

December 8, 1941

[Message To Congress]

FDR Speech File

1400

DRAFT No. 1

December 7, 1941.

PROPOSED MESSAGE TO THE CONGRESS

Yesterday, December 7, 1941, a date which will live in infamy,
the United States of America was suddenly and deliberately attacked
by naval and air forces of the Empire of Japan.

The United States was at the moment at peace with that nation and was
still in continuing the conversation with its Government and its Emperor looking
toward the maintenance of peace in the Pacific. Indeed, one hour after
Japanese air squadrons had commenced bombing in Dahⁿ
the Japanese Ambassador to the United States and his colleague delivered
to the Secretary of State a formal reply to a recent message,

While this reply stated it seemed useless to continue the negotiations
must be considered as final, it contained no threat or hint of war or
armed attack.

It will be recorded that the distance between the coasts of Hawaii from Japan makes it obvious that the attack was deliberately
planned many days ago. During the intervening time the Japanese Government has deliberately sought to deceive the United States by false
statements and expressions of hope for continued peace.

The attack yesterday on ~~Honolulu and on the island of Oahu~~ has

caused severe damage to American naval and military forces. Very many American lives have been lost. In addition American ~~ships~~ ships have been torpedoed on the high seas between San Francisco and Honolulu.

Yesterday the Japanese Government also launched an attack

against Malaya.

~~of last night Japanese forces attacked
Japan has, therefore, undertaken a surprise offensive extending~~

~~the Philippines~~
Solomon Islands

throughout the Pacific area. The facts of yesterday speak for themselves. The people of the United States have already formed their opinions and well understand the implications ~~of such~~
~~to very~~
~~in~~ to the safety of our nation.

As Commander-in-Chief of the Army and Navy I have, ~~directed~~, directed that all measures be taken for our defense.

Long will we remember the character of the onslaught against us.

(A) No matter how long it may take us to ~~overcome~~ ~~this~~ ~~permitted~~ invasion the American people will in their righteous might win through to absolute victory!

I speak the will of the Congress and of the people ~~of this~~

~~community~~ when I assert that we will not only defend ourselves to
the uttermost but will see to it that this form of treachery shall
D
never endanger us again. Hostilities exist. There is no mincing
the fact that our people, our territory and our interests are in
grave danger.

I, therefore, ask that the Congress declare that since the
unprovoked and dastardly attack by Japan on Sunday, December
7th, ^{as} ~~and~~ a state of war exists between the United States and the
Japanese Empire.

*We the people in
full confidence in our right*

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

December 15, 1941

MEMORANDUM:

This is the first draft of the message dictated by the President to Congress. The pencilled notes are mine.

HARRY L. HOPKINS

HLH

ORIGINALS of these documents are in Box 211

8/26/83 wfs

December 6, 1941

MEMORANDUM

I saw the President at 8:30 this morning and attached is the last draft of the speech.

I suggested that he take out "at the moment" in the fourth line on page 1 and "minor menace" on page 3. I also wrote the next to the last paragraph for him.

The speech is going to be given at 12:30 and I am going down with Mrs Roosevelt to hear it.

The President was receiving the latest despatches this morning and the news is surely not good. But, as ever, he had a good night's sleep, although someone woke him up at 7:30.

He dictated to Steve a long news release to be given out at once.

I told him I thought he should invite the Supreme Court and he readily agreed. This has been done.

HARRY L. HOPKINS

MESSAGE TO THE CONGRESS

DECEMBER 8, 1941

Yesterday, December 7, 1941 -- a date which will live in infamy -- the United States of America was suddenly and deliberately attacked by naval and air forces of the Empire of Japan.

The United States was at the moment at peace with that nation and, at the solicitation of Japan, was still in conversation with its Government and its Emperor looking toward the maintenance of peace in the Pacific. Indeed, one hour after Japanese air squadrons had commenced bombing in Oahu, the Japanese Ambassador to the United States and his colleague delivered to the Secretary of State a formal reply to a recent American message. While this reply stated that it seemed useless to continue the existing diplomatic negotiations, it contained no threat or hint of war or armed attack.

