OMNI “PEARL HARBOR DAY,” COLONIAL PACIFIC WORLD WAR II NEWSLETTER #6, December 7, 2013. Compiled by Dick Bennett. Another in OMNI’s NATIONAL/INTERNATIONAL DAYS series for a Culture of Nonviolent, Positive Peace (for more information see below).

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OMNI is part of the international peace, justice, and ecology movement. These newsletters contribute to the movement’s efforts to understand the causes of wars in order to prevent them. A close study of the origins of WWII in the Pacific, uncontaminated by the myths and propaganda generated by patriotism, strengthens enormously our critical thinking toward US wars. See the Newsletters “US Imperialism, Continental Westward Expansion” and “US Westward Imperialism, Pacific/E. Asia” and a dozen related newsletters.

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Pacific War, 1931-1945

Synopsis
A portrayal of how and why Japan waged war from 1931-1945 and what life was like for the Japanese people in a society engaged in total war.

Rev. by Daniel Ford

The Pacific War

"[General Akamatsu] ordered local inhabitants to turn over all food supplies to the army and commit suicide before U.S. troops landed. The obedient islanders, 329 all together, killed each other at the Onna River with razors, hatchets, and sickles."

It's bad enough when you read this stuff written by an American, but when it comes from a Japanese writer it's really unsettling. Saburo Ienaga was a high-school teacher during the war and a university professor afterward; he got into trouble with the authorities for trying to bring some balance to the high-school history texts in the 1950 and 1960s, when the Cold War and the end of the U.S. occupation allowed the schools to gloss Japan's role in World War II. I read this book when I was researching the Flying Tigers, but to sit down and read it on its own merits was a revelation. (Sorry about the cover! Obviously the publisher's design staff didn't take the time to read the book.)

Americans may be startled to pick up a 256-page book about the Pacific War and
discover that Pearl Harbor isn't mentioned until page 135, more than halfway through. That's a consequence of Ienaga's belief that the war began with the Japanese army's 1931 coup in Manchuria, which led inevitably to war with China, which in turn led to the wider war that began in December 1941. Despite Japan's claims about liberating Asians from white colonialism, its purpose in going to war with the Americans, British, and Dutch was to obtain the raw materials with which to prosecute the war in China. That was one reason the Japanese treated the "liberated" people so badly--as badly as they treated their prisoners of war, which was as bad as anything east of the German death camps. . . .

This is a valuable book, and one of only a half-dozen serious studies by Japanese scholars of World War II that are available in English. We didn't know our enemy in 1941; we hardly know him any better.
The Japanese historian Saburo Ienaga spent most of his life challenging his government's censorship of academic textbooks. His motivation was to educate the Japanese people about his country's wartime atrocities. As a young high school teacher, he was part of the system used to indoctrinate young minds with wartime propaganda and foster students' motivation to fight for and follow blindly a divine emperor. Back then, the militaristic government's controls over education made him fearful of expressing dissent.

After the war, the education ministry disapproved a high school textbook he had written because it included vivid accounts of Japanese wartime atrocities: the 1937 Nanking massacre, the army's germ warfare unit (Unit 731) and its inhumane experiments on Chinese prisoners, the forced suicides of Okinawan citizens by the military, and the use of Korean women as sex-slaves for Japanese troops. The government felt his book was too critical of Japanese actions in World War II, and that it did not accurately portray the wartime government's actions and principles. This episode was the start of a 32-year battle in and out of the courts between Ienaga and the government over whose version of the World War II atrocities was correct and whether the government's censorship policy was appropriate. More than anything else, Ienaga was seeking a moral victory. He won very little else out of all the court cases. He was, however, nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize in 1999 and 2001. Today the Japanese government favors a view of its history that is less critical of its past, a development which Ienaga, who died in 2002, would be very unhappy with.

His book is a fascinating look at World War II from the Japanese perspective and a vivid narrative of life in a state-controlled society. For them, World War II began with the Japanese army's 1931 takeover in Manchuria. (In fact, the attack on Pearl Harbor is not mentioned in Ienaga's book until page 135.) Ienaga maintains that Japan's primary concern was the Chinese communists. They could foment trouble within the Korean and Chinese working classes, which could negatively affect the flow of food, raw and manufactured materials, and cheap labor to the homeland from these Far East acquisitions. This in turn could ignite unrest at home and impede
Japan's gears of war. If this happened, the militarists could lose control of the government. The militarists did not fear America and the other western powers as much. It was always felt they would sue for peace after Japan secured its initial conquests in the Pacific.

