Under these orders all Nipponese merchant vessels would be clear of the Caribbean and North Atlantic areas by July 22. It related information from unusually reliable Chinese

³⁷ Dispatch ALUSNA, London to OPNAV, 3 February 1941, 031400, passed to CinCUS as OPNAV 032300.

³⁸ Exhibit 37, page 4.

³⁹ Exhibit 37, page 5.

sources that within two weeks Japan would abrogate the neutrality treaty with Russia and attack. The dispatch concluded as follows:

The present strength and deployment of Nip Army in Manchuria is defensive and the present distribution of the Japanese Fleet appears normal, and *that it is capable of movement either north or south*. That a definite move by the Japanese may be expected during the period July 20 - August 1 is indicated by the foregoing. (Italics supplied.)

On July 25, the Chief of Naval Operations sent me a dispatch in which the Chief of Staff joined.⁴⁰ This advised that on July 25 the United States would employ economic sanctions against Japan. It stated in part:

The Chief of Naval Operations and the Chief of Staff do not anticipate hostile reaction by Japan through the use of military means but you are furnished this information in order that you may take appropriate precautionary measures against possible eventualities. Action being initiated by the United States Army to call the Philippine Army into active service at an early date. This dispatch is to be kept secret except from immediate Army and Navy subordinates. . . .

In addition to these dispatches the Chief of Naval Operations' letters to me show recurrent tension in the international situation during 1941. His letters use such expressions as:

"What will happen in the Pacific is anyone's guess." (Memorandum of May 14, 1941)

An open rupture was described as a possibility on July 24, 1941.

"Obviously, the situation in the Far East continues to deteriorate; this is one thing that is factual." (July 31, 1941)

". . . Also the seriousness of the Pacific situation which continues to deteriorate." (August 21, 1941)

"I have not given up hope of continuing peace in the Pacific, but I could wish the thread by which it continues to hang were not so slender." (August 28, 1941)

"P. S. I have held this letter up pending a talk with Mr. Hull who has asked me to hold it very secret. I may sum it up by saying that conversations with the Japs have practically reached an impasse." (September 23, 1941)

⁴⁰ Exhibit 37, page 14.

None of these letters or dispatches warned of an attack in the Hawaiian area, or indicated that an attack there was imminent or probable. None of these letters or dispatches directed an alert in the Hawaiian area against an overseas attack.

On the contrary, on February 1, 1941, the Chief of Naval Operations wrote me on the subject of "Rumored Japanese Attack on Pearl Harbor."⁴¹ He stated that Mr. Grew had telegraphed the State Department on January 27, 1941:

The Peruvian minister has informed a member of my staff that he has heard from many sources, including a Japanese source that in the event of trouble breaking out between the United States and Japan, the Japanese intend to make a surprise attack against Pearl Harbor with all of their strength and employing all of their equipment. The Peruvian minister considered the rumors fantastic. Nevertheless, he considered them of sufficient importance to convey this information to a member of my staff.

The letter from the Chief of Naval Operations added:

The Division of Naval Intelligence places no credence in these rumors. Furthermore, based on known data regarding the present disposition and employment of Japanese naval and army forces, *no move against Pearl Harbor appears imminent or planned for in the foreseeable future.* (Italics supplied.)

This estimate as to the improbability of a move against Pearl Harbor was never withdrawn.

Consider my situation as Commander-in-Chief of the Pacific Fleet at the time I received, by letter and dispatch, these ominous predictions of Japanese aggression in the Far East. I was carrying out an intensive training program to prepare the Fleet for war. I was under specific injunction to continue that program. In an official letter to me on April 3, 1941 (Serial 038612), the Chief of Naval Operations wrote:

In the meantime I advise that you devote as much time as may be available to training your forces in the particular duties which the various units may be called upon to perform under your operating plans. The time has arrived, I believe, to perfect the technique and the methods that will be required by the special operations which you envisage immediately after the entry of the United States into war.

⁴¹ Exhibit 15.

On November 24, 1941, the Chief of Naval Operations sent me a dispatch stating that the chances of a favorable outcome of negotiations with Japan were very doubtful and that, in his opinion, an aggressive movement in any direction, including an attack on the Philippines or Guam was a possibility.⁴² Admiral Stark testified before the Naval Court of Inquiry that he did not intend that the Pacific Fleet should discontinue its training program upon receipt of this dispatch, two weeks before the attack.⁴³

I was not expected to discontinue training for all-out security measures, concentrated on the defense of the Hawaiian Islands, every time an alarming dispatch was received from Washington predicting Japanese aggression in the Far East. Indeed, had I done so, the training program would have been curtailed so drastically that the Fleet could not have been prepared for war. [In 1960 Fleet Admiral Nimitz wrote: "Admiral Kimmel had been given no information which would justify interrupting a very urgent training program (Admiral Nimitz, *Sea Power*, 1960, p.650)." Admiral Kimmel asked the Joint Congressional Committee to call Admiral Nimitz as a witness. They refused.]

During the time these dispatches were sent, the Navy Department knew just what my program in Hawaii was. My Fleet Operating Schedules were filed with the Navy Department,⁴⁴ where the location and movement of substantially every ship in the Fleet was known at all times. No dispatch or letter contained any order or suggestion for departure from my operating schedules. On May 24, 1941, the Navy Department sent me the following dispatch:⁴⁵

The Department in the interest of morale will consider visits of small detachments or individual ships to the Pacific Coast. *It is not desired that detachments of such size make these visits as to indicate the breaking up or reducing the Hawaiian concentration.* Your recommendations are requested. (Italics supplied.)

When the War and Navy Departments wished to put the forces in Hawaii on alert against attack, they could and did use appropriate language to that end. **The dispatch of June 17, 1940**, from the War Department to the Hawaiian Garrison demonstrates this. That dispatch stated:⁴⁶

Immediately alert complete defensive organization to deal with possible transpacific raid, to greatest extent possible without creating public hysteria or provoking undue curiosity of newspapers or alien agents. Suggest maneuver basis. **Maintain alert until further orders.**

⁴² Exhibit 37, page 32.

⁴³ Naval Court of Inquiry, testimony of Admiral Stark, questions Nos. 142, 404, and 405.

⁴⁴ CinPac File No. A4-3/FF12/(13), Serial 01254, August 13, 1941, received OpNav September 3, 1941.

⁴⁵ Dispatch OpNav to CinCPac, 24 May 1941, 242150.

⁴⁶ Exhibit 52, page 1.

Instructions for secret communication direct with Chief of Staff will be furnished you shortly. **Acknowledge.**

In reply to Admiral Richardson's dispatch reporting the actions taken by the Fleet forces to cooperate with the Army in maintaining the "alert," the Navy Department directed him to continue such cooperation.⁴⁷

It is one thing to warn commanders at a particular base of the probable outbreak of war in theaters thousands of miles array, knowing and expecting that they will continue their assigned tasks and missions after the receipt of such warning, and that the very nature of the warning emphasizes to them the necessity for continuing such tasks and missions.

It is quite another thing to warn commanders at a particular base of an attack to be expected in their own locality.

In 1941, we of the Pacific Fleet had a plethora of premonitions, of generalized warnings and forebodings that Japan might embark on aggressive action in the Far East at any one of the variously predicted dates. After receipt of such warnings, we were expected to continue with renewed intensity and zeal our own training program and preparations for war rather than to go on an all-out local alert against attack.

In the year 1941, the international situation was grave and, at times, tense. However, preparing the Fleet for war through an intensive training program had to go on. There was a vital element of timing involved in determining when the Fleet should curtail training for all out war measures. Maximum security measures, consistent with the maintenance of the training program, were already in effect in the Fleet. When would Japanese-American relations reach the point that all training should cease and all-out war dispositions should be made? This was what we needed to know in the Pacific in the year 1941.

Throughout 1941 the Navy Department had several courses open. It could furnish me directly with the best evidence of Japanese intentions and plans, the intercepted Japanese military and diplomatic messages. This would have given me an opportunity to judge for myself the gravity and intensity of the crisis as December 7, 1941 approached, and the probability of a Japanese attack on Hawaii. The Navy Department failed to do this. The Navy Department did not permit me to evaluate for myself the intercepted Japanese military and diplomatic messages.

Another course of action then remained. That was to issue an order which would have directed dispositions of the Fleet to guard against an attack in Hawaii. **The message of June 17, 1940, "be on the alert against hostile overseas raid," was such an order. It would have had the same effect in December of 1941 as it had in June of 1940. Such an order was not given.**

⁴⁷ Record, vol. 17, pp. 2779-2781.

Further, the War and Navy Departments could have ordered the local commanders of the Hawaiian Coastal Frontier, Admiral Bloch and General Short, to execute the Joint Coastal Frontier Defense Plan. This was not done.

The Navy Department could have given the order to mobilize under the War Plan. This order would have had a definite meaning. It would have placed the Fleet on an all-out war basis. The order to mobilize did not authorize acts of war.⁴⁸ The dispatch of January 21, 1941, indicated that mobilization would be ordered when war was imminent.⁴⁹ The order to mobilize was not given.

In the dispatches I received on and after October 16, 1941, I was not given available information as to the actual status of Japanese-American negotiations and as to Japanese military plans; nor was I given orders for alert against an attack on Hawaii. These dispatches had the same tenor as the warnings which had previously been sent in February, June, and July, 1941, predicting probable Japanese action thousands of miles from the Hawaiian area.

2. Dispatches from October 16, 1941 to and including November 27, 1941.

On October 16, 1941, the Chief of Naval Operations sent the Commanders-in-Chief, Atlantic, Asiatic and Pacific Fleets, the following dispatch:⁵⁰

The resignation of the Japanese Cabinet has created a grave situation. If a new cabinet is formed it will probably be strongly nationalistic and anti-American. If the Konoye Cabinet remains the effect will be that it will operate under a new mandate which will not include rapprochement with the U. S. In either case hostilities between Japan and Russia are a strong possibility. Since the U. S. and Britain are held responsible by Japan for her present desperate situation there is also a possibility that Japan may attack these two powers. In view of these possibilities you will take due precautions including such preparatory deployments as will not disclose strategic intention nor constitute provocative actions against Japan.

The term "preparatory deployments" used in this dispatch is non-technical. It has no especial significance other than its natural meaning. After receiving this dispatch, I made certain preparatory deployments. I ordered submarines to assume a war patrol off both Wake and Midway.⁵¹ I reinforced Johnston and Wake, with additional marines, ammunition, and stores and also sent additional marines to Palmyra Island. I ordered the

⁴⁸ Navy Basic War Plan—Rainbow No. 5, Chapter II, Section 2, Sections 0221, 0222, 0223.

⁴⁹ Dispatch CNO to CinCUS, January 21, 1941, 212155, "If this estimate proves correct I contemplate ordering mobilization according to Rainbow Three with following modifications....."

⁵⁰ Exhibit 37, page 18.

⁵¹ Dispatch, CinCPac to COMSUBSCOFOR 170354 AND 170426, October 17, 1941.

Commandant of the Fourteenth Naval District to direct an alert status in the outlying islands. He did so and reported his action to me.⁵²

I placed on twelve hours' notice certain vessels of the Fleet which were in West Coast ports, held six submarines in readiness to depart for Japan, delayed the sailing of one battleship which was scheduled to visit a West Coast Navy Yard. I dispatched twelve patrol planes to Midway with orders to carry out daily patrols within 100 miles of the Island,⁵³ and placed in effect additional security measures in the Fleet Operating Areas.

On October 22, I reported by letter all these dispositions to the Chief of Naval Operations.

I might say I summarized all these movements in a letter and the reports had previously been made in movement reports.

By letter dated November 7, 1941, the Chief of Naval Operations specifically approved these dispositions. He wrote:

OK on the dispositions which you made in connection with the recent change in the Japanese Cabinet.

The Naval Court of Inquiry found:

He (Admiral Kimmel) did not interpret the dispatch of 16 October as directing or warranting that he abandon his preparations for war. He held daily conferences with his subordinate commanders and the members of his Staff, all experienced officers of long service and sought by every means to ascertain wherein his interpretation might be incorrect. The consensus throughout was that no further steps were warranted by the information at hand.

In the dispatch of October 16, 1941, I was advised that there was a possibility Japan would attack the United States and Great Britain. But this advice was given a definite meaning by the Chief of Naval Operations in a letter to me on October 17, in which he said:

Personally I do not believe the Japanese are going to sail into us and the message I sent you *merely stated the "possibility:"* in fact I tempered the message handed to me considerably. (Italics supplied.)

This letter made it clear to me that when Admiral Stark stated certain Japanese action to be "possible," he meant that it was not probable.

⁵² Dispatch, CinCPac to Com14, 170319, October 17, 1941, and dispatch Com14 to CinCPac 170356.

⁵³ Dispatch, CinCPac to COMPATWING 2, 170429, October 17, 1941.

In his letter of October 17, 1941, the Chief of Naval Operations enclosed a "Memorandum for the CNO" from Captain R. E. Schuirmann, who was in charge of the Navy's liaison with the State Department, Admiral Stark stated in his letter that this memorandum by Captain Schuirmann "sums up my thoughts better than I have been able to set them down."

The dispatch of October 16 and the Schuirmann memorandum were not consistent. The dispatch of October 16 began: "The resignation of the Japanese Cabinet has created a grave crisis," The memorandum began: "I believe we are inclined to over-estimate the importance of changes in the Japanese Cabinet as indicative of great changes in Japanese policy of thought or action."

The memorandum stated:

Present reports are that the new Cabinet to be formed will be no better and no worse than the one which has just fallen.

The memorandum was to the effect that the Japanese military would determine Japan's policy regardless of the Cabinet in power.