It will be recorded that the distance of Hawaii from Japan makes it obvious that the attack was deliberately planned many days or even weeks ago. During the intervening time the Japanese Government has deliberately sought to deceive the United States by false statements and expressions of hope for continued peace.

The attack yesterday on the Hawaiian Islands has caused severe damage to American naval and military forces. Very many American lives have been lost. In addition American ships have been torpedoed on the high seas between San Francisco and Honolulu.

Yesterday the Japanese Government also launched an attack against Malaya.

Last night Japanese forces attacked Guam.

Last night Japanese forces attacked the Philippine Islands.

Japan has, therefore, undertaken a surprise offensive extending throughout the Pacific area. The facts of yesterday speak for themselves. The people of the United States have already formed their opinions and well understand the implications to the very safety of our nation.

As Commander-in-Chief of the Army and Navy I have directed that all measures be taken for our defense.

Long will we remember the character of the onslaught against us.

No matter how long it may take us to overcome this premeditated invasion, the American people will in their righteous might win through to absolute victory.

I speak the will of the Congress and of the people when I assert that we will not only defend ourselves to the uttermost but will see to it that this form of treachery shall never endanger us again.

Roosevelt

Hostilities exist. There is no mincing the fact
that our people, our territory and our interests are in
grave danger.

I, therefore, ask that the Congress declare that
since the unprovoked and dastardly attack by Japan on
Sunday, December seventh, a state of war has existed
between the United States and the Japanese Empire.

Honesty

With unbending confidence ^{in our}
armored forces - with faith in our people -
in our allies - we will assault ^{the} ~~the~~
coast - we will assault ^{the} ~~the~~
as help us God.
Unconditional Surrender

December 7, 1941.

PROPOSED MESSAGE TO THE CONGRESS

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The United States was at the moment at peace with that nation and was still in conversation with its Government and its Emperor looking toward the maintenance of peace in the Pacific. Indeed, one hour after Japanese air squadrons had commenced bombing in Hawaii and the Philippines, the Japanese Ambassador to the United States and his colleague delivered to the Secretary of State a formal reply to a recent American message. This reply contained a statement that it seemed useless to continue the diplomatic negotiations, but it contained no threat nor hint of war nor of an armed attack.

It will be recorded that the distance of Hawaii from Japan makes it obvious that the attack was deliberately planned many days or even weeks ago. During the intervening time the Japanese Government has deliberately sought to

deceive the United States by false statements and expressions of hope for continued peace.

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As Commander-in-Chief of the Army and Navy I have, of course, directed that all measures be taken for our defense.

Long will we remember the character of the onslaught against us.

I speak the will of the Congress and of the people of this country when I assert that we will not only defend ourselves to the uttermost but will see to it that this form of treachery shall never endanger us again. Hostilities exist. There is no mincing the fact that our people, our territory and our interests are in grave danger.

I, therefore, ask that the Congress declare that since the unprovoked and dastardly attack by Japan on Sunday, December seventh, a state of war has existed between the United States and the Japanese Empire.

Final Draft

MESSAGE TO THE CONGRESS

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Last night the Japanese attacked Wake Island.

This morning the Japanese attacked Midway Island.

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No matter how long it may take us to overcome this premeditated invasion, the American people will in their righteous might win through to absolute victory.

I believe I interpret the will of the Congress and of the people when I assert that we will not only defend ourselves to the uttermost but will make very certain that this form of treachery shall never endanger us again.

Hostilities exist. There is no blinking at the fact that our people, our territory and our interests are in grave danger.

With confidence in our armed forces -- with the unbounding determination of our people -- we will gain the inevitable triumph -- so help us God.

