



▲ President Roosevelt addresses Americans after the attack on Pearl Harbor

## WITNESS HISTORY AUDIO

### A Date Which Will Live in Infamy

In December 1941, the Japanese mounted a surprise attack on the U.S. naval base at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. The next day Franklin Delano Roosevelt spoke to the shocked American public:

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

—Franklin Roosevelt, Message Asking for War Against Japan, December 8, 1941

# America Enters the War

## Objectives

- Explain why Japan decided to attack Pearl Harbor, and describe the attack itself.
- Outline how the United States mobilized for war after the attack on Pearl Harbor.
- Summarize the course of the war in the Pacific through the summer of 1942.

## Terms and People

Hideki Tojo  
Pearl Harbor  
WAC

Douglas MacArthur  
Bataan Death March  
Battle of Coral Sea

## NoteTaking

### Reading Skill: Identify Causes and Effects

As you read, record the causes and effects of the attack on Pearl Harbor, as well as details about the attack itself, in a chart like the one below.

Causes	Attack on Pearl Harbor	Effects
• • •	→ • • •	→ • • •

**Why It Matters** In the beginning of December 1941, the United States had engaged in warlike activity but had yet to commit itself. A surprise attack on Pearl Harbor, an American naval base in Hawaii, ended all debate and brought the United States into the war. The participation of the United States in this war, as in World War I, would decide the struggle's conclusion. **Section Focus Question:** How did the United States react to the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor?

## Japan Attacks the United States

Although Japan and the United States had been allies in World War I, conflict over power in Asia and the Pacific had been brewing between the two nations for decades prior to 1941. Japan, as the area's industrial and economic leader, resented any threats to its authority in the region. America's presence in Guam and the Philippines and its support of China posed such a threat. Yet Japan relied on trade with the United States to supply much-needed natural resources.

**Trouble in the Pacific** As war broke out in Europe, the Japanese Empire continued to grow in China and began to move into Indochina. President Roosevelt tried to stop this expansion, in July of 1940, by placing an embargo on important naval and aviation supplies to Japan, such as oil, iron ore, fuel, steel, and rubber. After Japan signed the Tripartite Pact in 1940 with Germany and Italy, FDR instituted a more extensive embargo. The embargo slowed, but did not stop, Japanese expansion as the Japanese were able to secure the resources they needed within their new possessions.

In 1941, General **Hideki Tojo** (hī DEHK ee TOH joh) became the Japanese prime minister. Known as “the Razor” for his sharp mind, he focused intently on military expansion but sought to keep the United States neutral. Throughout the summer of 1941, Japan and the United States attempted to negotiate an end to their disagreement, but with little success. Japan was bent on further expansion, and the United States was firmly against it. Finally, in late November 1941, Cordell Hull, the U.S. Secretary of State, rejected Japan’s latest demands. Formal diplomatic relations continued for the next week, but Tojo had given up on peace. By the beginning of December he had made the decision to deliver a decisive first blow against the United States.

**The Japanese Attack Pearl Harbor** As Japanese diplomats wrangled in the U.S. capital, Japan’s navy sailed for **Pearl Harbor**, Hawaii, the site of the United States Navy’s main Pacific base. The forces that Tojo sent from Japan under the command of Vice Admiral Chuichi Nagumo (joo EE chee nah GOO moh) included 6 aircraft carriers, 360 airplanes, an assortment of battleships and cruisers, and a number of submarines. Their mission was to eradicate the American naval and air presence in the Pacific with a surprise attack. Such a blow would prevent Americans from mounting a strong resistance to Japanese expansion.

The attackers struck with devastating power, taking the American forces completely by surprise. A sailor aboard the hospital ship *USS Solace* recalled the destruction of the *USS Arizona*:

#### Primary Source

“I saw more planes coming in, passing over Battleship Row dropping bombs. I remember very clearly what looked like a dive-bomber coming in over the *Arizona* and dropping a bomb. I saw that bomb go down through what looked like a stack, and almost instantly it cracked the bottom of the *Arizona*, blowing the whole bow loose. It rose out of the water and settled. I could see flames, fire, and smoke coming out of that ship, and I saw two men fling through the air and the fire, screaming as they went.”