On November 24, I received a dispatch from the Chief of Naval Operations which was addressed to me, the Commander-in-Chief of the Asiatic Fleet, and the commandants of the Eleventh, Twelfth, Thirteenth, and Fifteenth Naval Districts. This dispatch read as follows:⁵⁴

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

Under date of November 25, the Chief of Naval Operations wrote me a letter which reached me on December 3. This letter contained a postscript added after a "meeting with the President and Mr. Hull today." The dates of the conference and the postscript are not known to me. In the postscript he wrote:

From many angles an attack on the Philippines would be the most embarrassing thing that could happen to us.

⁵⁴ Exhibit 37, page 32.

There are some here who think it likely to occur. I do not give it the weight others do, but I included it because of the strong feeling among some people. You know I have generally held that it was not time for the Japanese to proceed against Russia. I still do. Also I still rather look for an advance into Thailand, Indo-China. Burma Road area as the most likely.

I won't go into the pros or cons of what the United States may do. I will be damned if I know. I wish I did. The only thing I do know is that we may do most anything and that's the only thing I know to be prepared for; or we may do nothing—I think it more likely to be “anything.” (Italics supplied.)

On November 27, the Chief of Naval Operations sent to me and to the Commander-in-Chief of the Asiatic Fleet, the following dispatch:⁵⁵

This dispatch is to be considered a war warning. Negotiations with Japan looking toward stabilization of conditions in the Pacific have ceased and an aggressive move by Japan is expected within the next few days. The number and equipment of Japanese troops and the organization of naval task forces indicates an amphibious expedition against either the Philippines Thai or Kra Peninsula or possibly Borneo. Execute an appropriate defensive deployment preparatory to carrying out the tasks assigned in WPL 46. Inform District and Army authorities. A similar warning is being sent by War Department. SPENAVO inform British. Continental Districts Guam Samoa directed take appropriate measures against sabotage.

On the same day I received two other dispatches from the Chief of Naval Operations, which affected my current estimate of the situation, as well as my subsequent dispositions.

The first of these dispatches was as follows:⁵⁶

Army has offered to make available some units of infantry for reinforcing defense battalions now on station if you consider this desirable. Army also proposes to prepare in Hawaii garrison troops for advance bases which you may occupy but is unable at this time to provide any antiaircraft units. Take this into consideration in your plans and advise

⁵⁵ Exhibit 37, page 36.

⁵⁶ Dispatch CNO to CinCPac, November 26, 1941, 270040.

when practicable number of troops desired and recommended armament.

The second of these dispatches was as follows:⁵⁷

In order to keep the planes of the 2nd marine aircraft ring available for expeditionary use OpNav has requested and Army has agreed to station 25 Army pursuit planes at Midway and a similar number at Wake provide you consider this feasible and desirable. It will be necessary for you to transport these planes and ground crews from Oahu to these stations on an aircraft, carrier. Planes will be flown off at destination and ground personnel landed in boats essential spare parts tools and ammunition will be taken in the carrier or on later trips of regular Navy supply vessels. Army understands these forces must be quartered in tents. Navy must be responsible for supplying water and subsistence and transporting other Army supplies. Stationing these planes must not be allowed to interfere with planned movements of Army bombers to Philippines. Additional parking areas should be laid promptly if necessary. Can Navy bombs now at outlying positions be carried by Army bombers which may fly to those positions for supporting Navy operations. Confer with Commanding General and advise as soon as practicable. (Italics supplied.)

3. Analysis of the so-called "War Warning" Dispatch of November 27, 1941, and related information.

The so-called "war warning" dispatch of November 27 did not warn the Pacific Fleet of an attack in the Hawaiian area. It did not state expressly or by implication that an attack in the Hawaiian area was imminent or probable. It did not repeal or modify the advice previously given me by the Navy Department that no move against Pearl Harbor was imminent or planned by Japan. The phrase "war warning" cannot be made a catch-all for all the contingencies hindsight may suggest. It is a characterization of the specific information which the dispatch contained.

The dispatch warned of war - where?

In the Far East. The dispatch stated:

The number and equipment of Japanese troops and the organization of naval task forces indicates an amphibious

⁵⁷ Dispatch CNO to CinCPac, November 26, 1941, 270038.

expedition against either the Philippines, Thai, or Kra Peninsula or possibly Borneo.

Thus the Philippines, Thai, and the Kra Peninsula were stated to be expected objectives of Japan. When it came to "possible" objectives, Borneo was the only one specified. Hawaii was not mentioned. As the Naval Court of Inquiry points out, "No reference was made to the possibility of an aggressive movement in any direction as had been done in the dispatch of 24 November." This indicated to us in the Fleet that since the earlier dispatch, the Navy Department had obtained later information, on the basis of which it could specify both probable and possible Japanese objectives.

Moreover, the two other dispatches which I received on November 27, in addition to the so-called "war warning" dispatch, were affirmative evidence that the War and Navy Departments did not consider hostile action on Pearl Harbor imminent or probable.

One of these dispatches proposed (See footnote 57) that I send 25 Army pursuit planes by aircraft carrier to each of the Islands of Wake and Midway. The other dispatch proposed (See footnote 56) the reinforcement of Marine defense battalions on Midway and Wake with Army troops.

About the same time General Short received a dispatch⁵⁸ from the War Department which stated that the Army proposed to take over the defense of these islands from the Marines. Thus, the dispatches sent from the War and Navy Departments were in disagreement on the very fundamentals of the project.

The proposed exchange of Army troops for Marines on the outlying island bases was not feasible. General Short and I had extensive conferences on the subject. I learned that the Army had no guns, either surface or anti-aircraft to equip any troops which might relieve or reinforce the Marines. Thus, if the Marines were withdrawn, their equipment and arms would have to be left for the Army. I did not have sufficient additional supplies to reequip and rearm the Marines removed. The Marines stationed on the Islands were trained, acclimated and efficient beyond standards which could be immediately obtained by Army troops relieving them. The Army had nothing in its organization comparable to a Marine defense battalion, so that the Army garrison would have required a new table of organization. The proposed relief of the Marine garrisons by Army troops would necessarily disrupt the defense of the Islands during the period that one garrison was preparing to depart and the other was being installed.

Furthermore, at Wake, the more westerly of the two Islands, there were no harbor facilities or anchorage. Material and personnel had to be landed from ships underway in an open seaway. Ships had been delayed in unloading at Wake for as long as 28 days due to bad weather. It was not unusual for a ship to take as much as 7 or 8 days. Extensive unloading of men and material from ships at Wake, in the face of any enemy operation, would be impossible.

⁵⁸ Message No. 489, November 29, 1941, War Department to Commanding General, Hawaiian Department.

I believed that responsible authorities in Washington would not plan or propose a project for shifting garrisons under such circumstances, if they considered that enemy action against these outlying bases was imminent.

I promptly recommended to the Chief of Naval Operations that the Marines should not be withdrawn from the outlying islands until the Army had received arms and equipment for its defense battalions and had adequately trained them.⁵⁹

The replacement of Marine planes on the Islands of Wake and Midway with Army pursuit planes, as proposed by Washington, was also impracticable. At conferences with the Army on this matter, the Commanding General of the Hawaiian Air Detachment stated that the Army pursuit planes could not operate more than fifteen miles from land, nor could they land on a carrier. Consequently, once they were landed on one of the outlying islands they would be frozen there. Their fifteen-mile limit of operation radically restricted their usefulness in the island's defense (See footnote 59). I so advised the Chief of Naval Operations by dispatch and letter.⁶⁰

The Army pursuit planes which it was proposed to send to outlying islands from Oahu on November 27 constituted approximately 50 percent of the Army's pursuit strength on Oahu. The very fact that the War and Navy Departments proposed their transfer from Hawaii indicated to me that responsible authorities in Washington did not consider an air raid on Pearl Harbor either imminent or probable.

In brief, on November 27, the Navy Department suggested that I send from the immediate vicinity of Pearl Harbor the carriers of the Fleet which constituted the Fleet's main striking defense against an air attack.

On November 27, the War and Navy Departments suggested that we send from the Island of Oahu, 50 percent of the Army's resources in pursuit planes.

These proposals came to us on the very same day of the so-called "war warning."

In these circumstances no reasonable man in my position would consider that the "war warning" was intended to suggest the likelihood of an attack in the Hawaiian area.

⁵⁹ Dispatch CinCPac to OpNav, November 28, 1941, 280627; Official letter CinCPac to CNO, December 2, 1941, Serial 0114W; Personal letter to Admiral Stark, December 2, 1941.

⁶⁰ In the "Narrative Statement of Evidenence (sic) at Navy Pearl Harbor Investigations" prepared by the Navy Department for the Senate Naval Affairs Committee and distributed to this Committee, the following statement is made (pages 326 and 327): "It appears from the evidence that Admiral Kimmel and General Short had a conference about the subject of the dispatches concerning the Army's willingness to garrison Midway and Wake Islands, and that the project fell through because these two area Commanders could not agree as to whom should command the Army troops. Each insisted he should be supreme." This statement is not accurate. The decisions not to send the Army pursuit planes and not to relieve the Marines with Army troops were made for the reasons I have outlined and which are stated in my dispatch, and official and personal letters.

From November 27 to the time of the attack, all the information which I had from the Navy Department or from any other source, confirmed, and was consistent, with the Japanese movement in South East Asia described in the dispatch of November 27.

On November 30, the Navy Department sent me for information a dispatch addressed to the Commander-in-Chief of the Asiatic Fleet.⁶¹ This stated there were indications that Japan was about to attack points on the Kra Isthmus by overseas expedition. The Commander-in-Chief of the Asiatic Fleet was directed to scout for information of Japanese movements in the China Sea.

On December 1, the Navy Department sent me for information another dispatch which it addressed to the Commander-in-Chief of the Asiatic Fleet⁶² describing a Japanese intrigue in Malaya. Japan planned a landing at Khota Baru in Malaya in order to entice the British to cross the frontier from Malay into Thailand. Thailand would then call Britain an aggressor, and call upon Japan for aid. This would facilitate the Japanese entry into Thailand as a full-fledged ally, and give Japan air bases in the Kra Peninsula, and a position to carry out any further operations along Malaya.

From the Commander-in-Chief of the Asiatic Fleet, from the China Coast, and other sources, we had reports of the development of a Japanese amphibious expedition headed south. Movements of troops, tanks, amphibian boats, landing craft, transports, and naval vessels had been sighted moving to the Kra Peninsula.⁶³

On December 6, 1941, the Commander-in-Chief of the Asiatic Fleet reported various large Japanese forces apparently making for Kohtron.⁶⁴ These consisted of one 25-ship convoy with an escort of 6 cruisers and 10 destroyers, and another 13-ship convoy with 2 cruisers and 10 destroyers. The scouting force of the Asiatic Fleet had sighted 30 ships and one large cruiser anchored in Camranh Bay in Indochina. Incidentally, Kohtron is in Indochina.

In short, all indications of the movements of Japanese military and naval forces which came to my attention confirmed the information in the dispatch of 27 November—that the Japanese were on the move against Thailand or the Kra Peninsula in South East Asia.

The fortnightly "Summary of Current National Situations" issued by the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations under date of December 1, 1941, stated on page 1 "Strong indications point to an early Japanese advance against Thailand."⁶⁵ The same publication, on page 9, under the heading "The Japanese Naval Situation" stated

⁶¹Exhibit 78, page 2.

⁶²Dispatch OpNav to CinCAF, info CinCPac, 1 December, 011400. See also Hewitt testimony, Captain Layton, pages 216, 217.

⁶³Dispatch OpNav to CinCAF, info CinCPac, November 28, 1941, 281633. See also Hewitt testimony, Captain Layton, page 201.

⁶⁴Dispatch CinCAF to OpNav, info CinCPanc, December 6, 1941, 061255.

⁶⁵Exhibit 80.

definitely "Major capital ship strength remains in home waters as well as the greatest portion of the carriers."

On December 3, 1941, I received intelligence that Japanese consular and diplomatic posts at Hong Kong, Singapore, Batavia, Manila, Washington, and London, had been ordered to destroy most of their codes.⁶⁶ This dispatch stated "most of their codes and ciphers" –not all—a point which was noted by me and my staff at the time. This information appeared to fit in with the information we had received about a Japanese movement in South East Asia. Japan would naturally take precautions to prevent the compromise of her communication system in the event that her action in South East Asia caused Britain and the United States to declare war, and take over her diplomatic residences.

In addition to actual observation, there was another way of obtaining some indications of Japanese Fleet movements. This was the system of so-called traffic analysis. It rests on an attempted identification of call signs of various enemy ships and of subdivision commanders in the enemy fleet. The call sign is a group of letters and numbers used by a ship to identify itself much as a radio station announces itself as "Station ABC." The location of the ships from whence the call signs emanate is made by direction finders. In 1941 we had direction finders at Manila, Guam, and Pearl Harbor. We made a daily traffic analysis. I went over the material with care.

Under the best of circumstances the accuracy of estimates of enemy fleet movements based upon traffic analysis is open to serious doubts. To illustrate: On December 8, 1941, the Commandant of the Sixteenth Naval District sent a dispatch to the Chief of Naval Operations and to me for information. This dispatch was based upon traffic analysis made by the Communication Intelligence Unit in Manila. It stated:⁶⁷

The following Japanese distributions are based upon radio call recoveries since December first and are conservative:
Radio bearings indicate that *Akagi* is moving south from Empire and is now in Nansei Islands area.

This dispatch therefore placed the Japanese carrier *AKAGI* early on December 8 in Empire waters proceeding south from Japan. As a matter of fact, we now know—and you have the evidence before you (record, p. 450)—that the carrier *AKAGI* was in the striking force that attacked Pearl Harbor and could not possibly be moving south from Japan on December 8.

I was familiar with the vagaries of traffic analysis, which this dispatch illustrates. May I point out how these mistaken estimates arise?