I ask that the Congress declare that since the unprovoked and dastardly attack by Japan on Sunday, December seventh, a state of war has existed between the United States and the Japanese Empire.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

mandate (Rept. No. 1487). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. RANDOLPH: Committee on the District of Columbia. H. R. 6093. A bill to amend an act entitled "An act providing for the naming of the District of Columbia and the regulation of the location, height, bulk, and uses of buildings and other structures and of the uses of land in the District of Columbia, and for other purposes," approved June 26, 1938, without amendment (Rept. No. 488). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

REPORT OF COMMITTEE ON PRIVATE BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XIII, the report of committees was delivered to the Clerk for printing and reference to the proper calendar, as follows:

Mr. McGEEHEE: Committee on Claims. H. R. 1531. A bill for the relief of the state of John J. Murray; with amendment (Rept. No. 1476). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 3 of rule XIII, public bills and resolutions were introduced and severally referred as follows:

By Mr. EDMISTON:

H. R. 6181. A bill to extend eligibility for appointments to the West Point and Annapolis Academies to the sons of service-connected World War veterans and for other purposes; to the Committee on Military Affairs.

By Mr. STEAGALL:

H. R. 6182. A bill to amend the Reconstruction Finance Corporation Act, as amended, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking and Currency.

By Mr. FLOESSER:

H. R. 6183. Resolution requesting the President and the Secretary of State to negotiate for the purchase of a part of the Dominion of Canada; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

PRIVATE BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 1 of rule XIII, private bills and resolutions were introduced and severally referred as follows:

By Mr. CARTER:

H. R. 6183. A bill for the relief of James Theodore Heim; to the Committee on Immigration and Naturalization.

By Mr. HARRIS of Arkansas:

H. R. 6184. A bill for the relief of Mr. and Mrs. E. P. Hall; to the Committee on Claims.

By Mr. MARCANTONIO:

H. R. 6185. A bill for the relief of Father Michael O'Reilly; to the Committee on Immigration and Naturalization.

By Mr. WELCH:

H. R. 6186. A bill for the relief of Frederick Bush; to the Committee on Naval Affairs.

By Mr. CUFFORD:

H. R. 6187. A bill for the relief of Henry Tachudy and family; to the Committee on Immigration and Naturalization.

By Mr. BULL:

H. R. 6188. A bill for the relief of Robert E. Dennis; to the Committee on Claims.

PETITIONS, ETC.

Under clause 1 of rule XIII, petitions and papers were laid on the Clerk's desk and referred as follows:

2121. By Mr. CULKIN: Resolution of the National Orange, favoring application of economic devices as best means for holding down inflationary tendencies and opposing arbitrary price fixing unless necessary. If price fixing becomes necessary, demands that all groups be included, action be taken to prevent profiteering, standards be provided to assure equity, and that Congress retain control; to the Committee on Banking and Currency.

2124. Also, resolution of the Jefferson County Board of Supervisors, approving House bill 5912, for relief of agricultural producers whose crops were reduced by reason of drought or other uncontrollable natural causes; to the Committee on Agriculture.

2125. By Mr. LAMBERTSON: Petition of the Carpenters' Local Union, 1445, of the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America, Topeka, Kans., requesting the immediate enactment of a just and adequate old-age pension law; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

2126. By the SPEAKER: Petition of the General Welfare Federation, Pasadena, Calif., petitioning consideration of their resolution with reference to House bill 1410; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

MONDAY, DECEMBER 4, 1944

The House was called to order by the Speaker.

On motion of Mr. McCORMACK, by unanimous consent, the Journal of the proceedings of Friday, December 5, 1941, was approved without reading.

COMMUNICATIONS

Executive communications, pursuant to clause 2, rule XXIV, were referred as follows:

1121. A letter from the Acting Secretary of the Interior, transmitting a draft of proposed amending legislation that is needed in connection with the settlement of damage claims and the acquisition of easement rights in connection with the operation of the Fort Hall Indian irrigation project, Fort Hall, Idaho; to the Committee on Claims.

1122. A letter from the Secretary of the Navy, transmitting a draft of a proposed bill to further amend the act approved June 23, 1938 (52 Stat. 944), as amended; to the Committee on Naval Affairs.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

On motion of Mr. McCORMACK, by unanimous consent,

Ordered, That it may be in order at any time today for the House to stand in recess, subject to the call of the Speaker.