—Corpsman James F. Anderson, aboard the *USS Solace* in Pearl Harbor

**Results of the Attack** The Americans suffered heavy losses: nearly 2,500 people killed, 8 battleships severely damaged, 3 destroyers left unusable, 3 light cruisers damaged, and 160 aircraft destroyed and 128 more damaged. The U.S. battlefleet was knocked out of commission for nearly six months, allowing the Japanese to freely access the needed raw materials of their newly conquered territories, just as they had planned.

Despite these losses, the situation was not as bad as it could have been. The most important ships—aircraft carriers—were out at sea at the time of the attack and survived untouched. In addition, seven heavy cruisers were out at sea and also avoided detection by the Japanese. Of the battleships in Pearl Harbor, only three—the *USS Arizona*, the *USS Oklahoma*, and the *USS Utah*—suffered irreparable damage. American submarine bases also survived the morning, as did important fuel supplies and maintenance facilities. In the final analysis, Nagumo proved too conservative. He canceled a third wave of bombers, refused to seek out the aircraft carriers, and turned back toward home because he feared an American counterstrike. The American Pacific Fleet survived.

**America Declares War** As the news about Pearl Harbor spread across the nation and FDR prepared to address Congress, Americans rallied together. Many did not know what to expect, but they anticipated monumental changes. Journalist Marquis Child recalled thinking, “Nothing will ever be the same,” and added, “it never was the same.”

#### Japanese Ambitions

In late 1941, General Hideki Tojo (below) decided to stage a surprise attack on American forces. Items like this matchbook (below left) glorified Japan’s military might. On the matchbook, planes emerge from a Japanese flag and fly in the direction of the flags of Britain and the United States.



The attack on Pearl Harbor left little doubt about declaring war on Japan. The Soviet Union's conversion to the Allied side, following Germany's invasion in June 1941, made some Americans doubt the wisdom of supporting the Allies. The attack on Pearl Harbor changed that. It made the necessity of declaring war on Japan clear and ended any continuing political divisions between isolationists and interventionists. After President Roosevelt's speech, the House voted 388 to 1 to declare war, and the Senate joined them unanimously. True to their military commitments with Japan, Germany and Italy declared war on America. Both Democrats and Republicans put aside their political differences to unify the nation in facing the task of winning a global war.

✓ **Checkpoint** What did the Japanese military leaders hope to achieve by attacking Pearl Harbor? Were they successful in this goal?

## Events That Changed America

# SURPRISE ATTACK! PEARL HARBOR

December 7, 1941, dawned an overcast day in Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. The members of the U.S. military stationed there went about their usual Sunday activities. About half of the United States Navy's Pacific Fleet, including eight huge battleships, sat clustered in the harbor. At nearby Hickam Field and other airfields, American planes sat quietly wing-to-wing in perfect rows.

Then, at just after 6 A.M., hundreds of Japanese planes poured through a break in the clouds and into the central valley of Oahu. Over the next several hours, Japanese bombers torpedooed the moored ships, while fighters and dive-bombers machine-gunned and bombed ship decks and airfields. American military forces, caught completely by surprise, attempted to ward off the attackers with little effect. The scene was one of utter destruction.

Sailors at Ford Island Naval Air Station are stunned by the wreckage around them. ▼

◀ The USS *Arizona* sank during the attack. Nearly 1,200 sailors and marines died on this ship alone.



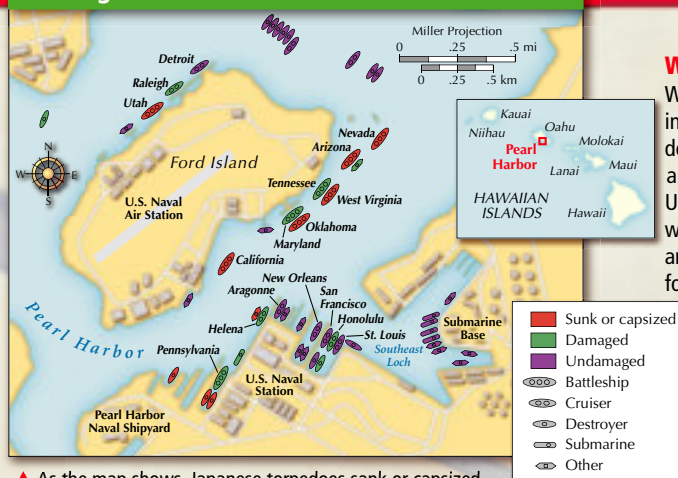


## Mobilizing for War

Following the Japanese attack, a spirit of patriotism and service swept across the country. Americans looked for ways to contribute to the war effort. They joined the military, volunteered with the Red Cross and other organizations, and moved into new jobs to help.