Updated Friday, 22-Mar-2013 11:31:28 EDT

The Pearl Harbor Myth: Rethinking the Unthinkable (Potomac's Military Controversies) Paperback
by George Victor

Did U.S. intelligence know of Japan's coming attack on Pearl Harbor? Did President Roosevelt know? If so, why did he withhold warnings from the commanders in Hawaii? The answers are embedded in the cogent analysis of The Pearl Harbor Myth. Based on voluminous data that does not appear in other books on the topic, it discusses in detail Roosevelt's developing strategy—both military and diplomatic—and his secret alliances to save the world from Hitler. It contains a wealth of fresh material on secret diplomacy; on secret military strategy, planning, and intelligence; and on disguised combat operations that began six months before the Pearl Harbor attack.
How U.S. Economic Warfare Provoked Japan's Attack on Pearl Harbor

Mises Daily: Friday, December 07, 2012 by Robert Higgs

Many people are misled by formalities. They assume, for example, that the United States went to war against Germany and Japan only after its declarations of war against these nations in December 1941. In truth, the United States had been at war for a long time before making these declarations. Its war making took a variety of forms. For example, the U.S. navy conducted "shoot [Germans] on sight" convoys - convoys that might include British ships — in the North Atlantic along the greater part of the shipping route from the United States to Great Britain, even though German U-boats had orders to refrain (and did refrain) from initiating attacks on U.S. shipping. The United States and Great Britain entered into arrangements to pool intelligence, combine weapons development, test military equipment jointly, and undertake other forms of war-related cooperation. The U.S. military actively cooperated with the British military in combat operations against the Germans, for example, by alerting the British navy of aerial or marine sightings of German
submarines, which the British then attacked. The U.S. government undertook in countless ways to provide military and other supplies and assistance to the British, the French, and the Soviets, who were fighting the Germans. **The U.S. government also provided military and other supplies and assistance, including warplanes and pilots, to the Chinese, who were at war with Japan.**[1] The U.S. military actively engaged in planning with the British, the British Commonwealth countries, and the Dutch East Indies for future combined combat operations against Japan. Most important, the U.S. government engaged in a series of increasingly stringent economic warfare measures that pushed the Japanese into a predicament that U.S. authorities well understood would probably provoke them to attack U.S. territories and forces in the Pacific region in a quest to secure essential raw materials that the Americans, British, and Dutch (government in exile) had embargoed. [2]

Consider these summary statements by **George Victor**, by no means a Roosevelt basher, in his well documented book *The Pearl Harbor Myth*.

Roosevelt had already led the United States into war with Germany in the spring of 1941—into a shooting war on a small scale. From then on, he gradually increased U.S. military participation. Japan's attack on December 7 enabled him to increase it further and to obtain a war declaration. *Pearl Harbor is more fully accounted for as the end of a long chain of events*, with the U.S. contribution reflecting a strategy formulated after France fell. . . . In the eyes of Roosevelt and his advisers, the measures taken early in 1941 justified a German declaration of war on the United States—a declaration that did not come, to their disappointment. . . . Roosevelt told his ambassador to France, William Bullitt, that U.S. entry into war against Germany was certain but must wait for an “incident,” which he was “confident that the Germans would give us.” . . . Establishing a record in which the enemy fired the first shot was a theme that ran through Roosevelt's tactics. . . . He seems [eventually] to have concluded—correctly as it turned out—that Japan would be easier to provoke into a major attack on the United States than Germany would be. [3]

The claim that Japan attacked the United States without provocation was . . . typical rhetoric. It worked because the public did not know that the administration had expected Japan to respond with war to anti-Japanese measures it had taken in July 1941. . . . Expecting to lose a war with the United States—and lose it disastrously—Japan's leaders had tried with growing desperation to negotiate. On this point, most historians have long agreed. Meanwhile, evidence has come out that Roosevelt and Hull persistently refused to negotiate. . . . Japan . . . offered compromises and concessions, which the United States countered with increasing demands. . . . It was after learning of Japan's decision to go to war with the United States if the talks "break down" that Roosevelt decided to break them off. . . . According to Attorney General Francis Biddle, Roosevelt said he hoped for an "incident" in the Pacific to bring the United States into the European war.[4]
These facts and numerous others that point in the same direction are for the most part anything but new; many of them have been available to the public since the 1940s. As early as 1953, anyone might have read a collection of heavily documented essays on various aspects of U.S. foreign policy in the late 1930s and early 1940s, edited by Harry Elmer Barnes, that showed the numerous ways in which the U.S. government bore responsibility for the country's eventual engagement in World War II—showed, in short, that the Roosevelt administration wanted to get the country into the war and worked craftily along various avenues to ensure that, sooner or later, it would get in, preferably in a way that would unite public opinion behind the war by making the United States appear to have been the victim of an aggressor's unprovoked attack. As Secretary of War Henry Stimson testified after the war, “we needed the Japanese to commit the first overt act.”