Let us assume a radio call sign "*KAGA*" is heard, and that direction finders locate in the China Sea the ship from which this call sign issues. The crucial question still

⁶⁶Exhibit 37, page 40.

⁶⁷Dispatch Com16 to OpNav, info CinCPac, December 8, 1941, 080333.

remains: What ship is using the call sign "KAGA"? Is it a battleship, a cruiser, a destroyer, a carrier, or some auxiliary? The actual intelligence transmitted by the ship having the call sign "KAGA", affords the best clue to her identity. The analyst, however, does not have that intelligence unless he knows the text of the message which the ship is sending. Until then his estimate of the identity of the ship from her call sign alone rests on assumptions, which are open to question, and may be in error.

When the call signs of the flagship and individual ships in a fleet are changed, there is a considerable period during which the location of these fleet units, through traffic analysis, is practically impossible.

The Japanese Navy changed its call signs on May 1, 1941. It took about a month thereafter before sufficient signs had been identified to make the location and identification of ships and subdivisions of the fleet sufficiently accurate to merit any real consideration.

Again on November 1, 1941, the call signs of the Japanese Navy were changed. About the end of November we had reached a point where the number of identified calls made the data as reliable as such data can be. Then on December 1, 1941 the call signs of the Japanese Navy were again changed. This second change within one month was entirely consistent with preparation for the anticipated movement to South East Asia by Japan.

From December 1 to December 7, 1941, as a consequence of the change in call signs, the data which we obtained from traffic analysis was fragmentary. Out of 20,000 calls involved in the change, only 200 service calls had been partially identified.⁶⁸ After December 1, practically all Japanese naval traffic was in a code which we were unable to read.

During the days from December 1 to December 7, 1941, there was a heavy volume of unidentified radio traffic of the Japanese Fleet. The Japanese carrier calls were not identified, nor were the calls of the major part of the Japanese Fleet. The failure to identify carrier traffic did not indicate that the carriers were enroute to Pearl Harbor. There was a similar failure to identify the calls on other major units of the Japanese Fleet, which did not come to Pearl Harbor. The failure to identify the carrier calls did not indicate that the carriers were not a part of the fleets which were known to be moving to South East Asia.

Nor did the failure to identify carrier calls mean that the carriers were preserving radio silence. It was entirely possible that the carriers were originating traffic and that their traffic was included within the great volume of unidentified traffic. Even on the assumption that the Japanese carriers were not originating radio traffic, it would not follow that the carriers were engaged on a secret mission. When ships are within the immediate location of shore stations, they do not ordinarily transmit over long distances,

⁶⁸Hewitt testimony, Captain Layton, page 224.

because their traffic is handled through shore stations. Consequently, even radio silence may merely mean that the ships are at anchor in some port in home waters.

The failure to identify Japanese carrier traffic, on and after December first, when the call-signs changed, was not an unusual condition. During the six months preceding Pearl Harbor, there were seven periods of eight to fourteen days each, in which there was a similar uncertainty about the location of the Japanese battleships. During the six months preceding Pearl Harbor, there was an almost continual absence of positive indications of the locations of the cruisers of the Japanese First Fleet, and eight periods of ten to twenty days each, in which the location of the greater numbers of cruisers of the Japanese Second Fleet was uncertain. As to the Japanese carriers, during the six months preceding Pearl Harbor, there existed a total of one hundred and thirty-four days—in twelve separate periods—each ranging from nine to twenty-two days, when the location of the Japanese carriers from radio traffic analysis was uncertain.⁶⁹

In brief, in the week immediately prior to Pearl Harbor, I had no evidence that the Japanese carriers were enroute to Oahu. Radio traffic analysis did not locate their positions. But this was not a new or unusual condition. It was inherent in the changes of call signs. It had existed on twelve other occasions over a six months period.

The dispatch of November 27 stated that Japanese-American negotiations looking toward stabilization of conditions in the Pacific had ceased. The Navy Department did not let this statement stand without modification. On November 29, two days later, the Navy Department sent me a dispatch⁷⁰ which quoted the War Department's message to General Short of November 27. This stated:

Negotiations with Japan *appear* to be terminated with only the barest possibility of resumption. (Italics supplied.)

This dispatch came to me near the end of "the next few days" set forth in the dispatch of November 27 as the period within which the Japanese action would come. Further, there was a public resumption of Japanese-American negotiations after November 27. The public press and radio news broadcasts contained accounts that negotiations were continuing after November 27 and after November 29. In the absence of more authoritative information, I took account of this public information as to diplomatic developments. This suggested a lessening of the emergency which prompted the so-called "war warning" dispatch.

The Navy Department did not inform me of the contents of the American note to Japan on November 26, or that the prevalent opinion in the Navy Department was that the proposals contained in that note were so drastic as to make Japanese acceptance of them impossible.⁷¹ In a letter of November 14, the Chief of Naval Operations sent me a copy

⁶⁹ See memorandum for the Roberts Commission from Lieutenant Commander E. T. Layton, Intelligence Officer, U. S. Pacific Fleet, dated January 5, 1942.

⁷⁰ Exhibit 37, page 38.

⁷¹ See Finding XVI, Naval Court of Inquiry.

of a memorandum for the President signed by himself and General Marshall. This memorandum advised against direct United States intervention in China and recommended specifically that "no ultimatum be delivered to Japan."

I was not informed that the Japanese were continuing the negotiations after November 26 only as a device to cover up their plans. The Navy Department knew this to be the fact.⁷² I was not informed that, upon receipt of the American note of November 26, the Japanese considered that negotiations had not merely ceased but that relations with this country were ruptured. The Navy Department knew this to be the fact.⁷³

The statement in the Navy Department's dispatch to me to the effect that negotiations had ceased on November 27 was a pale reflection of actual events; so partial a statement as to be misleading. The parties had not merely stopped talking. They were at swords-points. So far as Japan was concerned, the talking which went on after November 26 was play-acting. It was a Japanese stratagem to conceal a blow which Japan was preparing to deliver. That stratagem did not fool the Navy Department. The Navy Department knew the scheme. The Pacific Fleet was exposed to this Japanese stratagem because the Navy Department did not pass on its knowledge of the Japanese trick.

In the November 29th dispatch after quoting the Army message, the Chief of Naval Operations added the following direction:

W. P. L.-52 is not applicable to Pacific Area and will not be placed in effect in that area except as now in force in South East Pacific Sub Area and Panama Naval Coastal Frontier. Undertake no offensive action until Japan has committed an overt act. Be prepared to carry out tasks assigned in W. P. L.-46 so far as they apply to Japan in case hostilities occur.

W. P. L.-52 was the Navy Western Hemisphere Defense Plan No. 5. Under this plan the Atlantic Fleet had shooting orders. It was charged with the task of destroying German and Italian Naval, Land, and Air Forces encountered in the area of the Western Atlantic. The southeast Pacific Sub Area covered the area from the coast of South America to a distance of 700 miles westward. Here the southeast Pacific Naval Force had similar shooting orders and a similar task. In the dispatch of November 29, the Chief of Naval Operations informed me that W. P. L.-52 was not applicable to the Pacific. This was to impress upon me the fact that I did not have shooting orders and that I was not to shoot until Japan had committed an overt act. Although this dispatch was sent me for information I was as much bound by these orders as though I had been an action addressee.

⁷²See Exhibit 1, pages 191, 195, 199.

⁷³See Exhibit 1, pages 204, 180.

Incidentally, when I received that dispatch, I considered that a modification of the orders I have received in the war-warning dispatch, and that I was to be governed by the provisions of this dispatch. I can see no other interpretation, and I thought that the Navy Department had been brought into accord with the orders that had been issued by the War Department, and I thought that was what they were doing when they sent that dispatch.

This same note of caution is in the dispatch of October 16, 1941:

You will take due precautions including such preparatory deployments as will not disclose strategic intention nor constitute provocative action against Japan.

Again in the War Department dispatch, quoted to me by the Chief of Naval Operations in his message of November 29:

The United States desires that Japan commit the first overt act. . . . Measures should be carried out so as not to repeat not alarm civil population or disclose intent.

The Pacific Fleet was based in an area containing over 130,000 Japanese, any one of whom could watch its movements. You can appreciate the psychological handicaps and orders of this kind placed upon us. In effect, I was told:

"Do take precautions,"
"Do not alarm civilians."
"Do take a preparatory deployment."
"Do not disclose intent."
"Do take a defensive deployment."
"Do not commit the first overt act."

One last feature of the so-called "war warning" dispatch remains to be noted. This is the directive with which it closed:

Execute an appropriate defensive deployment preparatory to carry out the tasks assigned in WPL-46.

Under WPL-46 the first task of the Pacific Fleet was to support the forces of the Associated Powers (Britain, the Netherlands, and the United States) in the Far East by diverting enemy strength away from the Malay Barrier.

The Navy Department emphasized this instruction by repeating it on November 29. The dispatch of that date directed:

Be prepared to carry out the tasks assigned in WPL-46 so far as they apply to Japan in case hostilities occur.

Thus, in two separate dispatches I was ordered by the Navy Department to have the Pacific Fleet ready to move against the Marshalls upon the expected outbreak of war in the Far East.

This was a determinative factor in the most difficult and vital decisions I had to make thereafter. There was not a hint in these two dispatches of any danger in the Hawaiian area.

4-Action taken and decisions made after November 27, 1941.

The War Plan of the Pacific Fleet (W. P. Pac-46) prescribed a definite plan of operations to enable the Fleet to carry out its basic task of diverting Japanese strength away from the Malay Barrier, through the denial and capture of positions in the Marshalls. This plan was called the "**Marshall Reconnaissance and Raiding Plan.**"⁷⁴ Under the plan Task Force 2, under the command of Admiral Halsey, was to depart from Pearl Harbor on **one J Day**; i. e., one day after hostilities with Japan began. This Task Force consisting of the carrier *ENTERPRISE* with battleships and destroyers was to proceed toward Taongi Atoll in the northern Marshalls. Task Force 1, under the command of Admiral W. S. Pye, was to depart Pearl Harbor about **five J Day**, so as to rendezvous with Admiral Halsey's Task Force at a designated point on **eleven J Day**. From **six J Day** to **nine J Day**, Admiral Halsey's Task Force was to reconnoiter by air the atolls of the Marshall Islands for the purpose of determining the best objectives for a raid. About **10 J Day**, Task Force 3, under the command of Admiral Wilson Brown, was to join Task Force 2 under Admiral Halsey and thereafter operate as a part of that force. After the rendezvous of the task forces on **11 J Day**, the Commander-in-Chief of the Fleet would direct Admiral Halsey to commence the attacks on the selected islands of the Marshalls group. Admiral Halsey's battleships would then be transferred to Task Force 1, which would operate as a covering force for Halsey's raiding force. On about **13 J Day**, Task Force 2 would attack the selected objectives with air and surface forces.

Thus our plans called for a strike at the Marshalls very shortly after **J Day**, when hostilities commenced. We were conscious of the great value of speed in setting this expedition in motion. Its prime purpose was to divert Japanese strength from the Malay Barrier. If it were delayed, its entire purpose and value would be frustrated.

Under this plan of operations, the patrol planes of the Pacific Fleet had an essential role. The plan provides:⁷⁵

(d) Task Force Nine (Patrol Plane Force)
coordinate operations of patrol planes with those of other forces as follows:

(1) Prior to **Five J-Day** advance maximum practicable patrol plane strength to WAKE, MIDWAY, and JOHNSTON, leaving not less than two operating squadrons at OAHU.

⁷⁴ W. P. Pac-46, Annex II.

⁷⁵W.P.Pac-46, Annex II, Page 7, Sub-paragraph (d) (1), (2), (3), (4), (5).

(2) JOHNSTON-based planes, during passage of units of other forces to the westward, search along the route of advance from the vicinity of JOHNSTON to longitude one hundred seventy-eight degrees west.

(3) MIDWAY-based planes search sectors to the southwestward of MIDWAY to prevent surprise attack across that sector on units operating toward the MARSHALLS.

(4) WAKE-based planes make preliminary air reconnaissance of TAQNGI and BIKAR on **Five J-Day**, or as soon thereafter as practicable, and acquaint Commander Task Force Two with the results. Thereafter, conduct search, to the extent that available planes and supplies will permit, to prevent surprise attack from the westward by enemy surface forces on own units operating toward the MARSHALLS.

(5) On completion of the raiding operations of Task Force Two resume normal operations as required by paragraph 3242 b. of the Fleet Operating Plan.

The mere recitation of these tasks demonstrates the vital air reconnaissance required of the patrol plane force. Without it, the Task Forces might be exposed to surprise attack if they entered the dangerous Marshall area. It was an indispensable feature of the entire operation.

Beginning November 30, 1941, I made a daily memorandum entitled "Steps to be taken in case of American-Japanese war within the next twenty-four hours." The last form of this memorandum I reviewed and approved on the morning of December 6, 1941. In it I attempted to keep the basic plan of the raid on the Marshall Islands up to date and in conformity with the existing dispositions of Fleet units. The last issue of this memorandum, dated December 6, 1941, is as follows:

1. Send dispatch to Pacific Fleet that hostilities have commenced.
2. Send dispatch to task force commanders:
 - (a) WPL 46 effective (Execute 0-1A R5 except as indicated in (b) and (c) below). (The Submarine and Patrol Plane Plans will become effective without special reference to then.)
 - (b) Commerce sweeping plan, including cruiser operations west of Nanpo Shoto, cancelled.
 - (c) Raiding and reconnaissance plan effective, modified as follows: Delay reconnaissance until Task Forces Two and Three are joined; Batdiv One join Task Force One; Commander Base Force send two tankers with utmost dispatch to rendezvous with Task Force Three to eastward of Wake at rendezvous to be designated.

(d) Comairbatfor and units in company with him (Taskfor 8) return to Pearl at high speed, fuel and depart with reminder of Task force Two, less BBs, to join Task Force Three.