JOINT SESSIONS OF THE TWO HOUSES

Mr. McCORMACK submitted the following concurrent resolution, which was considered and agreed to (H. Con. Res. 611):

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That the two Houses of Congress assemble in the Hall of the House of Representatives on Monday, the 8th day of December 1941, at 12:30 o'clock p. m., for the purpose of receiving such communications as the President of the United States shall be pleased to make to them.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

On motion of Mr. McCORMACK, by unanimous consent,

Ordered, That it may be in order at any time today for the Speaker to recognize Members to move a suspension of the rules.

RECESS

At 12 o'clock and 3 minutes p. m., the House stood in recess, subject to the call of the Speaker.

AFTER RECESS—12:15 P. M.

The SPEAKER called the House to order.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Mr. Frazer, the legislative clerk, announced that the Senate had agreed, without amendment, to a concurrent resolution of the House of the following title:

H. Con. Res. 61. Concurrent resolution providing for a joint session of the House, December 8, 1941, for the purpose of receiving such communications as the President of the United States shall be pleased to make.

Then,

JOINT SESSION TO RECEIVE THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The Doorkeeper announced the Vice President and Members of the Senate, who entered the Chamber and took seats assigned them.

Whereupon, pursuant to House Concurrent Resolution 61, the Speaker called the joint session of the two Houses to order.

The Doorkeeper announced the Chief Justice of the United States and the Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States, who entered the Chamber and took seats assigned them.

The Doorkeeper announced the members of the President's Cabinet, who entered the Chamber and took seats assigned them.

The SPEAKER appointed Mr. McCORMACK, Mr. DOUGHTON, and Mr. MURPHY of Massachusetts; members on the part of the House of the committee to escort the President into the Hall of the House.

The VICE PRESIDENT appointed Mr. CLARK, Mr. BARKLEY, and Mr. McNARY members on the part of the Senate of the committee to escort the President into the Hall of the House.

The President of the United States, at 12 o'clock and 3 minutes p. m., escorted by the committee on the part of both Houses, entered the Hall of the House

for events surrounding
disappearance of Reading
Copy (12/8/41) see
Grace Tully, FDR, My
Boss, page 93
(also James Roosevelt, Affection-
ately, FDR, p. 329.)

RLS
11/31/58

62-
J.R. brought reading copy of a
white seal's left it uncut
with some ink which it was taken
by an unknown person. It has never
been used.

STATEMENTS FILE

HOLD FOR RELEASE

HOLD FOR RELEASE

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December 8, 1941

CONFIDENTIAL: To be held in STRICT CONFIDENCE and no portion, synopsis or intimation to be published or given out until delivery of the President's message to the Congress HAS BEGUN.

Release expected about 12:50 P. M., E. S. T., December 8, 1941.

CAUTION: Extreme care must be exercised to avoid premature publication.

STEPHEN EARLY
Secretary to the President

TO THE CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES:

Yesterday, December 7, 1941 -- a date which will live in infamy -- the United States of America was suddenly and deliberately attacked by naval and air forces of the Empire of Japan.

The United States was at peace with that nation and, at the solicitation of Japan, was still in conversation with its Government and its Emperor looking toward the maintenance of peace in the Pacific. Indeed, one hour after Japanese air squadrons had commenced bombing in Oahu, the Japanese Ambassador to the United States and his colligates delivered to the Secretary of State a formal reply to a recent American message. While this reply stated that it seemed useless to continue the existing diplomatic negotiations, it contained no threat or hint of war or armed attack.

It will be recorded that the distance of Hawaii from Japan makes it obvious that the attack was deliberately planned many days or even weeks ago. During the intervening time the Japanese Government has deliberately sought to deceive the United States by false statements and expressions of hope for continued peace.

The attack yesterday on the Hawaiian Islands has caused severe damage to American naval and military forces. Very many American lives have been lost. In addition American ships have been torpedoed on the high seas between San Francisco and Honolulu.

Yesterday the Japanese Government also launched an attack against Malaya.

Last night Japanese forces attacked Hong Kong.

Last night Japanese forces attacked Guam.