At present, however, seventy years after these events, probably not one American in 1,000—nay, not one in 10,000—has an inkling of any of this history. So effective has been the pro-Roosevelt, pro-American, pro-World War II faction that in this country it has utterly dominated teaching and popular writing about U.S. engagement in the “Good War.”

In the late nineteenth century, Japan's economy began to grow and to industrialize rapidly. Because Japan has few natural resources, many of its burgeoning industries had to rely on imported raw materials, such as coal, iron ore or steel scrap, tin, copper, bauxite, rubber, and petroleum. Without access to such imports, many of which came from the United States or from European colonies in Southeast Asia, Japan's industrial economy would have ground to a halt. By engaging in international trade, however, the Japanese had built a moderately advanced industrial economy by 1941.

At the same time, they also built a military-industrial complex to support an increasingly powerful army and navy. These armed forces allowed Japan to project its power into various places in the Pacific and East Asia, including Korea and northern China, much as the United States used its growing industrial might to equip armed forces that projected U.S. power into the Caribbean, Latin America, and even as far away as the Philippine Islands.

When Franklin D. Roosevelt became president in 1933, the U.S. government fell under the control of a man who disliked the Japanese and harbored a romantic affection for the Chinese because, some writers have speculated, Roosevelt's ancestors had made money in the China trade. Roosevelt also disliked the Germans in general and Adolf Hitler in particular, and he tended to favor the British in his personal relations and in world affairs. He did not pay much attention to foreign policy, however, until his New Deal began to peter out in 1937. Thereafter he relied heavily on foreign policy to fulfill his political
ambitions, including his desire for reelection to an unprecedented third term. When Germany began to rearm and to seek Lebensraum aggressively in the late 1930s, the Roosevelt administration cooperated closely with the British and the French in measures to oppose German expansion. After World War II commenced in 1939, this U.S. assistance grew ever greater and included such measures as the so-called destroyer deal and the deceptively named Lend-Lease program. In anticipation of U.S. entry into the war, British and U.S. military staffs secretly formulated plans for joint operations. U.S. forces sought to create a war-justifying incident by cooperating with the British navy in attacks on German U-boats in the northern Atlantic, but Hitler refused to take the bait, thus denying Roosevelt the pretext he craved for making the United States a full-fledged, declared belligerent—a belligerence that the great majority of Americans opposed.

In June 1940, Henry L. Stimson, who had been secretary of war under William Howard Taft and secretary of state under Herbert Hoover, became secretary of war again. Stimson was a lion of the Anglophile, northeastern upper crust and no friend of the Japanese. In support of the so-called Open Door Policy for China, Stimson favored the use of economic sanctions to obstruct Japan’s advance in Asia. Treasury Secretary Henry Morgenthau and Interior Secretary Harold Ickes vigorously endorsed this policy. Roosevelt hoped that such sanctions would goad the Japanese into making a rash mistake by launching a war against the United States, which would bring in Germany because Japan and Germany were allied.

The Roosevelt administration, while curtly dismissing Japanese diplomatic overtures to harmonize relations, accordingly imposed a series of increasingly stringent economic sanctions on Japan. In 1939, the United States terminated the 1911 commercial treaty with Japan. “On July 2, 1940, Roosevelt signed the Export Control Act, authorizing the President to license or prohibit the export of essential defense materials.” Under this authority, “[o]n July 31, exports of aviation motor fuels and lubricants and No. 1 heavy melting iron and steel scrap were restricted.” Next, in a move aimed at Japan, Roosevelt slapped an embargo, effective October 16, “on all exports of scrap iron and steel to destinations other than Britain and the nations of the Western Hemisphere.” Finally, on July 26, 1941, Roosevelt “froze Japanese assets in the United States, thus bringing commercial relations between the nations to an effective end. One week later Roosevelt embargoed the export of such grades of oil as still were in commercial flow to Japan.” The British and the Dutch followed suit, embargoing exports to Japan from their colonies in Southeast Asia.