(e) *Lexington* land Marine aircraft at Midway as planned (p.m. 7 Dec) and proceed with ships now in Company (Taskfor 12) to vicinity of Wake.

(f) Comtaskfor Three proceed to join *Lexington* group. Return DMS to Pearl.

3. (a) Do not modify the movements of *Regulus* at Midway (departing 9th), nor ships bound to Christmas and Canton.

(b) Direct that *William Ward Burrows* continue to Wake but delay arrival until 10th. Direct that *Lexington* group send two destroyers to join *Burrows* prior to her arrival at Wake.

(c) Do not withdraw any civilian workmen from outlying islands.

(d) Provide two destroyers to escort *Saratoga* from longitude 150° west to Pearl Harbor.

(e) Do not change passage of shipping to and from Manila, nor send any added escorts, nor dispose any cruisers toward California or Samoa until further developments occur.

The provisions of the memorandum were coordinated with the basic plan for the Marshall raid. The "VP Plans" which were to become effective without special reference were the plans for the operation of the patrol plane force. Paragraphs 2 (c), (d), and (e) had reference to the existing disposition of Fleet Units on December 5 and 6. Admiral Halsey at that time was returning from an expedition to Wake Island with a task force specially constituted for that purpose and called Task Force 8. I planned to have him return to Pearl Harbor to refuel before joining Task Force 3 on the expedition to the Marshalls. The carrier *Lexington* on December 6 was enroute to Midway. She was in a task force specially constituted for that purpose and called Task Force 12. In the event of hostilities I planned to have the *Lexington* carry out the Midway expedition and proceed to Wake there to be joined by the Commander of Task Force 3, of which the *Lexington* was a regular component. Admiral Wilson Brown, the Commander of Task Force 3, on December 5 was engaged in operations in the vicinity of Johnston Island. I planned to have him leave that area and join the *Lexington* group, thereby bringing together all elements of Task Force 3. Task Force 3 would then be joined by Admiral Halsey's Task Force 2. When these Task Forces joined, they would proceed with the reconnaissance features of the raiding plan as a preliminary to the actual raids on the Marshall Islands.

This initial expedition was to continue operating as long as we could supply it with fuel. We estimated that it would require continuous operation of maximum patrol plane strength from four to six weeks. Additional expeditions were to be undertaken as rapidly as events and forces permitted.

I shall now describe the nature and extent of distant reconnaissance from the Hawaiian area on and after November 27, 1941.

By dispatch on November 27, the Navy Department had urged me to send Amy pursuit planes to Midway and Wake by aircraft carrier. I replied by dispatch that on November 28 I was sending a carrier to Wake with Marine fighter planes, and that I expected thereafter to send other Marine planes to Midway.

I considered the Navy Department's suggestion that planes be sent to Wake and Midway to be sound. It was desirable that the defenses of these outlying islands should be as strong as possible. The planes which went to Wake were, of course, not enough to save that island. Together with its other defenses, they could make the capture of that island sufficiently costly to justify sending them there. The actual results in the defense of Wake after December 7 demonstrated that fact.

The sending of the carrier task forces to Wake and Midway did more than reinforce the air defenses of the islands. It permitted a broad area to be scouted for signs of enemy movement along the path of the advance of these task forces to the islands and their return to Oahu. In addition, they were in an excellent position to intercept any enemy force which might be on the move.

On November 28, Admiral Halsey left Pearl Harbor enroute to Wake in command of Task Force 8, consisting of the carrier *Enterprise*, three heavy cruisers and 9 destroyers. He carried out morning and afternoon searches to three hundred miles with his planes for any sign of hostile shipping.⁷⁶

On December 5, 1941, Admiral Newton left Pearl Harbor enroute to Midway in command of Task Force 12, consisting of the carrier *Lexington*, 3 heavy cruisers, and 5 destroyers. Newton, like Halsey, conducted scouting flights with his planes to cover his advance.⁷⁷

On December 5, Admiral Wilson Brown left Pearl Harbor enroute to Johnston Island with Task Force 3 to conduct landing exercises.

Thus by December 5 there were at sea three task forces of the Fleet each deployed in a different area. The *Lexington* and the *Enterprise* were each conducting air searches. It was a more intensive search in the areas covered than could have been made by patrol planes based on Oahu. Further, as they approached the outlying islands, these searches were conducted at a much greater distance from Oahu than any patrol plane based on Oahu could travel.

In addition to the operations of these task forces, other distant reconnaissance was conducted by the Fleet after November 27.

⁷⁶ Hart testimony - Admiral Halsey, page 299, question 44.

⁷⁷ Hart testimony - Admiral Newton, page 318, question 30.

Upon receipt of the so-called war warning dispatch of November 27, I ordered a squadron of patrol planes to proceed from Midway to Wake and search the ocean areas enroute. While at Wake on December 2 and 3, they searched to a distance of 525 miles. These orders were executed.⁷⁸

I also ordered another squadron of patrol planes from Pearl Harbor to replace the squadron which went from Midway to Wake.⁷⁹ This squadron of patrol planes left Pearl Harbor on November 30. It proceeded to Johnston Island. On the way to Johnston, it searched the ocean areas. It then proceeded from Johnston to Midway, making another reconnaissance sweep on the way. Upon reaching Midway, this squadron of patrol planes conducted distant searches of not less than 500 miles of varying sectors from that island on December 3, 4, 5, and 6. On December 7, five of these Midway-based patrol planes were searching the sector 120 to 170 degrees from Midway, to a distance of 400 miles. An additional two patrol planes of the Midway squadron left at the same time to rendezvous with the *Lexington* at a point 400 miles from Midway. Four of the remaining patrol planes at Midway, each loaded with bombs, were on ten-minute notice as a ready striking force.⁸⁰

When the *Enterprise* completed its delivery of planes to Wake, I withdrew a squadron of patrol planes from Wake. This squadron then proceeded to Midway, searching the ocean areas enroute. It then moved from Midway to Pearl Harbor, conducting a reconnaissance sweep enroute.

In the week before December 7, these reconnaissance sweeps of the patrol plane squadrons moving from Midway to Wake from Pearl Harbor to Johnston and from Johnston to Midway; from Wake to Midway and Midway to Pearl Harbor, covered a total distance of nearly five thousand miles. As they proceeded, each squadron would cover a 400-mile strand of ocean along its path. They brought under the coverage of air search about 2,000,000 square miles of ocean area.

In addition to these reconnaissance sweeps, submarines of the Fleet on and after November 27 were on war patrols from Midway and Wake Islands continuously.

At Oahu before the attack, there were 49 patrol planes, which were in flying condition. Eight other planes were out of commission and undergoing repair. In addition, on December 5, a squadron of patrol planes returned to Pearl Harbor after an arduous tour of duty at Midway and Wake. This squadron consisted of obsolete PBY-3 planes, approaching 18 months service and overdue for overhaul. It was not available for distant searches.

The 49 flyable patrol planes on Oahu were part of the planes which had arrived during the preceding four weeks—18 on October 28, 24 on November 23, and 12 on

⁷⁸ Dispatch CinCPac to COMPATWING 2, 28 November 1941, 280450.

⁷⁹ Mailgram COMTASKFOR 9 to COMPATRONS 21 and 22, November 20, 1941, 292103.

⁸⁰ Naval Court of Inquiry testimony, Admiral Bellinger, page 684, questions 106, 107.

November 28. These planes were of the PBV-5 type. They were experiencing the shake-down difficulties of new planes. There was considerable difficulty due to the cracking of new engine sections, which required replacement. A program for the installation of leak-proof tanks and armor on these planes was underway.⁸¹ The leak-proof tanks and armor were necessary to make these planes ready for war. That work had to be carried out in Hawaii. Under War Plans the planes were to operate from advance bases, Midway, Wake, Johnston, Palmyra Islands. There, they would operate from aircraft tenders. There were no facilities at those advanced bases to complete important material installations. The planes had to be in the highest condition of fighting efficiency before they left Oahu.

There was a total absence of spare parts for those planes.

There were no spare crews.

To insure an island base against a surprise attack from fast carrier-based planes, it is necessary to patrol the evening before to a distance of 800 miles on a 360 degree arc. This requires 84 planes on one flight of 16 hours, of course, the same planes and the same crews cannot make that 16-hour flight every day. For searches of this character over a protracted period, a pool of 250 planes would be required. These are fundamental principles. You will find them in the testimony of expert aviation officers before the Naval Court; and in the very comprehensive letter Fleet Admiral Nimitz wrote to the Commander-in-Chief United States Fleet, on January 7, 1942, on the subject: "Airplane Situation in Hawaiian Area."

It is clear that I did not have a sufficient number of planes to conduct each day a 360-degree distant search from the island of Oahu. That fact is beyond controversy.

A search of all sectors of approach to an island base is the only type of search that deserves the name. The selection of one sector around an island for concentration of distant search affords no real protection. After a while it may furnish some insurance that the enemy, having knowledge of the search plan, will choose some other sector within which to make his approach. The search concentrated on the so-called "dangerous sector" then ceases to offer much prospect of detecting the enemy. Admiral Nimitz put the matter clearly in his official letter on the subject. He said:⁸²

It cannot be assumed that any direction of approach ray safely be left unguarded. The fuel problem is no deterrent, for the approach was made from the north on 7 December. Increase in difficulty of the logistic problem would not be proportionately great if even an approach from the east were attempted. At the same time, as

⁸¹ Hewitt testimony, Admiral Bellinger, page 485, 497, Naval Court of Inquiry testimony, Captain Ramsey, page 590, question 72.

⁸² Letter CinCPac to CinCUS, January 7, 1942, Serial 059.

discussed above, neglect of any sector is apt soon to be known.

Tactical discussions now of what was the most dangerous sector around Oahu before December 7 do not reach the heart of the problem which I faced. [See www.pearlharbor911attacks.com for documentation on the most-dangerous sector myth—a myth most difficult to set right.]

In 1981 Donald Golstein wrote:

- “We agree with Forrestal ‘that [Kimmel’s] most grievous failure was his failure to conduct long-range air reconnaissance in the more dangerous sectors...’
- “aircraft . . . should have been utilized on the basis of such carefully reasoned estimates as the Martin-Bellinger and Farthing reports...”
– *At Dawn We Slept*, 1981, p.733.

In 1986 Donald Goldstein sharpened his criticism of Kimmel in a chapter titled, *His [Kimmel’s] Most Grievous Failure*, as follows:

- “Carefully reasoned estimates, such as the Martin-Bellinger and Farthing reports, existed postulating that the most dangerous sectors were the north and northwest (Pearl Harbor The Verdict of History, 1986, p.441).”

In 1994 former Chief of Naval Operations Trost wrote to the Secretary of the Navy explaining that the preceding information was false—the Martin-Bellinger and Farthing reports say no such thing. See WWW.PEARLHARBOR911ATTACKS.COM for a copy of CNO Trost’s letter.]

The Secretary of the Navy in his endorsement to the Record of the Naval Court of Inquiry has stated:

There were sufficient fleet patrol planes and crews, in fact, available in Oahu during the week preceding the attack to have flown, for at least several weeks, a daily reconnaissance covering 128° to a distance of about 700 miles.

This statement assumes a 25-mile visibility for each patrol plane engaged in the search. It further assumes that I could have used all the patrol plane force for this type of search alone without keeping any planes in reserve for emergency searches or to cover movement of ships in and out of the harbor and in the operating area.

If I instituted a distant search of any 128-degree sector around Oahu on and after November 27, within the foreseeable future, I would have deprived the Pacific Fleet of any efficient patrol plane force for its prescribed war missions.

In the secret Investigation before Admiral Hewitt, from which I was excluded, Vice Admiral Bellinger, who commanded my patrol plane force, testified:⁸³

QUESTION. Assuming that on December 1, 1941, you had received a directive from Admiral Kimmel to conduct the fullest possible partial reconnaissance over an indefinite period of time, could you have covered 128 degrees approximately on a daily basis and for how long?

ANSWER. It could have been done until the failure of planes and lack of spare parts reduced the planes to an extent that it would have made it impossible. *Perhaps it could have been carried on for two weeks, perhaps, but this estimate is, of course, very vague and it is all based on maintaining planes in readiness for flight. (Italics supplied.)*

This testimony reflected the conditions in the patrol plane squadrons as I knew them on November 27 and thereafter.

Captain Ramsey, the Executive Officer of the Patrol Wing, testified before the Naval Court of Inquiry as follows:⁸⁴

As nearly as I could estimate the situation and in view of our almost total lack of spare parts for the PBV-5 planes, I believe that three weeks of intensive daily searches would have seen approximately a 75 per cent reduction in material readiness of the entire outfit and we would have been placing planes out of commission and robbing them for spare parts to keep other planes going. The pilots, I believe, could have kept going approximately a six-weeks period, but at the end of that time they would have all required a protracted rest period.

The patrol planes in Oahu were not uselessly employed prior to the attack. They were not standing idle. There was a definite program for their operation which was consistent with creating and preserving their material readiness for war. In the week preceding the attack, there was a daily scout by patrol planes on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday, of a sector to the north and northwest of Oahu to a distance of 400 miles, after which the planes required maintenance and upkeep.⁸⁵ This was not distant reconnaissance, as such, although the distance covered was greater than that searched at the time of the 1940 alert. In addition, there was the daily dawn patrol out 300 miles to cover the areas where the Fleet operated.

⁸³ Hewitt Testimony - Admiral Bellinger, page 505.

⁸⁴ Naval Court of Inquiry testimony, Captain Ramsey, page 583, question 44.

⁸⁵ Naval Court of Inquiry testimony Captain Ramsey, page 595, question 101.

I had been ordered, not once but twice, to be prepared to carry out the raids on the Marshalls under WPL-46, which meant the extended use of the Fleet patrol planes from advance bases in war operations.