**Responding to the Call** During the course of the war, more than 16 million Americans served in the military. From 1941 to 1942 alone, the army grew from about 1.4 million to more than 3 million, the navy increased from under 300,000 to more than 600,000, and the marines expanded from only about 54,000 to almost 150,000. Americans from all ethnic and racial backgrounds joined the fight. Approximately 300,000 Mexican Americans and 25,000 Native Americans

### Damage at Pearl Harbor



▲ As the map shows, Japanese torpedoes sank or capsized six huge battleships and several smaller ships at Pearl Harbor. Most of the damaged ships were eventually repaired.

Soon, newspapers such as the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin* (below) spread grief and outrage around the country. Pearl Harbor inspired motivation for the U.S. war effort. ▼

### Why It Matters

When the smoke cleared, nearly 2,500 people, including military personnel and civilians, were dead. The Pacific Fleet had taken a big hit—and there was no longer any question that the United States would enter World War II. The war would change the lives of all Americans, and its effects would ripple across the globe for decades after the last shot was fired.

Female firefighters try to douse fires after the attack. ▼

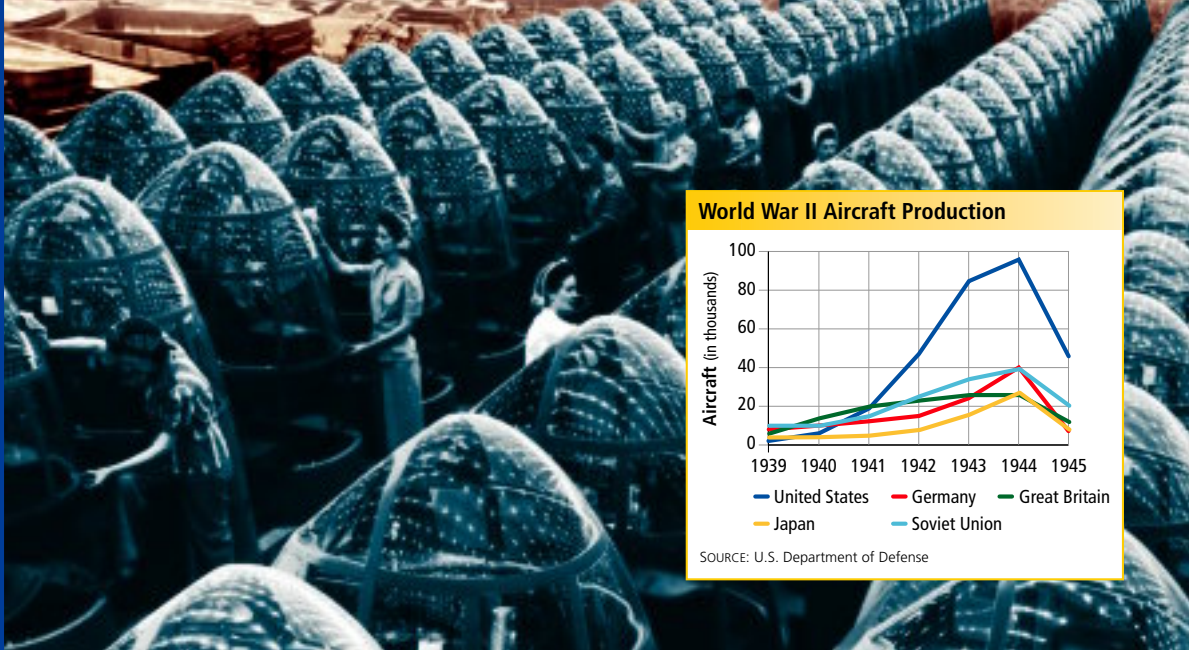


### Thinking Critically

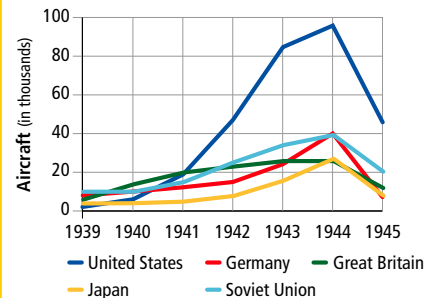
How did Pearl Harbor change American opinion about the war?

