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FACTS FORUM Telecast

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DATE 5 October 1954 COMMENT NO. 1

Maj Claude S. Kramer, 60261/rw

1. Attached is transcript of a television program entitled "Was the Attack on Pearl Harbor a Surprise?" presented by FACTS FORUM on television station WTTG, at 1830 Sunday, 3 October 1954. Telecast was recorded in the AG's office and transcribed from the recording.

2. Passages of interest to NSA are underlined in red and appear on pages 8-13.


 G. WESLEY REYNOLDS
 Chief, Security Division

Incl:
 a/s

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FACTS FORUM
3 October 1954

(MUSIC)

NARRATOR: America is great. America is beautiful. America is free. A land where men who love freedom practice freedom. But freedom is not free. What our forefathers won by struggle we can lose by indifference. Believing that people who govern themselves must inform themselves, FACTS FORUM presents discussions of facts and issues which effect the daily lives of all Americans.

(MUSIC)

NARRATOR: Good evening, and welcome to FACTS FORUM. You know, many of the issues discussed on this and other FACTS FORUM radio and television programs are reprinted in the FACTS FORUM NEWS each month. The FACTS FORUM NEWS also lists, for your convenience, the day and time these programs may be seen and heard on stations in all parts of the country, and there are many other interesting features in the FACTS FORUM NEWS such as Letters to the Editor, announcements of awards, and award winners. The FACTS FORUM NEWS also publishes their monthly poll question along with the results of the previous month's poll. Subscriptions to the FACTS FORUM NEWS are only \$2.00 a year or \$1.00 for the special six months' introductory offer. Send your subscription order direct to Dallas, Texas. No other address is necessary, just FACTS FORUM NEWS, Dallas, Texas.

Now, here is Mr. Dan Smoot. FACTS FORUM invites you to join Dan Smoot in a discussion of both sides of an important controversial question. Dan Smoot.

MR. SMOOT: Hello again. I wonder how many of you remember these headlines: "WAR — OAHU BOMBED BY JAPANESE PLANES." This is a special edition of the

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Honolulu Star Bulletin, dated Sunday, December 7, 1941, Pearl Harbor Day, the day that will live in infamy. Do you think that the attack on Pearl Harbor was actually a surprise?

There have been eight investigations of the Pearl Harbor disaster, but none of them has satisfactorily answered for the American people this burning question: How could Pearl Harbor possibly have happened at a time when war was already raging in Europe and Asia, when Japan was engaged in a formal alliance with Hitler, and when American relations with both Japan and Germany were so strained that everyone knew something terrible could happen any day? How was it possible for a great Jap carrier task force to move over three thousand miles across the open sea, to catch our entire Pacific Fleet bundled up in Pearl Harbor, completely unaware and unadvised, destroy it and get away with practically no loss to the Japs?

The belief that President Roosevelt knew that the attack on Pearl Harbor was coming and deliberately let it happen as a means of getting America into World War II was widely held by Americans from the beginning. But public discussions and public investigations of such a thing could not be permitted during the War, when it was necessary for the American people to be united behind and confident in the national leadership. Immediately after the war, however, when self public records became available, various scholars began probing into the Pearl Harbor record.

Since 1945, several massive and scholarly books have been written by revisionist historians. These historians feel that the official history of Pearl Harbor as told by Roosevelt and by the writers supporting Roosevelt is false. They call themselves revisionists because they want to revise the official history in order to tell what they regard as the truth about

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America's entrance into World War II. The truth, as these revisionist historians see it, is that it was pressure from Roosevelt which finally caused the British and the French to declare war on Germany as a result of the Nazi invasion of Poland September 1, 1939. Following that, the British and French put pressure on Roosevelt to help in the war that he had wanted them to fight. Roosevelt wanted to get into World War II but could not openly advocate such a course because the American people were almost solidly opposed to our intervention in another European war. The revisionist theory of what happened in Pearl Harbor is that Roosevelt, after a long series of unsuccessful attempts to goad Germany into attacking the United States, finally turned his attention to Japan and was successful in manipulating a Japanese attack against America.