Last night Japanese forces attacked the Philippine Islands.

Last night the Japanese attacked Wake Island.

This morning the Japanese attacked Midway Island.

Japan has, therefore, undertaken a surprise offensive extending throughout the Pacific area. The facts of yesterday speak for themselves. The people of the United States have already formed their opinions and well understand the implications to the very safety of our nation.

As Commander-in-Chief of the Army and Navy I have directed that all measures be taken for our defense.

Always will we remember the character of the onslaught against us.

No matter how long it may take us to overcome this pre-meditated invasion, the American people will in their righteous might win through to absolute victory.

I believe, I interpret the will of the Congress and of the people whom I assert that we will not only defend ourselves to the uttermost but will make very certain that this form of treachery shall never endanger us again.

Hostilities exist. There is no blinking at the fact that our people, our territory and our interests are in grave danger.

With confidence in our armed forces -- with the unbounding determination of our people -- we will gain the inevitable triumph -- so help us God.

I ask that the Congress declare that since the unprovoked and dastardly attack by Japan on Sunday, December seventh, a state of war has existed between the United States and the Japanese Empire.

FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT

THE WHITE HOUSE,

December 8, 1941.

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STEPHEN EARLY
Secretary to the President

*Mr Vice President & Senator and Member of the Senate and
House of Representatives
to the Government of the United States*

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The United States was at peace with that nation and, at the solicitation of Japan, was still in conversation with its Government and its Emperor looking toward the maintenance of peace in the Pacific. Indeed, one hour after Japanese air squadrons had commenced bombing in Oahu, the Japanese Ambassador to the United States and his colleague delivered to the Secretary of State a formal reply to a recent American message. While this reply stated that it seemed useless to continue the existing diplomatic negotiations, it contained no threat or hint of war or armed attack.

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The attack yesterday on the Hawaiian Islands has caused severe damage to American naval and military forces. Very many American lives have been lost. In addition American ships have been reported torpedoed on the high seas between San Francisco and Honolulu.

I regret to tell you that

reported

Original copy

Yesterday the Japanese Government also launched an attack against Malaya.

Last night Japanese forces attacked Hong Kong.

Last night Japanese forces attacked Guam.

Last night Japanese forces attacked the Philippine Islands.

Last night the Japanese attacked Wake Island.

And this morning the Japanese attacked Midway Island.

Japan has, therefore, undertaken a surprise offensive extending throughout the Pacific area. The facts of yesterday speak for themselves. The people of the United States have already formed their opinions and well understand the implications to the very life and safety of our nation.

As Commander-in-Chief of the Army and Navy I have directed that all measures be taken for our defense.

our whole Nation
But always will we remember the character of the onslaught against us. (Applause)

No matter how long it may take us to overcome this pre-meditated invasion, the American people in their righteous might will win through to absolute victory. (loud and prolonged cheer and applause)

I believe I interpret the will of the Congress and of the people when I assert that we will not only defend ourselves to the uttermost but will make very certain that this form of treachery shall never endanger us again. (applause)

Hostilities exist. There is no blinking at the fact that our people, our territory and our interests are in grave danger.

With confidence in our armed forces -- with the unbounding determination of our people -- we will gain the inevitable triumph -- so help us God. (Applause)

I ask that the Congress declare that since the unprovoked and dastardly attack by Japan on Sunday, December seventh, ^{the state} 1941, of war has existed between the United States and the Japanese Empire.

(loud and prolonged cheer and applause).

FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT

THE WHITE HOUSE,

December 8, 1941.

Mr. Romagna

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FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT

THE WHITE HOUSE,

December 8, 1941.

December 23, 1941

Dear Jimmy:

I have had a howl go up from the Library at Hyde Park and from Grace here that you have taken away with you the war Message to Congress.

Because of your being away and the possibility of Rommie going from place to place, I really think it would be better for you to put it on deposit at Hyde Park where the Library will, of course, take care of its safety. As a matter of fact, it probably ought to be in the Government permanently because they have everything else and this particular one is just about the equal in importance to the First Inaugural Address. Will you or Rommie send it to me?