### History Interactive

For: More information about Pearl Harbor  
Web Code: nep-1006



**World War II Aircraft Production**



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Defense

## The Production Miracle

America's productive capability proved to be one of the Allies' main advantages in World War II. Above, female workers inspect the noses of A-20 attack bomber aircraft. *By how much did U.S. aircraft production increase between 1941 and 1944?*

served in integrated units. Nearly one million African Americans also joined the military. They served mostly in segregated units, however, and were at first limited to supporting roles. However, as casualties mounted, African Americans saw more active combat, and some eventually served in white combat units.

Over 350,000 women also responded to the call. In 1941, Congresswoman Edith Nourse Rogers introduced a bill to establish a Women's Army Auxiliary Corps—which became the **Women's Army Corps (WAC)** in 1943—to provide clerical workers, truck drivers, instructors, and lab technicians for the United States Army. More than 150,000 women volunteered for the service; 15,000 served abroad over the course of the war and over 600 received medals for their service. More than 57,000 nurses served in the Army Nurse Corps, putting themselves in danger to care for the wounded in Europe and the Pacific. Tens of thousands more American women joined similar navy and Coast Guard auxiliaries.


**Mobilizing Industry** From the start, Roosevelt and the other Allied leaders knew that American production would play a key role in helping the Allies win the war. Although America's industry had started to mobilize in response to the Lend-Lease Act, American production still needed to increase the rate at which it churned out war materials. In January 1942, the government set up the War Production Board (WPB) to oversee the conversion of peacetime industry to war industry. Later, the government created a host of other agencies that worked together to **allocate** scarce materials into the proper industries, regulate the production of civilian goods, establish production contracts, negotiate with organized labor, and control inflation, with the Office of War Mobilization (OWM) to supervise all of these efforts.

Under the direction of the government, Americans worked to create a "production miracle." The massive defense spending finally ended the Great Depression; for the first time in more than a decade there was a job for every worker. Each year of the war, the United States raised its production goals for military

## Vocabulary Builder

**allocate**—(AL oh kayt) *v.* to distribute according to a plan

materials, and each year it met these goals. The Ford Motor Company poured all of its resources into war production, building over 8,000 B-24 Liberator bombers. Henry J. Kaiser's shipyards produced large merchant "Liberty Ships" in as little as four and a half days. In 1944, American production levels were double those of all the Axis nations put together, giving the Allies a crucial advantage. In a toast at a wartime conference, even Joseph Stalin, an Allied leader, praised American production: "To American production, without which the war would have been lost."

 **Checkpoint** What were the first actions taken by the United States once war was declared?

## Fierce Fighting in the Pacific

With Pearl Harbor smoldering, the Japanese knew they had to move fast to gain important footholds in Asia and the Pacific. Although Japan's population was smaller than America's, the Japanese did have military advantages, including technologically advanced weapons and a well-trained and highly motivated military. At the start of the Pacific war the outlook was grim for America.

**Japanese Forces Take the Philippines** In December 1941, General **Douglas MacArthur**, commander of United States Army forces in Asia, struggled to hold the U.S. positions in the Philippines with little support. This task grew even more daunting when the Japanese destroyed half of the army's fighter planes in the region and rapidly took Guam (gwahm), Wake Island, and Hong Kong. The main land attack came on December 22. MacArthur positioned his forces to repel the Japanese invasion, but he badly miscalculated the strength of the enemy and was forced to retreat. U.S. forces fell back from Manila to the Bataan (buh TAN) Peninsula and a fortification on Corregidor (kuh REHG uh dor) Island, where they dug in for a long siege. Trapped in Corregidor, Americans suffered, lacking necessary military and medical supplies and living on half and quarter rations.