I had to decide what was the best use of the patrol planes as a matter of policy for the foreseeable future, and with their war tasks in front of me.

Had I directed their use for intensive distant searches from Oahu, I faced the peril of having those planes grounded when the Fleet needed them and when the war plan was executed.

I had no way of knowing that the war was to start on the 7th of December. I could not decide the matter on the basis of five days to ten days of distant searches.

I did not have the intercepted Japanese dispatches pointing to Pearl Harbor as a probable point of attack.

I know that any search I could make, straining the planes to the breaking point, was in its nature partial and ineffective.

I took account of my resources. They were slender.

I took account of the probable future needs and of my orders from the Navy Department.

I decided that I could not risk having no patrol plane force worthy of the name for the Fleet's expected movement into the Marshalls.

I considered the nature and extent of the distant reconnaissance I was effectuating with my task forces at sea and the patrol plane sweeps to and from the outlying islands.

I considered the necessity of permitting the essential replacement and material upkeep program for the new patrol planes in Oahu to be continued to get them into war condition.

I considered the need for patrols of the Fleet operating areas against the submarine menace and these I carried out.

I considered the need for some reserve of patrol planes for emergency distant searches.

I considered the need for patrol planes in covering Fleet movements in and out of the harbor—which might have to be quickly and unexpectedly executed.

I considered the endurance of my patrol plane man power—and the absence of any spare crews.

I decided I could not fritter away my patrol plane resources by pushing them to the limit in daily distant searches of one sector around Oahu—which within the predictable future would have to be discontinued when the patrol planes and crews gave out.

The three admirals who composed the Naval Court of Inquiry scrutinized my decision after extensive testimony. Each of the admirals could view the matter from the point of view of the commander in the field. They summarized the problem:

The task assigned the Commander in Chief, Pacific Fleet, was to prepare his Fleet for war. War was known to be imminent—how imminent he did not know. The Fleet planes were being constantly employed in patrolling the operating areas in which the Fleet's preparations for war were being carried on. Diversion of these planes for reconnaissance or other purposes was not justified under existing circumstances and in the light of available information.

If so diverted, the state of readiness of the Fleet for war would be reduced because of the enforced suspension of Fleet operations.

The value of the Fleet patrol planes to the Fleet would be reduced seriously after a few days because of the inability of planes and crews to stand up under the demands of daily long-range reconnaissance.

The Court concluded (finding XIII):

The omission of this reconnaissance was not due to oversight or neglect. It was the result of a military decision, reached after much deliberation and consultation with experienced officers and after weighing the information at hand and all the factors involved.

[Fleet Admiral William F. Halsey, Admiral Kimmel's senior air officer stated that—concerning Kimmel's decision to save his aircraft for future combat and not to engage in token long-range reconnaissance without more threat information than was contained in the Nov 27th War Warning Message—“Any Admiral worth his stars would have made the same choice (William F. Halsey, *Admiral Halsey's Story*, McGraw Hill, 1947, p.71).” Admiral Kimmel asked the Joint Congressional Committee to call Admiral Halsey as a witness. They refused.]

I shall now discuss the dispositions of the capital ships of the Pacific Fleet on and after November 27. On November 28, Admiral Halsey left for Wake with a carrier task force and on December 5, Admiral Newton left for Midway with another carrier task force. These missions were in pursuance of an explicit suggestion from the Navy Department. When Admiral Halsey left for Wake on November 28, the three battleships of his task force accompanied him out of Pearl Harbor so as to avoid creating the impression that there was anything unusual about the movement of his task force. However, immediately on clearing the channel, Admiral Halsey diverted his battleships and instructed them to carry out exercises in the Hawaiian area. He then headed west with the remainder of his task force.

It would have been unwise for Admiral Halsey to have taken along the battleships. The maximum speed of the battleships was 17 knots. The Fleet units which he took to Wake could make 30 knots. To take his battleships with him would have meant the loss of 13 knots of potential speed. He was bound for dangerous waters where curtailed speed might spell disaster. He needed all the mobility his force could attain. Three battleships did not furnish sufficient supporting strength to warrant the risks of reduction in speed and mobility which their presence in the expedition to Wake would entail. Moreover, it was necessary to complete the Wake operation as quickly as possible so that the ships engaged might be ready for further eventualities.

Almost every disposition which I made in the Pacific with the forces available to me had its cost. In sending the two carriers to Wake and Midway, I took from the immediate vicinity of Pearl Harbor, for the time being, the Fleet's air strength. We had no carrier left in the Hawaiian area. The *Saratoga*, the third carrier of the Pacific Fleet, had been undergoing repair and overhaul on the West Coast. The advisability of using her to transfer a squadron of Marine fighter planes from San Diego to Hawaii was suggested by the Chief of Naval Operations on November 28.⁸⁶ The absence of the carriers from the Hawaiian area temporarily limited the mobility of the battleships which were left behind.

While the carriers were absent on the assigned missions to Midway and Wake, the battleships force was kept in Pearl Harbor. To send them to sea without air cover for any prolonged period would have been a dangerous course. The only effective defense at sea from air attack, whether it be a bombing attack or a torpedo-plane attack, is an effective air cover. Surface ships, such as destroyers and cruisers, are much less effective against an air attack. That is so today. It was the more so prior to 7 December because of the existing inadequacies of anti-aircraft guns.

The carriers furnished air coverage for the battleships at sea. The few planes that battleships and cruisers carry for use by catapult are not fighters. Their function is only scouting and reconnaissance. They are ineffective as a defense against enemy air attack. The battleships at sea without carriers had no protection from air bombing attack. In Pearl Harbor they had the protection of such anti-aircraft defenses as the Army had. At sea, in deep waters, there were no physical barriers to the effectiveness of torpedo plane attack.

⁸⁶ Dispatch CNO to CinCPac, November 28, 1941, 282054.

In Pearl Harbor, where the depth of water was less than forty feet, a torpedo-plane attack was considered a negligible danger. The battleships of the Fleet at sea, without carriers, sighted by a force of such character as to have a chance of a successful air attack on the Hawaiian Islands appeared to be more subject to damage than in port.

Vice Admiral Pye, commander of the Battle Force, and I discussed these considerations in a conference after the receipt of the so-called war warning dispatch.

At the time of our discussion—at that time and later—we did not have before us the intercepted Japanese messages indicating that the ships in port in Pearl Harbor were marked for attack. We had no information that an air attack upon Pearl Harbor was imminent or probable. The fact that the Navy Department proposed at this time that our carriers be sent to the outlying islands indicated to us that the Navy Department felt that no attack on Pearl Harbor could be expected in the immediate future.

All the dispositions, of my task forces at sea, as well as the presence of the battleships in port, were known to the Navy Department. Admiral Stark, the Chief of Naval Operations, testified before the Roberts Commission as follows:⁸⁷

What we expected him (Admiral Kimmel) to do was to get more planes and personnel, and so on, out to Wake and Midway, if possible, and to send his task forces—some task forces to sea in readiness to catch any raiders, which he did. He did that. *We knew it. We knew these task forces were at sea. He informed us that one was returning from having put the people ashore at Wake, that certain planes had been sent to Midway, and were expected to go on the fifth or sixth day down to Wake, and we knew the schedule of the ships that were in port, and at that particular time out of the three task forces, there were two scheduled to be in port. Actually there was less than one and a half in port. He kept the others at sea. He had taken those measures which looked absolutely sound. It was a safe assumption that other measures had been taken of a similar nature.* (Italics supplied.)

Upon receipt of the so-called war warning dispatch of November 27, 1941, I issued orders to the Fleet to exercise extreme vigilance against submarines in operating areas and to depth bomb all contacts expected to be hostile in the Fleet operating areas.⁸⁸ My dispatch of November 28 to the Fleet containing this order was forwarded to the Navy Department on that day. On December 2, I wrote to the Chief of Naval Operations directing his personal attention to this order. The Navy Department in the ten days prior to the attack did not approve or disapprove my action.

⁸⁷Roberts Commission testimony, pages 1813 and 1819.

⁸⁸Dispatch CinCPac to Pacific Fleet, info OpNav, November 28, 1941, 280355.

For some time there had been reports of submarines in the operating areas around Hawaii. During the first week of February 1941, a submerged submarine contact was reported about eight miles from the Pearl Harbor entrance buoys. A division of destroyers trailed this contact for approximately 48 hours, after which the contact was lost. The destroyers were confident it was a Japanese submarine. I was not fully convinced, but made a complete report to Naval Operations, stating the action taken and adding that I would be delighted to bomb every suspected submarine contact in the operating area around Hawaii.⁸⁹ I was directed by dispatch not to depth bomb submarine contacts except within the 3-mile limit.

A similar contact at approximately the same position was made about the middle of March. Again the destroyers were confident that they had trailed a Japanese submarine. Again the evidence was not conclusive because the submarine had not actually been sighted.

On September 12, 1941, I wrote to the Chief of Naval Operations and asked him "What to do about the submarine contacts off Pearl Harbor and the vicinity." I stated, "As you know, our present orders are to trail all contacts but not to bomb unless they are in the defensive areas. Should we now bomb contacts without waiting to be attacked?"

On September 23, the Chief of Naval Operations replied to my question in a personal letter. He stated:

The existing orders, that is, not to bomb suspected submarines except in the defensive sea areas, are appropriate. If conclusive, and I repeat conclusive, evidence is obtained that Japanese submarines are actually in or near United States territory, then a strong warning and threat of hostile action against such submarines would appear to be our next step.

No conclusive evidence was obtained until December 7, 1941.

The files of the Commander-in-Chief, Pacific Fleet, contain records of at least three suspicious contacts during the 5 weeks preceding Pearl Harbor.

On November 3, 1941, a patrol plane observed an oil slick area in latitude 20-10, longitude 157-41. The patrol plane searched a 15-mile area. A sound search was made by the U.S.S. *Borden*, and an investigation was made by the U.S.S. *Dale*, all of them producing negative results.⁹⁰ On November 28, 1941, the U.S.S. *Helena* reported that a radar operator without knowledge of my orders directing an alert against submarines was positive that a submarine was in a restricted area.⁹¹ A search by a task group with three destroyers of the suspected area produced no contacts. During the night

⁸⁹Official letter CinCPac to CNO, February 11, 1941, Serial 0243.

⁹⁰ Hewitt report, pages 148-149.

⁹¹ Dispatch U.S.S. *Helena* to GR 1.5 - info CinCPac, November 28, 1941, 280835.

of December 2, 1941, the U.S.S *Gamble* reported a clear metallic echo in latitude 26-30, longitude 158-23. An investigation directed by Destroyer Division Four produced no conclusive evidence of the presence of a submarine.⁹² On the morning of the attack, the U.S.S. *Ward* reported to the Commandant of the 14th Naval District that it had attacked, fired upon, and dropped depth charges upon a submarine operating in the defensive sea area. The Commandant of the 14th Naval District directed a verification of this report with a view to determining whether the contact with the submarine was a sound contact or whether the submarine had actually been seen by the *Ward*. He also directed that the ready-duty destroyer assist the *Ward* in the defensive sea area. Apparently, some short time after reporting the submarine contact, the *Ward* also reported that it had intercepted a sampan which it was escorting into Honolulu. This message appeared to increase the necessity for a verification of the earlier report of the submarine contact.

Between 7:30 and 7:40, I received information from the Staff Duty Officer of the *Ward's* report, the dispatch of the ready-duty destroyer to assist the *Ward*, and the efforts then underway to obtain a verification of the *Ward's* report. I was awaiting such verification at the time of the attack. In my judgment, the effort to obtain confirmation of the reported submarine attack off Pearl Harbor was a proper preliminary to more drastic action in view of the number of such contacts which had not been verified in the past.

Part III

Information Withheld from the Fleet and Its Significance

When I took command of the Pacific Fleet, I realized that information about our relations with Japan and the plans of that government was of supreme importance to me. I knew in general, from my experience in the Navy, of the sources from which the Navy Department might derive such intelligence, including the so-called "magic" source. The Pacific Fleet was dependent upon the Navy Department in Washington for information derived from intercepted Japanese diplomatic messages.

Shortly after I took command, Vice Admiral Wilson Brown, upon his arrival in Hawaii from Washington, informed me of some confusion in the Navy Department as to whether the responsibility of furnishing the Commander-in-Chief, Pacific, with secret information rested with Naval Operations or Naval Intelligence. I immediately added a postscript to a letter which I was writing to the Chief of Naval Operations, bringing this situation to his attention. I wrote Admiral Stark on February 18, 1941:

I have recently been told by an officer fresh from Washington that ONI considers it the function of Operations to furnish the Commander-in-Chief with information of a secret nature. I have heard also that Operations considers the responsibility for furnishing the same type of information to be that of ONI. I do not know

⁹² Hewitt report, page 149.

that we have missed anything, but if there is any doubt as to whose responsibility it is to keep the Commander-in-Chief fully informed with pertinent reports on subjects that should be of interest to the Fleet, will you kindly fix that responsibility so that there will be no misunderstanding .

He replied in a letter of March 22:

With reference to your postscript on the subject of Japanese trade routes and the responsibility for the furnishing of secret information to CinCUS, Kirk informs me that ONI is fully aware of its responsibilities in keeping you adequately informed concerning foreign nations, activities of these nations, and disloyal elements within the United States.

On May 25, 1941, I wrote an official letter to the Chief of Naval Operations on the subject of "Survey of Conditions in the Pacific Fleet." In a separate paragraph entitled "Information," again I described my need for information of all important developments affecting our foreign relations [See 16PHA2238, See Admiral Kimmel's Story, p. 80].