The book that has currently brought this question before the public is this little volume called "The Final Secret of Pearl Harbor." It was written by Rear Admiral Robert A. Theobald and published in 1954 by the Devin-Adair Company. It received widespread publicity and attention before publication because the complete book was run as a special feature in the U. S. News and World Report. In this little book, which has corroborative forewords written by Admiral Kimmel and Fleet Admiral William F. (Bull) Halsey, Theobald puts full responsibility for Pearl Harbor on the President, saying that Roosevelt deliberately invited the Japanese attack, knew it was coming, and withheld his knowledge from the United States Commanders in Hawaii. On the other hand, of course, there is the belief that this is a dastardly charge to bring against an American President, that no such charge as this has ever been made against any other American since Benedict Arnold was accused of trying to surrender West Point to the British during the Revolutionary War.

In the tradition of FACTS FORUM, let's examine the two opposite sides of this question: Was the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor actually a surprise?

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Let's take first the arguments of those who say yes, it was a surprise. Here is a brief condensation of that point of view.

No one has yet made the crazy allegation that Roosevelt was a Japanese sympathizer. Yet, unless you are willing to believe that Roosevelt was a Japanese sympathizer and wanted to see Japan win the war against the United States, you cannot, with any degree of logic, accept the fantastic thesis that Roosevelt engineered the Pearl Harbor attack which resulted in the greatest military disaster in American history. There was one thing about President Roosevelt that everybody knew: he loved the American Navy. Even if you could assume that Roosevelt wanted the Japs to attack Pearl Harbor as a means of getting America into the war, there is absolutely no logic, good sense, or even decency in the further assumption that Roosevelt deliberately set the thing up for the Japanese to destroy our Pacific Fleet, practically without loss to themselves. There is an abundance of evidence to prove that Roosevelt did everything possible to avoid war with Japan.

Anyone who is familiar with our foreign policy in the years immediately preceding the Pearl Harbor attack knows that President Roosevelt was outspoken in his denunciation of aggression anywhere in the world. He expressed this objection publicly and privately. He told Germany, Italy, and Japan about it in plain language. Yes, the record of these days is full of proof that Roosevelt was extremely anxious to keep America out of the war and to negotiate with Japan a settlement of our differences and avoid the catastrophe of getting the United States involved in the second World War.

In fact, at the very last moment on December 6, 1941, the day before the Pearl Harbor attack, the Japanese delivered in Washington a memorandum rejecting Hull's ultimatum. President Roosevelt acknowledged that this

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rejection meant war. Nonetheless, he sent a personal appeal to Emperor Hirohito. In that appeal President Roosevelt withdrew the greater part of the demands which Hull's ultimatum had made upon Japan. President Roosevelt said to the Emperor "A withdrawal of the Japanese forces from Indo-China would result in the assurance of peace throughout the whole of the South Pacific areas. I am confident that both of us, for the sake of peoples not only of our own great countries, but for the sake of humanity in neighboring territories, have a sacred duty to restore traditional amity and prevent further death and destruction in the world."

There can be no doubt that President Roosevelt anticipated war with Japan and was determined to lead America in an all-out fight if and when Japan struck. Nevertheless, he made every effort short of war itself to stop the Japanese seizure of territory in the Pacific to eliminate the necessity for war.

Immediately after the Pearl Harbor attack, President Roosevelt appointed the Roberts Commission to act as a fact finding body to obtain and report the facts relating to the Japanese attack. The Roberts Commission made investigations in Washington and in Hawaii, examining in Hawaii Admiral Kimmel and General Short, the top military commanders responsible for the disposition of American forces in the Territory of Hawaii. The Roberts Commission felt that Washington officials had adequately fulfilled their obligations in connection with the Pearl Harbor attack. Blame was placed on the two Hawaiian commanders, Admiral Kimmel and General Short. The Roberts Commission found that these two commanders had received adequate warning from Washington but that they had failed either to comprehend the seriousness of the situation or had been negligent about placing their commands on alert and so deploying their forces as to avoid disaster. Both General Short and Admiral Kimmel were severely

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censured and removed from their commands. None of the seven Pearl Harbor investigations which have followed the inquiry of the Roberts Commission has produced evidence which would bear out the allegations made against President Roosevelt by Admiral Theobald in this book, and by the other revisionist writers.