Roosevelt and his subordinates knew they were putting Japan in an untenable position and that the Japanese government might well try to escape the stranglehold by going to war. Having broken the Japanese diplomatic code, the American leaders knew, among many other things, what Foreign Minister Teijiro Toyoda had communicated to Ambassador Kichisaburo Nomura on July 31: “Commercial and economic relations between Japan and third countries, led by England and the United States, are gradually becoming so horribly strained that we cannot endure it much longer.
Consequently, our Empire, to save its very life, must take measures to secure the raw materials of the South Seas."[9]

Because American cryptographers had also broken the Japanese naval code, the leaders in Washington also knew that Japan's "measures" would include an attack on Pearl Harbor.[10] Yet they withheld this critical information from the commanders in Hawaii, who might have headed off the attack or prepared themselves to defend against it. That Roosevelt and his chieftains did not ring the tocsin makes perfect sense: after all, the impending attack constituted precisely what they had been seeking for a long time. As Stimson confided to his diary after a meeting of the War Cabinet on November 25, "The question was how we should maneuver them [the Japanese] into firing the first shot without allowing too much danger to ourselves." After the attack, Stimson confessed that "my first feeling was of relief . . . that a crisis had come in a way which would unite all our people."[11]

Comment on this article.

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Notes

The president faced an economic depression that wouldn't go away, and a deeply disgruntled electorate. Not for the first or last time, the option of entering a war seemed politically appealing. How badly did FDR want a war and to what lengths was he willing to go to get one? The questions have vexed historians for many decades.

Pearl Harbor: The Seeds and Fruits of Infamy by Percy Greaves, Jr. (1906-1984), published for the first time in 2010, blows the top off a 70-year cover-up, reporting for the first time on long-suppressed interviews, documents, and corroborated evidence.

The first section (the seeds) provides a detailed history of pre-war U.S.-Japan relations, thoroughly documenting the sources of rising tension. The second section (the fruits) shows that the attack on December 7, 1941 was neither unexpected nor unprovoked. Nor was it the reason that Franklin Roosevelt declared a war that resulted in massive human slaughter. Instead, in exhaustive detail, this book establishes that Pearl Harbor was permitted as a public relations measure to rally the public, shifting the blame from the White House, where it belonged, to the men on the ground who were unprepared for the attack.

For 70 years, Greaves's documents have been the primary source of revisionist scholarship on Pearl Harbor. These documents were prepared under his leadership as main counsel for the Republican minority on the Joint Congressional Committee that investigated Pearl Harbor from 1945 to 1946.

More than any other person, he was qualified to speak on this subject. He possessed encyclopedic knowledge and had
access to research available to no one else. He conducted in-person, detailed, comprehensive interviews with all the players at Pearl Harbor and many people in the security apparatus. The contents of these interviews are further corroborated by military records.

However, for many reasons, the documents were not published. He continued to work on this book for many years before his death in 1984. At that point, his wife Bettina Bien Greaves took up the project. The result is absolutely astonishing. Much of Greaves's research has never appeared in print—effectively suppressed for 70 years. Even the censored minority report did not include it all. But at long last, the fullness of this report is revealed. The result is this monumental book, completed and edited by Bettina Greaves and published by the Mises Institute. Pearl Harbor is a 937-page indictment of the Roosevelt administration, one that finally and devastatingly rips the lid off a case that has been shrouded in mystery for generations.

Because of the astonishing source material and thoroughness of the argument, Robert Stinnett, the leading authority on the topic and the author of Day of Deceit, calls Greaves's book "explosive!"

Indeed, it is. The author writes in a guarded tone, carefully backing up every statement with massive evidence, providing a level of depth never before seen. The prevailing consensus is that the fault for Pearl Harbor attack belongs to General Walter Short and Admiral Husband Kimmel, while the major political and military figures in Washington should be completely exonerated.

Greaves turns this conventional wisdom on its head. "It is now apparent also that the president himself, even before the attack, had intended to order the U.S. armed forces to make a pre-emptive strike against the Japanese in the southwest Pacific in order to assist the British in southeast Asia. But the Japanese "jumped the gun" on him by bombing Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941."