The Commander-in-Chief, Pacific Fleet, is in a very difficult position. He is far removed from the seat of government, in a complex and rapidly changing situation. He is, as a rule, not informed as to the policy, or change of policy, reflected in current events and naval movements and, as a result, is unable to evaluate the possible effect upon his own situation. He is not even sure of what force will be available to him and has little voice in matters radically affecting his ability to carry out his assigned tasks. This lack of information is disturbing and tends to create uncertainty, a condition which directly contravenes that singleness of purpose and confidence in one's own course of action so necessary to the conduct of military operations.

It is realized that, on occasion, the rapid developments in the international picture, both diplomatic and military, and, perhaps, even the lack of knowledge of the military authorities themselves, may militate against the furnishing of timely information, but certainly the present situation is susceptible to marked improvement. Full and authoritative knowledge of current policies and objectives, even though necessarily late at times, would enable the Commander-in-Chief, Pacific Fleet, to modify, adapt, or even re-orient his possible courses of action to

conform to current concepts. This is particularly applicable to the current Pacific situation, where the necessities for intensive training of a partially trained Fleet must be carefully balanced against the desirability of interruption of this training by strategic dispositions, or otherwise, to meet impending eventualities. Moreover, due to this same factor of distance and time, the Department itself is not too well informed as to the local situation, particularly with regard to the status of current outlying island development, thus asking it even more necessary that the Commander-in-Chief, Pacific Fleet, be guided by broad policy and objectives rather than by categorical instructions.

It is suggested that it be made a cardinal principle that the Commander-in-Chief, Pacific Fleet, be immediately informed, of all important developments as they occur and by the quickest secure means available.

I brought this official letter to Washington with me in June of 1941, handed it to the Chief of Naval Operations personally, discussed it with him, and received his assurance that I would be informed of all important developments as they occurred and by the quickest secure means available.

In the month of July 1941, the Chief of Naval Operations sent me at least seven dispatches which quoted intercepted Japanese diplomatic messages from Tokyo to Washington, Tokyo to Berlin, Berlin to Tokyo, Tokyo to Vichy, Canton to Tokyo. These dispatches identified by number the Japanese messages they quoted and gave their verbatim text.⁹³

I was never informed of any decision to the effect that intelligence from intercepted Japanese messages was not to be sent to me. In fact, dispatches sent to me by the Navy Department in the week before the attack contained intelligence from intercepted messages. On December 1, a dispatch from the Chief of Naval Operations,⁹⁴ sent to me for information, quoted a report of November 29 from the Japanese Ambassador in Bangkok to Tokyo which described a Japanese plan to entice the British to invade Thai, thereby permitting Japan to enter that country in the role of its defender. On December 5, a dispatch to me from the Chief of Naval Operations set forth an order from Japan to diplomatic agents and expressly referred to this order as "Circular Twenty Four Forty Four from Tokyo."⁹⁵ Another dispatch from the Chief of Naval Operations on December 5 referred to certain "categorical and urgent instructions which were sent yesterday to Japanese diplomatic and consular posts."⁹⁶

⁹³ Exhibit 37, pages 6 to 12.

⁹⁴ Dispatch OpNav to CinCAF info CinCPac, 1 December 1941, 011400.

⁹⁵ Exhibit 37, page 41.

⁹⁶ Exhibit 37, page 40.

The Navy Department thus engaged in a course of conduct calculated to give me the impression that intelligence from important intercepted Japanese messages was being furnished to me. Under these circumstances a failure to send me important information of this character was not merely a withholding of intelligence. It partook of the nature of an affirmative misrepresentation. I had asked for all vital information. I had been assured that I would have it. I appeared to be receiving it. My current estimate of the situation was formed on this basis. Yet, in fact, the most vital information from the intercepted Japanese messages was not sent to me. This failure not only deprived me of essential facts. It misled me.

I was not supplied with any information of the intercepted messages showing that the Japanese government had divided Pearl Harbor into five sub areas and was seeking minute information as to the berthing of ships of the Fleet in those areas.

On September 24, 1941, the Japanese Government instructed its Consul General, in Honolulu as to the type of report it desired from him concerning vessels in Pearl Harbor. These instructions divided Pearl Harbor into five sub areas. Each area was given an alphabetical symbol. Area A was the term prescribed to describe the waters between Ford Island and the Arsenal. Area B was the term prescribed to describe the waters south and west of Ford Island. Area C was the term prescribed to describe East Loch; Area D, Middle Loch, Area E, West Loch and communicating water routes. The dispatch stated:⁹⁷

With regard to warships and aircraft carriers, we would like to have you report on those at anchor, (those 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 dispatch was decoded and translated on October 9, 1941. This information was never supplied to me.

On September 29, 1941, Kita, the Japanese Consul General in Honolulu, replied to his government's dispatch of September 24. He described an elaborate and detailed system of symbols to be used thereafter in designating the location of vessels in Pearl Harbor. The letters "KS" would describe the repair dock in the Navy Yard. The letters, "KT" would describe the Navy dock in the Navy Yard. The letters "FV" would describe the moorings in the vicinity of Ford Island. The letters "FG" would describe vessels alongside Ford Island, the east and west sides to be designated by A and B, respectively. This dispatch of the Consul General was decoded and translated on October 10, 1941.⁹⁸ This information was never supplied to me.

⁹⁷ Exhibit 2, page 12.

⁹⁸ Exhibit 2, page 13.

In the critical period before the attack, the Japanese government sent further significant instructions to Honolulu. On November 15, Togo sent the following dispatch:⁹⁹

As relations between Japan and the United States are most critical, make your ships in harbor report irregular but at the rate of twice a week. Although you already are no doubt aware, please take extra care to maintain secrecy.

This dispatch was decoded and translated by the Navy in Washington on December 3, 1941. This information was never supplied to me.

On November 18, 1941, Togo sent the following dispatch to Honolulu:¹⁰⁰

Please report on the following areas as to vessels anchored therein; Area N, Pearl Harbor, Manila Bay (Honolulu), and the Areas Adjacent thereto. (Make your investigation with great secrecy.)

This dispatch was decoded and translated on December 5, 1941. This information was never supplied to me.

On November 18, 1941, the Japanese Consul General in Honolulu reported to Tokyo in accordance with the system prescribed in the dispatch from Tokyo on September 24. He reported that in Area A there was a battleship of the *Oklahoma* class; that in Area 0 there were three heavy cruisers at anchor, as well as the carrier *Enterprise* or some other vessel; that two heavy cruisers of the *Chicago* class were tied up at docks "KS." The symbol "KS" it will be recalled was established by the Consul General in his September dispatch to Tokyo to designate the repair dock in the Pearl Harbor Navy Yard. The Consul General described in great detail the course taken by destroyers entering the harbor, their speed and their distances apart. He reported that they changed course five times, each time roughly thirty degrees, from the entrance of the harbor through area B to the buoys in Area C at which they were moored. This dispatch was decoded and translated in Washington on December 6, 1941.¹⁰¹ This information was never supplied to me.

On November 20, Togo in Tokyo dispatched instructions to Honolulu to investigate comprehensively Fleet bases in the neighborhood of the Hawaiian Military Reservation. This dispatch was decoded and translated on the 4th of December.¹⁰² This information was never supplied to me.

Again on November 29, Tokyo sent the following dispatch to Honolulu:

⁹⁹ Exhibit 2, page 15.

¹⁰⁰ Exhibit 2, page 15.

¹⁰¹ Exhibit 2, page 14.

¹⁰² Exhibit 2, page 15.

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

This dispatch was decoded and translated on December 5, 1941.¹⁰³ This information was never supplied to me.

In the volume of intercepted Japanese dispatches eliciting and securing information about American Military installations and naval movements, the dispatches concerning Pearl Harbor, on and after September 24, 1941, stand out, apart from the others (Exhibit 2). No other harbor or base in American territory or possessions was divided into sub-areas by Japan. In no other area was the Japanese government seeking information as to whether two or more vessels were alongside the same wharf. Prior to the dispatch of September 24, the information which the Japanese sought and obtained about Pearl Harbor, followed the general pattern of their interest in American Fleet movements in ether localities. One might suspect this type of conventional espionage. With the dispatch of September 24, 1941, and those which followed, there was a significant and ominous change in the character of the information which the Japanese government sought and obtained. The espionage then directed was of an unusual character and outside the realm of reasonable suspicion. It was no longer merely directed to ascertaining the general whereabouts of ships of the Fleet. It was directed to the presence of particular ships in particular areas; to such minute detail as what ships were double-docked at the same wharf. In the period immediately preceding the attack, the Jap Consul General in Hawaii was directed by Tokyo to report even when there were no movements, of ships in and out of Pearl Harbor. These Japanese instructions and reports pointed to an attack by Japan upon the ships in Pearl Harbor. The information sought and obtained, with such painstaking detail, had no other conceivable usefulness from a military viewpoint. Its utility was in planning and executing an attack upon the ships in port. Its effective value was lost completely when the ships left their reported berthings in Pearl Harbor.

No one had a more direct and immediate interest in the security of the Fleet in Pearl Harbor than its Commander-in-Chief. No one had a greater right than I to know that Japan had carved up Pearl Harbor into sub-areas and was seeking and receiving reports as to the precise berthings in that harbor of the ships of the Fleet. I had been sent Mr. Grew's report earlier in the year with positive advice from the Navy Department that no credence was to be placed in the rumored Japanese plans for an attack on Pearl Harbor. I was told then, that no Japanese move against Pearl Harbor appeared "imminent or planned for in the foreseeable future." Certainly I was entitled to know when information in the Navy Department completely altered the information and advice previously given to me. Surely, I was entitled to know of the intercepted dispatches between Tokyo and Honolulu on and after September 24, 1941, which indicated that a Japanese move against Pearl Harbor was planned in Tokyo.

¹⁰³ Exhibit 2, page 15.

Knowledge of these intercepted Japanese dispatches would have radically changed the estimate of the situation made by me and my staff. It would have suggested a re-orientation of our planned operations at the outset of hostilities. The war plans of the Navy Department, and of the Pacific Fleet, as well as our directives and information from Washington prior to the attack indicated that the Pacific Fleet could be most effectively employed against Japan through diversionary raids on the Marshalls, when the Japanese struck at the Malay Barrier. Knowledge of a probable Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor afforded an opportunity to ambush the Japanese striking force as it ventured to Hawaii. It would have suggested the wisdom of concentrating our resources to that end, rather than conserving them for the Marshall expedition.

The intercepted dispatches about the berthing of ships in Pearl Harbor also clarified the significance of other intercepted Japanese dispatches, decoded and translated by the Navy Department prior to the attack. I refer particularly to the intercepted dispatches which established a deadline date for agreement between Japan and the United States. When this date passed without agreement, these dispatches revealed that a Japanese plan automatically took effect.

The deadline date was first established in a dispatch #736 from Tokyo to Washington on November 5, 1941. In this dispatch the Japanese government instructed its ambassador in Washington as follows:¹⁰⁴

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

This information is to be kept strictly to yourself alone.

This dispatch was decoded and translated by the Navy on the date of its origin, November 5, 1941. This information was never supplied to me.

The deadline data was reiterated in a dispatch from Tokyo to Washington on November 11, 1941. This dispatch stated:¹⁰⁵

Judging from the progress of the conversations, there seem to be indications that the United States is still not fully aware of the exceedingly criticalness of the situation here.

¹⁰⁴ Exhibit 1, page 100.

¹⁰⁵ Exhibit 1, page 116.

The fact remains that the date set forth in my message #736 is absolutely immovable under present conditions. It is a definite deadline and therefore it is essential that a settlement be reached by about that time. The session of Parliament opens on the 15th (work will start on (the following day?)) according to the schedule. The government must have a clear picture of things to come in presenting its case at the session. You can see, therefore, that the situation is nearing a climax, and that time is indeed becoming short. . . .

This dispatch was decoded and translated by the Navy Department on November 12, 1941. This information was never supplied to me.

The deadline was again emphasized in a dispatch from Tokyo to Washington on November 15, 1941. This dispatch stated:¹⁰⁶

Whatever the case may be, the fact remains that the date set forth in my message #736 is an absolutely immovable one. Please, therefore, make the United States see the light, so as to make possible the signing of the agreement by that date.

This dispatch was decoded and translated by the Navy Department on the date of its origin, November 15, 1941. This information was never supplied to me.

The deadline was again reiterated on November 16 with great emphasis upon its importance. A dispatch from Tokyo to Washington of that date was as follows:¹⁰⁷

For your Honor's own information,

1. I have read your #1090 and you may be sure that you have all my gratitude for the efforts you have put forth, but the fate of our Empire hangs by the slender thread of a few days, so please fight harder than you ever did before.
2. . . .In your opinion we ought to wait and see what turn the war takes and remain patient. However, I am awfully sorry to say that the situation renders this out of the question. I set the deadline for the solution of these negotiations in my #736 and there will be no change. Please try to understand that. You see how short the time is therefore, do not allow the United States to sidetrack us and delay the negotiations any further. Press them for a solution

¹⁰⁶ Exhibit 1, page 130.

¹⁰⁷ Exhibit 1, page 138.

on the basis of our proposals and do your best to bring about an immediate solution.

This dispatch was decoded and translated on November 17, 1941. This information was never supplied to me.

The deadline was finally extended on November 22 for a period of 4 days. On that date a dispatch from Tokyo to Washington instructed Nomura and Kurusu:¹⁰⁸

It is awfully hard for us to consider changing the date we set in my #736. You should know this, however, I know you are working hard. Stick to our fixed policy and do your very best. Spare no efforts and try to bring about the solution we desire. There are reasons beyond your ability to guess why we wanted to settle Japanese-American relations by the 25th, but if within the next three or four days you can finish your conversations with the Americans; if the signing can be completed by the 29th, (let me write it out for you — twenty-ninth); if the pertinent notes can be exchanged; if we can get an understanding with Great Britain and the Netherlands; and in short, if everything can be finished, we have decided to wait until that date. This time we mean it, that the deadline absolutely cannot be changed. After that things are automatically going to happen. Please take this into your careful consideration and work harder than you ever have before. This, for the present, is for the information of you two Ambassadors alone.