Immediately following the close of World War II Congress, animated by the persistent wide-spread rumors about President Roosevelt, General George C. Marshall, and other high officials in Washington, set up a joint Congressional committee to make an investigation and get the facts on what actually happened at Pearl Harbor. This Congressional committee held hearings from November 15, 1945 to May 31, 1946. It produced eleven volumes of evidence and ten volumes of exhibits, and it compiled seventeen volumes from earlier investigations. The Majority Report of this committee concluded that the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor was a sneak operation which surprised virtually everyone, despite the fact that officials in Washington and in Hawaii were conscious of the danger from air attack and did realize that there was a possibility of such an attack on Pearl Harbor. The Majority Report concluded that the attack was well planned and skillfully executed by more powerful forces than it was thought that Japan could employ in a single tactical adventure at such a distance under such circumstances. The Congressional committee found that the Pearl Harbor attack was an unprovoked act of aggression and that President Roosevelt had made every possible effort to avert war with Japan.

One of the most convincing bits of testimony to refute the theory that Roosevelt engineered the Pearl Harbor disaster, knew it was coming, has been given by Vice Admiral Frank E. Beatty. Admiral Beatty was an aide to Frank Knox, Secretary of the Navy, at the time of the Pearl Harbor attack. Beatty

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was lunching at the White House at the moment of the attack, was called from the White House to Secretary Knox' office, and went immediately with Knox to Hawaii to find what happened. Admiral Beatty was very close to the inner circle at the White House and at the Army and Navy Departments throughout the period leading up to, including, and following the Japanese attack. He says that he never heard anyone in high authority in the Naval service suggest that Pearl Harbor liked the attack. He says that after the attack, and after hearing numerous hints that certain people had known it was coming, he very carefully watched for any evidence that might turn up. Today, more than twelve years later, Admiral Beatty says he has yet to find any person in a high capacity who knew of or even suspected the intention of the Japanese to attack Pearl Harbor. Admiral Beatty says, "Prior to December 7, it was evident, even to me, that we were pushing Japan into a corner. I believed that it was the desire of President Roosevelt and of Prime Minister Churchill that we get into the war as they felt the Allies could not win without us, and all our efforts to cause the Germans to declare war on us had failed. The conditions we imposed on Japan -- get out of China, for example -- were so severe that we knew they could not accept. We did not want her to accept. We were forcing her so severely that we should have known that she would react toward the United States. All her preparations in a military way -- and we knew their over-all import -- pointed that way."

Nonetheless, Admiral Beatty says the considered and consistent opinion in the Navy Department was that Japan would attack not American territory but British territory in the Far East. Admiral Beatty specifically mentions a high level conference held in the office of Secretary of the Navy Knox on the morning of Saturday, December 6, 1941, the day before Pearl Harbor. In addressing the group, Knox said, "Gentlemen, are they going to hit us?"

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Admiral Turner replied very quickly, "No, Mr. Secretary, they are not ready for us. They are going to hit the British." Now, Admiral Turner was Director of War Plans for the Navy; he was^a/close advisor of Admiral Stark, Chief of Naval Operations; he was in close touch and completely familiar with all of the intercepted Japanese messages that we were getting in those days; and he was convinced that the Japanese were not going to attack the United States. The infamous attack was a surprise. What is even more surprising, however, is that the Neo-Fascists, reactionaries, and disgruntled isolationists can find a public market for their senseless slander against a President who gave America the aggressive, dynamic leadership necessary to win the greatest war in history.

Now that was one side of the question, but there is another side. Here, in brief condensation, are the arguments of some others who do not think that the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor was actually a surprise.

In the political campaign of 1940, Franklin D. Roosevelt, running for a third term, campaigned primarily on a platform of peace. Again and again and again Roosevelt told the American people that there would be no war but, while making these public promises, Roosevelt was doing everything he could to involve the United States in war with Germany. There are some who thought that Roosevelt wanted war in order to cover up the dismal failure of his New Deal, that he was at heart a tyrant and wanted the power and glory which would be his as a war-time President. Be that as it may, Roosevelt got the war he wanted by goading Japan into doing what he had been unable to prod Germany into, namely an attack on American territory.

Against professional military advice, Roosevelt moved our weak Pacific Fleet from the West Coast out to Hawaii and based it at Pearl Harbor, which is land-locked and quite vulnerable to air attack. He deliberately set

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Pearl Harbor up as a setting duck to invite a Japanese attack. Roosevelt knew that after we had pushed Japan as far as she would go, she would strike at us and the only logical target for her was Pearl Harbor. She certainly wouldn't risk bringing the power of the United States against her by spearheading an attack on some outlying garrison like Guam, which would merely enrage the American people but would not seriously damage American strength. A successful attack against Pearl Harbor, however, could destroy or render ineffective the entire Pacific Fleet of the United States. This would give Japan time to over-run on other American outposts in the Pacific and entrench herself in the Philippines and on islands stretching throughout the vast Pacific Ocean.