Although MacArthur was ordered to evacuate to Australia, the other Americans remained behind. They held out until early May 1942, when 75,000 Allied soldiers surrendered. Japanese troops forced the sick and malnourished prisoners of war, or POWs, to march 55 miles up the Bataan Peninsula to reach a railway that took them inland where they were forced to march 8 more miles. More than 7,000 American and Filipino troops died during the grueling journey, which is known as the **Bataan Death March**.

**Japanese Forces Advance** Throughout the Pacific, Japanese forces attacked and conquered. These advances secured important oil and rubber supplies for Japan, and brought Southeast Asia and the western Pacific securely under Japanese control. By the summer of 1942, Japan appeared ready to dominate the Indian Ocean, Australia, New Zealand, and the central Pacific. If the Allies did not regroup quickly, they would have little hope of victory in the Pacific.

## NoteTaking

### Reading Skill: Sequence

Sequence the fighting that followed Pearl Harbor in a table like the one below.

Early War in the Pacific	
May 1942	The Philippines fall to the Japanese.

### America Mobilizes

These young men train to fight abroad. Training went on for months before soldiers were considered ready for combat.



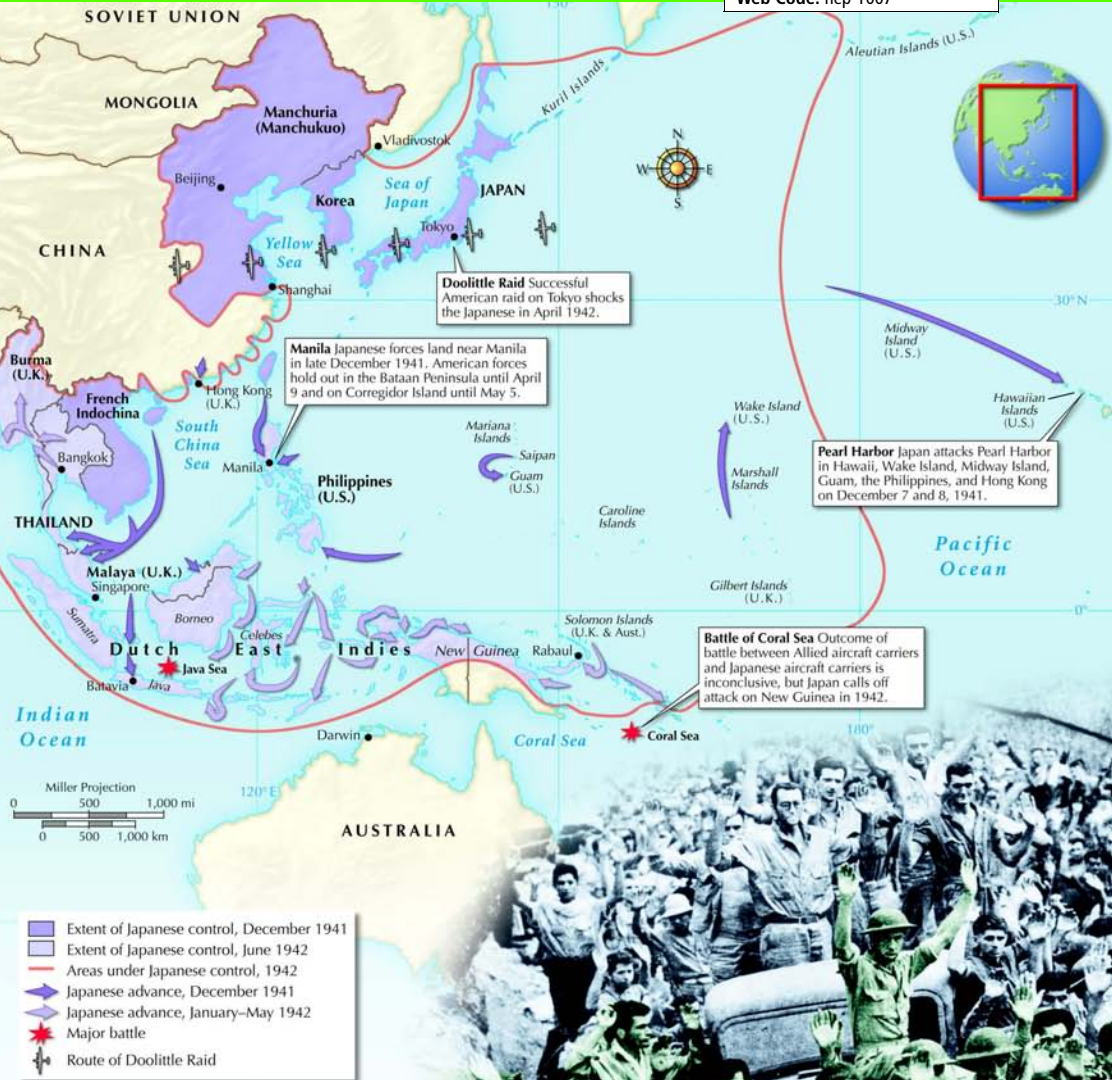


# Japanese Aggression, December 1941–June 1942

**Geography Interactive**

For: Interactive map

Web Code: nep-1007



**America Strikes Back With the Doolittle Raid** After Pearl Harbor, FDR wanted America to retaliate against Japan. American military leaders devised a plan for a nighttime bombing raid from the deck of the aircraft carrier USS *Hornet*, led by Colonel James Doolittle. While still 800 miles away from mainland Japan, the *Hornet* was detected, so rather than wait for night, Doolittle led a force of 16 B-25 bombers against Tokyo. They delivered their payload on the Japanese capital just after noon.

The raid killed 50 Japanese people and damaged 100 buildings. The pilots then flew to China, where they crash-landed. Doolittle's Raid proved a minimal military gain, but it bolstered American morale for the long fight ahead.