This dispatch was decoded and translated on the date of its origin, November 22, 1941. This information was never supplied to me.

Again on November 24, 1941, Tokyo specifically instructed its ambassadors in Washington that the November 29th deadline was set in Tokyo time.¹⁰⁹ This dispatch was decoded and translated on November 24, the date of its origin. This information was never supplied to me.

In at least six separate dispatches, on November 5, 11, 15, 16, 22, and 24, Japan specifically established and extended the deadline of November 25, later advanced, to November 29. The dispatches made it plain that after the deadline date a Japanese plan was automatically going into operation. The plan was of such importance that as the deadline approached, the government of Japan declared: "The fate of our Empire hangs by the slender thread of a few days."¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁸ Exhibit 1, page 165.

¹⁰⁹ Exhibit 1, page 173.

¹¹⁰ Exhibit 1, page 137.

When the deadline date of November 29 was reached with no agreement between the United States and Japan, there was no further extension. The intercepted dispatches indicated that the crisis deepened in its intensity after that day passed. On the first of December, Tokyo advised its ambassadors in Washington:¹¹¹

The date set in my message #812 has come and gone and the situation continues to be increasingly critical.

This message was translated by the Navy on the first of December. This information was never supplied to me.

An intercepted Japanese dispatch from Tokyo to Washington of November 26, 1941, made it clear that the American proposal of November 26 was completely unsatisfactory to Japan and that an actual rupture of negotiations would occur upon the receipt of the Japanese reply. A dispatch on November 28, decoded and translated on the same day stated:¹¹²

Well you two ambassadors have exerted superhuman efforts but, in spite of this, the United States has gone ahead and presented this humiliating proposal. This was quite unexpected and extremely regrettable. The Imperial Government can by no means use it as a basis for negotiations. Therefore, with a report of the views of the Imperial Government on this American proposal which I will send you in two or three days, the negotiations will be de facto ruptured. This is inevitable. . . .

After receipt by Tokyo of the American note of November 26 the intercepted Japanese dispatches show that Japan attached great importance to the continuance of negotiations to conceal from the United States whatever plan automatically took effect on November 29. Thus, the dispatch for Tokyo to Washington of November 28, cautions the Japanese ambassadors in Washington:¹¹³

I do not wish you to give the impression that the negotiations are broken off. Merely say to them that you are awaiting instructions and that, although the opinions of your government are not yet clear to you, to your own way of thinking the Imperial Government has always made just claims and has borne great sacrifices for the sake of peace in the Pacific. . . .

This information was never supplied to me.

¹¹¹ Exhibit 1, page 208.

¹¹² Exhibit 1, page 195.

¹¹³ Exhibit 1, page 195.

Again the dispatch from Tokyo to Washington of December 1, 1941, advising the Japanese ambassador that the deadline date had come and gone and the situation continues to be critical, contains this further information:¹¹⁴

. . . . to prevent the United States from becoming unduly suspicious we have been advising the press and others that though there are some wide differences between Japan and the United States, the negotiations are continuing. (The above is for only your information.)

This information was never supplied to me.

Again in the trans-Pacific telephone conversation intercepted on November 27, and translated by the Navy Department on November 28, Yamamoto in Tokyo explicitly instructed Kurusu: "Regarding negotiations, don't break them off."¹¹⁵

In another trans-Pacific telephone conversation between Kurusu and Yamamoto, intercepted and translated by the Navy on November 30, Kurusu noted the change in the Japanese attitude with respect to the duration of the American-Japanese negotiations. Before the deadline date Kurusu and Nomura had been urged by Tokyo to press for a conclusion of negotiations. Now they were instructed to stretch them out. Kurusu asked, "Are the Japanese-American negotiations to continue?" Yamamoto replied, "Yes." Kurusu then stated: "You were very urgent about them before, weren't you; but now you want them to stretch out. We will need your help. Both the Premier and the Foreign Minister will need to change the tone of their speeches. Do you understand? Please all use more discretion."¹¹⁶

This information from these telephone conversations was never supplied to me.

Again on November 29, an intercepted Japanese dispatch from Tokyo contains cautious representations to be addressed to the United States. The following instruction accompanied them:¹¹⁷

In carrying out this instruction, please be careful that this does not lead to anything like a breaking off of negotiations. . . .

This dispatch was decoded and translated by the Navy on November 30, and never sent to me.

¹¹⁴ Exhibit 1, page 208.

¹¹⁵ Exhibit 1, page 190.

¹¹⁶ Exhibit 1, page 207.

¹¹⁷ Exhibit 1, page 199.

The intercepted Japanese diplomatic dispatches show that on and after November 29, a Japanese plan of action automatically went into effect; that the plan was of such importance that it involved the fate of the empire; and that Japan urgently wanted the United States to believe that negotiations were continuing after the deadline date to prevent suspicion as to the nature of the plan.

What was this plan? Why such elaborate instructions to stretch out negotiations as a pretext to hide the operation of this plan? Anyone reading the Japanese intercepted messages would face this question.

Certainly the concealed Japanese plans which automatically went into effect on November 29 would hardly be the Japanese movement in Indo-China.

No effort was made to mask the movements or presence of the naval forces moving southward, because physical observations of that movement were unavoidable and the radio activity of these forces would provide a desirable semblance of normalcy.¹¹⁸

The troop movements to southern Indo-China were the subject of formal diplomatic exchanges between the two governments of Japan and the United States.

On December 2, 1941, Mr. Welles handed to Mr. Nomura and Mr. Kurusu a communication which the President of the United States wished to make to them. This communication was as follows:¹¹⁹

I have received reports during the past days of continuing Japanese troop movements to southern Indo-China. These reports indicate a very rapid and material increase in the forces of all kinds stationed by Japan in Indo-China. . . . The stationing of those increased Japanese forces in Indo-China would seem to imply the utilization of these forces by Japan for purposes of further aggression, since no such number of forces could possibly be required for the policing of that region. Such aggression could conceivably be against the Philippine Islands; against the many islands of East Indies; against Burma; against Malaya or either through coercion or through the actual use of force for the purpose of undertaking the occupation of Thailand Please be good enough to request the Japanese ambassador and Ambassador Kurusu to inquire at once of the Japanese government what the actual reasons may be for the steps already taken and what I am to consider is the policy of the Japanese government as

¹¹⁸ Record, testimony Admiral Inglis, page 453.

¹¹⁹ Foreign Relations of the United States, Japan; 1951-1941, Vol., 2, page 779.

demonstrated by this recent and rapid concentration of troops in Indo-China.

Thus, it was apparent to the Japanese government from this formal representation of the United States that our government was aware of the movement in Indo-China. The United States expressed its concern about potential Japanese action against the Philippines, the East Indies, Malaya, or Thailand. There was, therefore, very little reason for Japan to keep up a pretext of negotiations for the purpose of disguising these objectives.

Consequently, as time went on after November 29, and as Japan insisted to her envoys upon the continuance of negotiations as a pretext to divert the suspicion of the United States, it must have been apparent to a careful student of the intercepted dispatches that Japan on a deadline date of November 29 had put into effect an operation which was to consume a substantial time interval before its results were apparent to this government, and which appeared susceptible of effective concealment in its initial phases.

The messages as to the berthings of ships in Pearl Harbor would then have given the reader of these intercepted dispatches an insight as to one of the probable directions of the plan which went into effect automatically on November 29, and which Japan was so anxious to conceal. All these dispatches taken together would have pointed to Pearl Harbor as a probable objective of this plan. Yet, because I was not furnished with these intercepted dispatches, nor given in summary form any indication of the deadline date, the automatic execution of a plan by Japan on that date, and the continuance of negotiations thereafter as a pretext to hide that plan, I was deprived of the opportunity to make this deduction, which the dispatches as a whole would warrant, if not compel.

After November 27, there was a rising intensity in the crisis in Japanese-United States relations apparent in the intercepted dispatches. I was told on November 27 that negotiations had ceased and two days later that they appeared to be terminated with the barest possibilities of their resumption. Then I was left to read public accounts of further conversations between the State Department and the Japanese emissaries in Washington which indicated that negotiations had been resumed.

The Navy Department knew immediately of the reactions of Nomura and Kurusu to the American note of November 26—"Our failure and humiliation are complete."¹²⁰

The Navy Department knew immediately of the reactions of the Japanese government to the American note of November 26. Japan termed it:¹²¹

. . . a humiliating proposal. This was quite unexpected and extremely regrettable. The Imperial Government can by no means use it as a basis for negotiations. Therefore with a report of the views of the Imperial Government on

¹²⁰ Exhibit 1, page 180.

¹²¹ Exhibit 1, page 195.

this American proposal which I will send you in two or three days, the negotiations will be de facto ruptured. This is inevitable.

The Navy Department knew that Nomura and Kurusu suggested to Japan on November 26 one way of saving the situation — a wire by the President to the Emperor.¹²²

The Navy Department knew that the Japanese Government advised Nomura and Kurusu on November 28 that the suggested wire from the President to the Emperor offered no hope: “What you suggest is entirely unsuitable.”¹²³

The Navy Department knew that on November 30, Japan gave Germany a detailed version of the negotiations with the United States. Japan stated that "a continuation of negotiations would inevitably be detrimental to our cause," and characterized certain features of the American proposal of November 26 as “insulting — clearly a trick.” Japan concluded that the United States had decided to regard her as an enemy.¹²⁴

The Navy Department knew that Japan had instructed her ambassadors in Berlin on November 20 to inform Hitler:¹²⁵

The conversations begun between Tokyo and Washington last April . . . now stand ruptured— broken. Say very secretly to them (Hitler and Ribbentrop) that there is extreme danger that war may suddenly break out between the Anglo-Saxon nations and Japan through some clash of arms and add that the time of the breaking out of this war may come quicker than anyone dreams.

All this vital information came from intercepted, dispatches decoded and translated in Washington, either on the day they were sent or a day or two later. None of this information was supplied to me.

On November 19, 1941, the Japanese government set up a system for informing its representatives throughout the world of the time when Japan was to sever diplomatic relations or go to war with the United States, Great Britain or Russia. This decision was to be made known through a false weather broadcast from Japan. The words "east wind rain" in the broadcast meant that Japan had decided to sever relations¹²⁶ or go to war¹²⁷

¹²² Exhibit 1, page 180.

¹²³ Exhibit 1, page 195.

¹²⁴ Exhibit 1, page 205, 206.

¹²⁵ Exhibit 1, page 204.

¹²⁶ Exhibit 1, pages 154, 155.

¹²⁷ Dispatch Alusna Batavia to OpNav, December 5, 1941., 031030; Naval Court of Inquiry, exhibit 64, item 3, Record, testimony General Miles, page 4100.

with the United States. The words "west wind clear" would denote such action against England. The words "north -wind cloudy" would denote such action against Russia.

The interception of the false weather broadcast was considered by the Navy Department to be of supreme importance. Every facility of the Navy was invoked to learn as speedily as possible when the false weather broadcast from Japan was heard and which of the significant code words were used. Extraordinary measures were established in the Navy Department to transmit the words used in this broadcast to key officers as soon as they were known.¹²⁸

The Naval Court of Inquiry heard substantial evidence from various witnesses on the question of whether or not Japan gave the signal prescribed by the winds code. The Naval Court of Inquiry found the facts on this matter to be as follows:¹²⁹

On 4 December an intercepted Japanese broadcast employing this code was received in the Navy Department. Although this notification was subject to two interpretations, either a breaking off of diplomatic relations between Japan and the United States, or war, this information was not transmitted to the Commander-in-Chief, Pacific Fleet, or to other Commanders afloat.

It was known in the Navy Department that the Commanders-in-Chief, Pacific and Asiatic Fleets, were monitoring Japanese broadcasts for this code, and apparently there was a mistaken impression in the Navy Department that the execute message had also been intercepted at Pearl Harbor, when in truth this message was never intercepted at Pearl Harbor. No attempt, was made by the Navy Department to ascertain whether this information had been obtained by the Commander-in-Chief, Pacific, and by other Commanders afloat.

Admiral Stark stated that he knew nothing about it, although Admiral Turner stated that he himself was familiar with it and presumed that Admiral Kimmel had it. This message cannot now be located in the Navy Department.

[In 1980, twelve years after Admiral Kimmel deceased, Cheltenham, Maryland Naval Radio Communications Station operator Ralph Briggs admitted receiving the Winds Execute message and asserted he was ordered not to testify about it to the JCC in 1946. If the Winds Execute message could have been produced at the JCC hearings in 1946, it would have provided dramatic and irrefutable evidence of the Navy Department's failure

¹²⁸ Naval Court of Inquiry testimony, Comdr. Kramer, page 956, question 32.

¹²⁹ Addendum to Naval Court of Inquiry Finding of Fact, page 4, (not published).

to pass on critical intelligence to the Pacific Fleet. The JCC concluded in 1946 that the Winds Execute message was never received by American intelligence (National Archives document SRH-051: "Interview with Mr. Ralph T. Briggs," conducted by the Naval Security Group in 1977, and declassified by the National Security Agency on 11 March 1980).]

From various intercepted Japanese messages it was apparent that the high point in the crisis in Japanese-American affairs would be reached when the Japanese reply to the American note of November 26 was received. As the Naval Court of Inquiry put it:¹³⁰

The reply to this note was anxiously awaited by the high officials of the War and Navy Departments because of the feeling that Japan would not accept the conditions presented, and that diplomatic relations would be severed or that war would be declared.