On January 27, 1941, American Ambassador Joseph Grew in Tokyo reported to the State Department that a rumor in high diplomatic circles in Tokyo, emanating from Japanese sources, held that in the event of serious trouble between the United States and Japan, the Japanese intended to make a surprise attack against Pearl Harbor. The truth of this rumor was indicated by an intensification of Japanese espionage in Hawaii as soon as Japanese-American relations became critical. As early as 1940, United States experts had broken Japan's highest security code, the so-called "Purple" code, and had even devised a machine called "The Magic" for ciphering Japanese coded radio messages. Japan's intense preparations for an attack against the American Fleet at Pearl Harbor became obvious to the American Government on September 24, 1941, when we intercepted a Tokyo dispatch to the Japanese Consulate in Hawaii instructing him to keep the Japanese Government continuously advised of all details concerning the Pacific Fleet at Pearl Harbor. The Japanese Consulate in Honolulu made regular reports to Japan, giving the exact locations of carriers, battleships, and cruisers at Pearl Harbor, and detailing all naval movement in and out of that base. The American Government in Washington,

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intercepting all of these reports, knew precisely what Japan was doing, but never gave any of this information to the Army and Navy commanders in Hawaii to let them know what grave danger their garrison was in.

It was obvious in Washington that a Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor would come simultaneously with the final break-down of diplomatic relations, negotiations, between Japan and the United States. Washington knew, moreover, that those diplomatic negotiations were going to break down because Roosevelt wanted it that way.

On November 26, 1941, Cordell Hull handed the Japanese Ambassadors in Washington the ultimatum which meant war. Hull, in fact, said it meant war. On the day that he gave the ultimatum, he told the Secretaries of the Army and Navy that Japanese relations were now in their hands, that diplomacy had gone as far as it could go. Two days later Washington intercepted a radio message in from Tokyo to the Japanese Embassy in Washington telling the Embassy that Japan could not accept the ultimatum, clearly indicating that war was the only alternative, but telling the Japanese Ambassadors to pretend that they were still trying to negotiate. The implication of this message was quite clear. Japan wanted to keep the diplomatic talks going as a cover for the sneak attack on Pearl Harbor.

On November 30, 1941, we intercepted a Japanese message to their Embassy in Berlin, instructing Japan's Ambassador to inform Hitler that war between the United States and Japan was about to begin. By December 1, 1941, we were intercepting Japanese messages to their Embassies and Consular posts ordering the destruction of all their codes, ciphers, coding machines, and secret papers. Again Roosevelt and the men around him knew that this meant war in the immediate future and they said so in their private conversations, but still the information was not passed on to our Hawaiian commanders in order to alert them of the attack that Washington knew was coming.

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On November 25, 1941, knowing that an ultimatum was going to be given to Japan the next day, and realizing that nothing but war could result from it, Roosevelt called a meeting of his top advisors, among them Henry L. Stimson, Secretary of War. Here, in part, is Stimson's sworn testimony as to what happened during that meeting. "Mr. Hull said that the Japanese were poised for the attack, that they might attack at any time. The President said that the Japanese were notorious for making an attack without warning and stated that we might be attacked, say, next Monday, for example. One problem troubled us very much: if you know your enemy is going to strike you, it is usually unwise to wait until he gets the jump on you by taking the initiative. In spite of the risk involved, however, in letting the Japanese fire the first shot, we realized that in order to have the full support of the American people it was desirable to make sure that the Japanese be the ones to do this so that there should remain no doubt in anyone's mind as to who was the aggressor." Stimson's diary for that day, November 25, stated this problem briefly in these words: "The question was how we could maneuver the Japanese into the position of firing the first shot without allowing too much danger to ourselves."

Roosevelt's off-hand remark that the Japanese attack against us was liable to come on a Monday was extremely significant. For over twelve years, there have been persistent rumors that Roosevelt was forewarned from sources in the Far East that the Japs would attack Pearl Harbor on a Monday. Now, one of these sources was reported to be Josef Stalin, who got the information in October, 1941, from Richard ^{SORGE}~~Sork~~, a Russian spy in Japan. At any rate, the Japs did attack Pearl Harbor on a Monday. The attack came at 7.55 a.m. Sunday, Hawaiian time; that was Monday, Far Eastern time.