**The Battle of Coral Sea Gives Hope** A second event, the **Battle of Coral Sea**, also helped to kindle hope for the American military in the Pacific. In early May 1942, the Japanese moved to take Port Moresby in New Guinea. From that position they could threaten Australia and protect their important military bases at Rabaul (also in New Guinea). To counter Japan's move, the United States sent two aircraft carriers, the USS *Lexington* and USS *Yorktown*, along with support vessels.

On May 7 and 8, in the middle of a Pacific storm, Japanese and U.S. aircraft carriers engaged in battle. It was the first sea fight in which enemy warships never sighted one another. Instead, U.S. airplanes attacked Japanese ships and vice versa. Although technically the Battle of Coral Sea proved a draw, strategically it was a victory for the United States because it forced the Japanese to call off their attack on New Guinea. It marked a shift in momentum toward the Americans. From that day on, the Pacific theater of battle would be won or lost on the strength of aircraft carriers and planes—and here, America's productive capacity gave Americans a marked advantage over their adversaries.

The Battle of Coral Sea and the Doolittle Raid gave the United States a renewed sense of confidence. The war would last three more years, but the dark days of early 1942 were over.

 **Checkpoint** What military advantages did the United States have over Japan?

### Vocabulary Builder

minimal—(MIHN uh muhl) *adj.*  
smallest or least amount possible

## SECTION

# 3 Assessment

### Progress Monitoring Online

For: Self-test with vocabulary practice  
Web Code: nea-1008

### Comprehension

- 1. Terms and People** For each item below, write a sentence explaining how it related to the entry of the United States into World War II.
- Hideki Tojo
  - Pearl Harbor
  - WAC
  - Douglas MacArthur
  - Bataan Death March
  - Battle of Coral Sea

- 2. NoteTaking Reading Skill:** **Identify Causes and Effects** Use your chart and table to answer the Section Focus Question: How did the United States react to the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor?

### Writing About History

- 3. Quick Write: Compare Primary Sources** Compare the primary source describing the attack on Pearl Harbor to the images of the attack in this section. Write one paragraph describing what information both sources convey about the event.

### Critical Thinking

- 4. Identify Points of View** Was the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor a success or failure from the Japanese point of view? Explain.
- 5. Predict Consequences** What role do you think the productive capacity of the United States played in World War II?
- 6. Draw Conclusions** Why was the Battle of Coral Sea a turning point for the Allies?