All the good luck in the world.

Devotedly,

Captain James Roosevelt,
c/o Mrs. Jerome Schneider,
106 South Orlando Avenue,
Los Angeles, California



General
Services
Administration

National Archives
and
Records Service Washington, DC 20408

Date : May 9, 1984

Reply to:

Amt of : NMFD - L

Subject: Reply to inquiry

To : Mr. Ray Teichman
Franklin D. Roosevelt Library
Hyde Park, NY 12538

You will find an answer to your inquiry in the statement(s) checked below.

1. The enclosed information will help answer your recent inquiry.
2. The material you ordered is enclosed will be mailed in about _____ week(s).
3. Your order costs \$ _____.
4. Your refund of \$ _____ is enclosed will be sent by Treasury check in a few weeks.
5. Enclosed is the copy of President Roosevelt's message of December 8, 1941, from the records of the U. S. House of Representatives.

Charles South

CHARLES SOUTH
Legislative and Diplomatic Branch
Civil Archives Division

RECEIVED

MAY 14 1984

THE FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT
LIBRARY

a b

The following is a summary of the papers
relating to the subject.

Foreign Affairs

43

TO THE CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES:

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~~bouned~~ determination of our people -- we will gain the in-
evitable triumph -- so help us God.

I ask that the Congress declare that since the un-
provoked and dastardly attack by Japan on Sunday, December
seventh, a state of war has existed between the United States
and the Japanese Empire.

Franklin D. Roosevelt (1)

THE WHITE HOUSE,
December 8, 1941.

TO THE CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES:

Yesterday, December 7, 1941 — a date which will live in infamy -- the United States of America was suddenly and deliberately attacked by naval and air forces of the Empire of Japan.

The United States was at peace with ~~the~~ nation and, at the solicitation of Japan, was still in conversation with its Government and its Emperor looking toward the maintenance of peace in the Pacific. Indeed, one hour after Japanese air squadrons had commenced bombing in Oahu, the Japanese Ambassador to the United States and his colleague delivered to the Secretary of State a formal reply to a recent American message. While this reply stated that it seemed useless to continue the existing diplomatic negotiations, it contained no threat or hint of war or armed attack.

It will be recorded that the distance of Hawaii from Japan makes it obvious that the attack was deliberately planned many days or even weeks ago. During the intervening time the Japanese Government has deliberately sought to deceive the United States by false statements and expressions of hope for continued peace.

The attack yesterday on the Hawaiian Islands has caused severe damage to American naval and military forces. Very many American lives have been lost. In addition American ships have been ~~perforated~~ torpedoed on the high seas between San Francisco and Honolulu.

Yesterday the Japanese Government also launched an attack against Malaya.

Last night Japanese forces attacked Hong Kong.

Last night Japanese forces attacked Guam.

Last night Japanese forces attacked the Philippine Islands.

Last night the Japanese attacked Wake Island.

This morning the Japanese attacked Midway Island.

Japan has, therefore, undertaken a surprise offensive extending throughout the Pacific area. The facts of yesterday speak for themselves. The people of the United States have already formed their opinions and well understand the implications to the ^{life and} safety of our nation.

As Commander-in-Chief of the Army and Navy I have directed that all measures be taken for our defense.

Always will be remembered the character of the onslaught against us.

No matter how long it may take us to overcome this premeditated invasion, the American people ^{wish} in their ^{we will} righteous might win through to absolute victory.

I believe I interpret the will of the Congress and of the people when I assert that we will not only defend ourselves to the uttermost but will make very certain that this form of treachery shall never endanger us again.

Hostilities exist. There is no blinking at the fact that our people, our territory and our interests are in grave danger.

With confidence in our armed forces -- with the unbounding determination of our people -- we will gain the inevitable triumph -- so help us God.

I ask that the Congress declare that since the unprovoked and dastardly attack by Japan on Sunday, December seventh, a state of war has existed between the United States and the Japanese Empire.

Franklin D. Roosevelt

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Read in
your session.