On the afternoon of December 6, 1941, there was intercepted, decoded, and translated in the Navy Department, a dispatch from Japan to her Ambassadors in Washington known as the "pilot message." This stated:¹³¹

1. The Government has deliberated deeply on the American proposal of the 26th of November and as a result we have drawn up a memorandum for the United States contained in my separate message #902 (in English).
2. This separate message is a very long one, I will send it in fourteen parts and I imagine you will receive it tomorrow. However, I am not sure. The situation is extremely delicate, and when you receive it I want you to please keep it secret for the time being.
3. Concerning the time of presenting this memorandum to the United States, I will wire you in a separate message. However, I want you in the meantime to put it in nicely drafted form and make every preparation to present it to the Americans just as soon as you receive instructions.

The first thirteen parts of the Japanese reply were intercepted and received by the Navy Department at about 3:00 p.m., December 6, 1941, and were translated and made ready for distribution by 9:00 p.m., Washington time on that date. These thirteen parts contained strong language. The following expressions are fairly typical of the tenor of these thirteen parts:¹³²

¹³⁰ Naval Court of Inquiry, finding XVI.

¹³¹ Exhibit 1, page 238.

¹³² Exhibit 1, pages 239-244.

The American Government obsessed with its own views and opinions, may be said to be scheming for the extension of the war [Part 9] it is exercising in conjunction with Great Britain and other nations pressure by economic power. Recourse to such pressure as a means of dealing with international relations should be condemned as it is at times more inhumane than military pressure [Part 9] It is a fact of history that the countries (of East Asia for the past hundred years or more have) been compelled to observe the status quo under the Anglo-American policy of imperialistic exploitation and to sacrifice (themselves) to the prosperity of the two nations (Part 10).

Mr. Hull described the whole document on December 7:¹³³

In all my fifty years of public service I have never seen a document that was more crowded with infamous falsehoods and distortions — infamous falsehoods and distortions on a scale so huge that I never imagined until today that any government on this planet was capable of uttering them.

The thirteen parts and the pilot message instructing the Japanese envoys that a specific hour was later to be fixed for its delivery could mean only one thing, that war with the United States was imminent. An hour had been fixed for the delivery of the Japanese ultimatum and for the probable outbreak of hostilities. The hour fixed would be communicated to the Japanese emissaries in Washington in a separate message to be expected shortly. Not a word of these supremely critical developments of Saturday, December 6, was sent to me. This vital information which was available at 9:00 p.m., Washington time, was distributed to the most important officers of the government in Washington by midnight, Washington time. The President of the United States had it. The Secretary of the Navy had it. The Chief of Military Intelligence had it. The Director of Naval Intelligence had it. Apparently, the Secretary of War and the Secretary of State were apprised of these momentous events on that same evening. Nine p. m. in Washington was 3:30 in the afternoon in Hawaii. At midnight in Washington it was early evening, 6:30 p. m., in Hawaii.

The dispatch fixing the hour for the delivery of the Japanese ultimatum to the United States as 1:00 p. m., Washington time,¹³⁴ was intercepted and decoded by the Navy Department by 7:00 on the morning of December 7; — 7:00 a. m., Washington time, 1:30 a. m., Hawaiian time — nearly six and a half hours before the attack.¹³⁵ The

¹³³ Foreign Relations of United States, Japan, 1931-1941, Vol. 2, page 787.

¹³⁴ Exhibit 1, page 248.

¹³⁵ Hewitt report, page 86.

translation of this short message from the Japanese was a two-minute job.¹³⁶ Not later than 10:30 a. m. the Chief of Naval Operations was informed of it. This information was not supplied to me prior to the attack.

I cannot tell what the evidence at this investigation will ultimately show as to the precise hours on the morning of December 7, when various responsible officers of the Navy Department knew that 1:00 p. m. , Washington time, was the hour fixed for the delivery of the Japanese ultimatum to this government. This much I know. There was ample time, at least an interval of approximately two and one-half hours in which a message could have been dispatched to me. Regardless of what arguments there may be as to the evaluation of the dispatches that had been sent to me, I surely was entitled to know of the hour fixed by Japan for the probable outbreak of war against the United States. I cannot understand now — I have never understood — I may never understand — why I was deprived of the information available in the Navy Department in Washington on Saturday night and Sunday morning.

On November 28, 1941, the Navy Department could have informed me of the following vital facts:

(1) Japan had set November 29 as an immovable deadline date for agreement with the United States.

(2) The United States gave to Japan certain proposals for a solution of Japanese-American relations on November 26, I might remark parenthetically that an authoritative statement from my government as to the general nature of those proposals would have been most enlightening.

(3) Japan considered the United States proposals of November 26 as unacceptable and planned to rupture negotiations with the United States when her reply to them was delivered to this government.

(4) Japan was keeping up a pretext of negotiations after November 26 to conceal a definite plan which went into effect on November 29th.

This was the type of information which I had stated in May I needed so urgently in making the difficult decisions with which I was confronted.

The question will arise in your minds, as it has in mine: Would the receipt of this information have made a difference in the events of December 7? No man can now state as a fact that he would have taken a certain course of action four years ago had he known facts which were then unknown to him. All he can give is his present conviction on the subject, divorcing himself from hindsight as far as humanly possible, and re-creating the atmosphere of the past and the factors which then influenced him. I give you my views, formed in this manner.

¹³⁶ Hewitt testimony, Captain Kramer, page 595.

Had I learned these vital facts and the "ships in harbor" messages on November 28th, it is my present conviction that I would have rejected the Navy Department's suggestion to send carriers to Wake and Midway. I would have ordered the third carrier, the *Saratoga*, back from the West Coast. I would have gone to sea with the Fleet and endeavored to keep it in an intercepting position at sea. This would have permitted the disposal of the striking power of the Fleet to meet an attack in the Hawaiian area. The requirement of keeping the Fleet fuelled, however, would have made necessary the presence in Pearl Harbor from time to time of detachments of various units of the main body of the Fleet.

On December 4, ample time remained for the Navy Department to forward to me the information which I have outlined, and in addition the following significant facts, which the Navy Department learned between November 27 and that date:

(1) Japan had informed Hitler that war with the Anglo—Saxon powers would break out sooner than anyone dreams;

(2) Japan had broadcast her winds code signal using the words "east wind rain," meaning war or a rupture of diplomatic relations with the United States.

Assuming that for the first time on December 5 I had all the important information then available in the Navy Department, it is my present conviction that I would have gone to sea with the Fleet, including the carrier *Lexington* and arranged a rendezvous at sea with Halsey's carrier force, and been in a good position to intercept the Japanese attack.

On December 6, fifteen hours, before the attack, ample time still remained for the Navy Department to give me all the significant facts which I have outlined and which were not available to me in Hawaii. In addition, the Navy Department could then have advised me that thirteen parts of the Japanese reply to the American proposals had been received, that the tone and temper of this message indicated a break in diplomatic relations or war with the United States, and that the Japanese reply was to be formally presented to this government at a special hour soon to be fixed. Had I received this information on the afternoon of December 6, it is my present conviction that I would have ordered all Fleet units in Pearl Harbor to sea, arranged a rendezvous with Halsey's task force returning from Wake, and been ready to intercept the Japanese force by the time fixed for the outbreak of war.

Even on the morning of December 7, four or five hours before the attack, had the Navy Department for the first time seen fit to send me all this significant information, and the additional fact that at 1 p.m., Washington time, had been fixed for the delivery of the Japanese ultimatum to the United States, my light forces could have moved out of Pearl Harbor, all ships in the harbor would have been at General Quarters, and all resources of the Fleet in instant readiness to repel an attack.

It is my conviction that action by the Navy Department at any one of these significant dates in furnishing me the information from the intercepted messages would have altered the events of December 7, 1941.

The Pacific Fleet deserved a fighting chance. It was entitled to receive from the Navy Department the best information available. Such information had been urgently requested, I had been assured that it would be furnished me. We faced our problems in the Pacific confident that such assurance would be faithfully carried out.

PART IV

Previous Pearl Harbor Investigations

Voluminous data and documents have accumulated during the course of previous Pearl Harbor investigations. The procedure adopted at certain of these investigations must be considered in placing a value on the results and conclusions which were reached.

At the proceedings of the Roberts Commission I was told that I was not on trial.¹³⁷ I was not permitted to be present at the testimony of other witnesses or to examine or cross-examine them. I was not permitted to know what evidence had been presented.

The Roberts Commission held sessions in Washington prior to going to Hawaii. At these sessions the highest ranking officers of the War and Navy Departments were heard. Their testimony was not recorded. A précis was made of testimony given by responsible officers of the Navy Department.¹³⁸ There is also a memorandum prepared by Admiral Wilkinson, Director of Naval Intelligence, dated December 19, 1941, addressed to the Chief of Naval Operations, which gives a contemporaneous account of Admiral Wilkinson's testimony.¹³⁹ These documents contain statements that prior to the attack I was given all the information available to the Navy Department.¹⁴⁰ It appears that the so-called "magic" or intercepted messages were freely discussed before the Commission. Consequently, it is likely that the Commission received the impression that the intercepted Japanese diplomatic messages were either forwarded to me by Washington or available to me in Pearl Harbor. The Director of War Plans, Admiral Turner, testified before the Naval Court of Inquiry to the effect that he may have given the Roberts Commission the impression that I was familiar with these intercepted dispatches because that was his information at the time.¹⁴¹

[Admiral Frank E. Beatty, Secretary of the Navy Frank Knox's aide, at Knox's urging before the attack, asked Admiral Turner, Director of Naval War Plans,

¹³⁷ Roberts Commission testimony, page 581.

¹³⁸ Record, testimony of Admiral Wilkinson, page 5021.

¹³⁹ Record, testimony of Admiral Wilkinson, pages 4891-4900.

¹⁴⁰ Record, testimony of Admiral Wilkinson, page 5022; testimony of Admiral Wilkinson, pages 4893-4895.

¹⁴¹ Naval Court of Inquiry, testimony Admiral Turner, Volume 4, page 1018, question 158.

“Is Admiral Kimmel getting these ‘magic messages’?” Turner replied, “Beatty, of course, he is. He has the same ‘magic’ setup we have here *US News & World Report*, May 28, 1954, p.50).

Admiral Beatty testified before the JCC, but did not reveal the preceding information. Secretary Knox conducted the first of ten official Pearl Harbor investigations and did not reveal the preceding information.]

I do not intend to suggest that any of these responsible officers deliberately misled the Roberts Commission as to my receipt of the "magic messages." It was tragic, however, that the Commission did not ask me about this matter. [See www.pearlharbor911attacks.com for documentation that: In December 1941, the Director of the FBI J. Edgar Hoover gave in writing President Roosevelt, and the man FDR chose to investigate the Pearl Harbor attack, Associate Supreme Court Justice Owen Roberts, information strongly suggesting that Army and Navy Intelligence in Washington, DC had learned the entire Japanese attack plan days before the attack, and sent it to Admiral Kimmel, who did nothing about it. The Roberts Commission tried and failed to prove the allegation against Admiral Kimmel, and then refused to follow logical leads to investigate Admiral Kimmel’s bosses in Washington keeping secret its source of information until discovered in 2007. In 1946, Chairman Roberts under oath at the Joint Congressional Committee’s Pearl Harbor Attack investigation claimed he could not recall who gave him this information.] No question was addressed to me on the subject of my knowledge of the intercepted Japanese dispatches. I had no opportunity to correct any misinformation which the Roberts Commission may have received as to my receipt of this information. I had no way of knowing what evidence had been given the Commission other than my own testimony. It was more than two years after the Commission concluded its proceedings before I was permitted to know what evidence had been presented to the Commission.

In June of 1944, the Congress, by Statute, directed the Secretary of War and the Secretary of the Navy to make investigations. The Naval Court of Inquiry was appointed for this purpose. The three admirals who sat on the Court were selected by the Secretary of the Navy. The Court proceedings lasted several months. I was present at all hearings, was represented by counsel, introduced evidence, examined, and cross-examined witnesses. This proceeding was the only one of the secret investigations of Pearl Harbor in which these basic American rights were accorded to me.

The Naval Court of Inquiry found unanimously that there was no ground for criticism of my decisions or actions. The findings of the Naval Court were not made public, however, until August 28, 1945. When they appeared in the press, I learned for the first time that the Naval Court of Inquiry had found that I was not guilty of any dereliction of duty or errors of judgment.

On February 6, 1945, I wrote to the Secretary of the Navy requesting permission to read the findings of fact, opinions, and recommendations of the Naval Court. On February 13, 1945, the Secretary of the Navy denied my request.

In May of 1945, long after the Naval Court of Inquiry had filed its report, the Secretary of the Navy detailed Admiral Hewitt to conduct a further secret investigation into Pearl Harbor. I learned from the public press that this investigation had begun. On May 8, 1945, I wrote to the Secretary requesting permission to be present at the hearings before Admiral Hewitt, to introduce evidence, to confront and cross-examine witnesses. The Secretary of the Navy denied my request in a letter of May 14, 1945.

On May 24, 1945, I wrote again to the Secretary requesting that he reconsider his decision to exclude me from the Hewitt Investigation. The Secretary of the Navy never replied. The Hewitt Investigation went ahead in secret. On the basis of this secret investigation, the Secretary, in effect, set aside the verdict of the Naval Court of Inquiry.

With these facts the American people will know how to evaluate the various investigations into Pearl Harbor. If this investigation succeeds in preserving for the future the pertinent facts about Pearl Harbor, I shall be content. History, with the perspective of the long tomorrow, will enter the final directive in my case. I am confident of that verdict. [Fleet Admiral Nimitz and his co-author, the leading naval historian of his day, E. B. Potter wrote in 1960 that:

- “It is the duty of every person interested in the national defense to read and understand such a book as Sea Power.” Nimitz.
 - “Every page of Sea Power reflects the influence of Admiral Nimitz.” Potter.
 - “It was [Nimitz] chiefly who steered the civilian writers away from the pitfalls of amateur military analysis.” Potter.
- » Sea Power, Nimitz/Potter, 1960, pp., vi-viii