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On the afternoon of Saturday, December 6, 1941, a long fourteen-part message from Tokyo to the Japanese Embassy in Washington started coming in. And, of course, the American monitors were receiving it and deciphering it as it was delivered. The first thirteen parts of this message were obviously written for history. The Japanese Government was simply reviewing its efforts to negotiate with the American Government and its failure to achieve peacefully any satisfactory settlement. The message advised the Japanese Ambassadors in Washington that the fourteenth part of this message would not be transmitted from Tokyo until Sunday morning, December 7, and that it should not be delivered to the American Government until exactly 1.00 p.m., Washington time, on Sunday. This obviously meant that the Japs were planning to strike against American territory at 1.00 p.m., Washington time, Sunday, December 7, 1941. That happens to be 7.00 a.m., Honolulu time.

The first thirteen parts of this Japanese secret message were received, deciphered, and distributed among American officials by 9.00 p.m. Saturday, December 6. Washington officialdom knew that war was coming to the United States the next day. The next morning, the day of the attack, Admiral Stark, Chief of Naval Operations, got to his office around 9 o'clock. But General Marshall didn't show up until after 11. Years later, when questioned by a Congressional committee as to where he was on that fateful Sunday morning, General Marshall was very evasive and vague. It was later established that on Sunday morning, knowing that his nation was going to be attacked that day, George C. Marshall, Chief of Staff of the United States Army, held himself incommunicado all morning while taking a horseback ride through the Virginia countryside.

When Marshall did arrive in his office that Sunday morning, the final message from the Japanese had been received and decoded. It was apparent

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that a Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor would be made within a matter of hours. Time had practically run out on the ill-fated American garrison. But even then, as late as 11.30 a.m. in Washington, a telephone call to Hawaii would have alerted the Commander there that an attack was coming. But the call was not made. General Marshall finally sent a message to the Army Commander but he did not send it in such a way that it would be delivered immediately. He sent it by commercial telegraph. It was delivered to the Commander in Hawaii several hours after the Japanese attack had come and gone. The Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor was a surprise to the American garrison there, but not to Roosevelt in Washington. The record is full and clear that Franklin D. Roosevelt, as Clare Boothe Luce once said, lied America into World War II.

4,575 Americans were killed or wounded at Pearl Harbor; 18 major ships were sunk or damaged; 177 airplanes were lost. By the time we were able to recuperate from these losses at Pearl Harbor, the Japs were so well entrenched throughout the Pacific that dislodging them necessitated the most prolonged, savage, and bloody war that American soldiers ever had to endure. Responsibility for the ghastly consequences of the Japanese sneak attack on Pearl Harbor rests as clearly and squarely on Roosevelt, George Marshall, and Admiral Stark as if they had ordered the attack themselves. December 7, 1941, will live in history, as Roosevelt himself was so fond of saying, as a day of infamy. It was infamous for the Japanese to make the attack. It was more infamous for the American President knowing that the attack was coming not to warn the American soldiers who were to die in order to satisfy the President's ambition.

A very quick review of the two sides of a FACTS FORUM question: Was the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor actually a surprise?

I see that our time is almost gone, but I will be back in just a moment.

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NARRATOR: Thank you, Mr. Smoot. Folks, the analysis you have just listened to by Mr. Smoot will be reprinted in a forthcoming issue of the FACTS FORUM NEWS. And, by the way, if you have had a Letter to the Editor published recently on a subject of national importance, be sure and enter it in FACTS FORUM's Letter to the Editor Contest. Rules governing the awards on this and other FACTS FORUM contests are listed in each issue of the FACTS FORUM NEWS. You can receive the FACTS FORUM NEWS for six months for only \$1.00 or a full year for \$2.00. Be sure and send your subscription order right away to FACTS FORUM, Dallas, Texas. That is, FACTS FORUM, Dallas, Texas.

Now, let's return once again to Mr. Dan Smoot.

MR. SMOOT: We present these programs in the public interest. We have made enemies and most of them we are proud to have — as enemies. These programs are put on films so that they can be used for educational purposes. We lend the film free of charge. _____ ? transcripts of the programs are also made. Most of them appear in this monthly FACTS FORUM NEWS. If you are interested, or if you would like to suggest subjects for discussion, write to FACTS FORUM, Dallas, Texas. No other address is necessary, just FACTS FORUM, Dallas, Texas.

Good-bye and God bless you.

(MUSIC)