Greaves's conclusion is dramatic: "It must be said also that the evidence revealed in the course of the several investigations leads to the conclusion that the ultimate responsibility for the catastrophe inflicted on the U.S. Fleet at Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, must rest on the shoulders of President Roosevelt.... It was thanks to Roosevelt's decisions and actions that an unwarned, ill-equipped, and poorly prepared Fleet remained stationed far from the shores of the continental United States, at a base recognized by his military advisers as indefensible and vulnerable to attack.... That the attack on Pearl Harbor became FDR's excuse, not his reason, for calling for the United States's entry into World War II."

Greaves provides comprehensive coverage here on the history of U.S. and Japanese relations, the actions of the Roosevelt administration, the attack and the response on the ground, the investigations and cover-ups that began almost immediately and continue to this day. Today the "back-door-to-the-war" theory has become mainstream historiography, even if those who admit it say that the lies were necessary for the good of the country. That is a difficult opinion to maintain in the face of the fullness of the evidence against FDR.

It is a remarkable fact that Greaves, who later became a close confidant of Mises himself throughout the 1950s and 1960s, and who is known mainly for his monetary work, has left us an amazing revelation 70 years after the fact and 26 years after his own death. It is proof that the wheels of justice can grind slowly but also very finely.

"Percy Greaves was chief of the minority (Republican) research staff of the (1945-1946) Joint Congressional Committee to Investigate the Pearl Harbor Attack. He attended all its hearings, interviewed many Army, Navy, and Washington principals involved in the attack and in the investigations. He researched diplomatic documents, studied reports and accounts of the event published during the years that followed. This book is not about the attack itself. It is about never before presented pre-attack and post-attack events, from the Washington point of view. Without name-calling, innuendo, or slander, Greaves simply presents the pertinent, significant and relevant facts which led the Japanese to attack and the political..."
Charles Callan Tansill, one of the foremost American diplomatic historians of the twentieth century, argues that FDR wished to involve the United States in the European War that began in September 1939. When he proved unable to do so directly, he determined to provoke Japan into an attack on American territory. Doing so would involve Japan’s Axis allies in war also, and we would thus enter the war.
through the “back door”. The strategy succeeded, and Tansill maintains that Roosevelt in accord with it welcomed Japan’s attack on Pearl Harbor. The book is based on exhaustive research in the State Department archives.

Publication Information

Updated 11/6/2012

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Pearl Harbor: The Story of the Secret War - Digital Book
by Morgenstern, George. 1947

George Morgenstern’s Pearl Harbor: The Story of the Secret War is one of the bravest books ever written. It’s a wonder it came out at all, just as the war ended and FDR had died. It argued that the bombing was not unexpected but provoked wanted by the administration as a “backdoor to the war” that FDR really wanted as a means to rescue his presidency. This was not an unknown fact a few years earlier but the war victory led to a situation where it was considered unpatriotic and downright nasty to look back and say what was widely known only a few years earlier. Such is the way war scrambles people’s brains. Nonetheless, the book appeared and created an incredible frenzy of denunciation and hysteria; it has been the template for war revisionism ever since. Since that time, however, more and more books have come out that only reinforce the point that Morgenstern was making, among which Percy Greaves’s...

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This newsletter continues OMNI’s NATIONAL/INTERNATIONAL DAYS PROJECT. Half of the Project affirms nonviolent DAYs, such as Human Rights Day. The other half offers nonviolent, world cooperative alternatives to violent, imperial, or generally misdirected days, as with the following:

Feb. 14: Standing on the Side of Love Day (formerly Valentine’s Day)

May, 2\textsuperscript{nd} Sunday: Julia Ward Howe’s Mother’s Day for Peace (Mother’s Day)

3\textsuperscript{rd} Sat. in May: Peace Forces Day (Armed Forces Day)

May, last Monday: Day of Mourning for Victims of Wars (Memorial Day)

June 14: Liberty and Justice for All Day (Flag Day)

June, 3\textsuperscript{rd} Sunday: Father’s Day for Peace (Father’s Day)

September 11 (9-11): Peaceful Tomorrows Day (Patriot Day)

Oct., 2\textsuperscript{nd} Monday: Indigenous Peoples Day (Columbus Day):

Nov. 11: World Unity Day (Veterans Day) (Or Armistice Day in 1918 when WWI ended).

November: Fourth Thursday: National Day of Gratitude and Atonement (Thanksgiving)

December 7: Pacific Colonial War Day (Pearl Harbor Day)

December 25: Love and Peacemaking Day (Christmas)

**END PACIFIC COLONIAL WAR (PEARL HARBOR) DAY**

**NEWSLETTER #6  December 7, 2013**

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Dick Bennett

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National/International Days

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