

## **Chapter 2 - The Trap Laid by the United States**

### **The big lie about the outbreak of the war**

Why is it that Japan had to fight the United States?

Today many Japanese people mistakenly believe that the war with the United States was started by Japan or that it was the fault of Japan's out-of-control military.

It is indeed true that if Japan had been unable to restrain its military in August of 1945, the last summer of the war, then the decisive battle would have been fought on the mainland and Japan would have been destroyed.

However, in 1941 neither the Japanese government nor the military had any desire to go to war with the United States. Right up to the final days before the fighting began, they made every effort to try to avoid war.

By contrast, the United States had already decided, well before Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor, on a policy of going to war with and neutralizing Japan.

In spite of this, most people remain convinced that it is Japan, not the United States, that should be held responsible for starting the war.

This assertion is utterly contrary to the facts. It is the product of a wildly distorted view of history which was promoted by the United States in the wake of Japan's defeat.

Those who control the history of the past are also able to control the future. After losing the war Japan became a nation robbed of its own history.

History is memory. People who suffer memory loss are unable to lead normal lives, and the same holds true for nations.

### **President Roosevelt's pro-China attitude**

The war between Japan and the United States was not inevitable. It was provoked through American actions.

President Franklin Roosevelt, who prosecuted the war with Japan, entered the White House in 1933. The year before that, he had run as the Democratic Party's candidate for the US presidential election in which he trounced incumbent President Herbert Hoover of the Republican Party. If Roosevelt had not won that fateful election, then there would have been no war between Japan and the United States.

At that point in time, public opinion in the United States was dominated by noninterventionist sentiment. Americans had learned a bitter lesson from the disaster of World War I and did not want to get involved in another war in Europe.

America's war-weary determination to not repeat its mistake of intervening in World War I, which had ended in 1918, continued to exert a powerful influence. The situation was very reminiscent of the pacifist sentiment now pervading in modern-day Japan.

A major factor behind the war between the United States and Japan was President Roosevelt's favoritism towards China and ostracism of Japan.

The father of Roosevelt's mother, Sara, had built a huge fortune selling opium in late-Qing China during the clipper ship era and owned a mansion in Hong Kong. Because of this, Sara spent much of her childhood in Hong Kong and acquired a deep sympathy for the Chinese.

Roosevelt himself grew up surrounded by the priceless artwork, including temple bells, folding screens, ivory, and porcelain, which his grandfather had looted from China, and thus came to hold affection for China from a young age. Even after becoming president, he spoke excitedly about his grandfather's wide-ranging travels across China.

Many Americans also regarded China as being within their sphere of influence.

China had gained America's goodwill both by welcoming in a great number of Christian missionaries from the United States and due to its highly coveted status as one of the world's largest marketplaces. Japan, on the other hand, was quite a different situation. Japan was much smaller as a marketplace, it declined to adapt to Christian culture and instead maintained its traditional culture, and it refused to act obsequiously to the United States.

### **The misunderstood China Incident**

In 1931, the Manchurian Incident occurred. Manchuria lies beyond the Great Wall and historically was the home of the Manchu people, not a part of China. The Manchu people carried out an invasion and conquest of China by crossing the Great Wall and thus founded the Qing Dynasty (1644-1912), but during this period they forbade ethnic Han Chinese from entering Manchuria.

Nevertheless, Roosevelt viewed the Manchurian Incident as a Japanese invasion of China.

In 1935, as tensions in Europe mounted, the US Congress enacted the Neutrality Act, which had been passed with the support of the ruling Democratic Party under pressure from public opinion. The Neutrality Act banned the export of weapons and war materials to any countries at war, including civil war.

In January of 1932, the year following the Manchurian Incident, the Shanghai Incident broke out. Japan dispatched troops to Shanghai, but in May, a ceasefire agreement was reached and Japan's expeditionary army withdrew.

In July of 1937, Japanese and Chinese soldiers clashed near Marco Polo Bridge in the outskirts of Beijing. The so-called "Marco Polo Bridge Incident" is now known to have been a provocation set in motion by the Chinese Communist Party. Since the Boxer Rebellion of 1900, a variety of nations, including Japan, Great Britain, and France, had the right to station soldiers on Chinese soil in order to protect their citizens there.

The Battle of Shanghai began the following month. At that point, Japan had a naval landing party of only 3,000 soldiers stationed in the city's Japanese concession.

This small force was suddenly attacked by a 400,000-man Chinese army unit. Zhang Zhizhong, the army group commander, later admitted in his memoirs that he was a secret agent of the Chinese Communist Party. Because the Soviet Union was afraid of having to fight Japan, the Soviets instigated the Chinese Communist Party to provoke a conflict between China and Japan.

The Japanese Army in China received reinforcements as the fighting extended across the Chinese mainland.

Roosevelt falsely portrayed both the Marco Polo Bridge Incident and the Battle of Shanghai as being planned acts of aggression by Japan against China.

However, Japan did not start the China Incident.

After the war, the China Incident became known as the Second Sino-Japanese War, despite the fact that neither side declared war on the other until after the outbreak of the war between the United States and Japan in 1941. The conflict should more appropriately be referred to as an "incident."

### **Volunteer servicemen deployed in China**

Even though Japan had done no harm whatsoever to the United States, the Roosevelt administration viewed Japan as an enemy.

Still, because the United States was a neutral power, President Roosevelt was not able to assist any belligerent power directly. Instead, he encouraged private civilians to form the China Aid Council, which provided a considerable amount of funds to Chiang Kai-shek's government with which to fight Japan. The Roosevelt administration had financial aid, weaponry, and war materials pumped into China in great quantities.

Because Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek and his wife Soong May-ling were Christians, many Americans viewed the war as an invasion of Christian China by heathen Japan.

In order to manipulate American public opinion, Chiang's regime regularly bought influence among American journalists, university scholars, and researchers.

In 1937, Chiang's regime also hired Captain Claire Chennault of the United States Army Air Corps as a highly paid military advisor. The following year, Chennault was made a colonel and was appointed Chief of Staff of the Republic of China Air Force.

Chennault submitted a plan to the Roosevelt administration to send fighters and active duty US Air Corps pilots to China under the guise of being a "volunteer group." President Roosevelt approved this idea on the spot.

This, however, was a serious violation of international laws. Chennault's air corps was dubbed the "Flying Tigers". The United States supplied their fighter planes, which each had the image of a shark's face painted on its nose cone and the "white sun, blue sky" emblem of Nationalist China marked on its wings. The Flying Tigers, piloted by American "volunteers", made big headlines in the United States.

In July of 1939, the Roosevelt administration notified Japan that it had decided to not renew the Treaty of Commerce and Navigation which was set to expire in January of next year. Japan and the United States had signed the Treaty of Commerce and Navigation in 1911.

It was also in July that the United States imposed a restrictive licensing system on the export of oil and scrap iron to Japan and prohibited the export of aircraft fuel.

The Second World War began in September with the invasion of Poland by Hitler's Germany. The United States immediately declared its neutrality.

President Roosevelt made a radio address in which he stated, "I hope the United States will keep out of this war... As long as it remains within my power to prevent, there will be no blackout of peace in the United States."

In October, an American military code-breaking team succeeded in decrypting Japan's diplomatic code. It referred to the diplomatic code as the "Purple Code" and called its cipher machine the "Purple Machine."

The United States was thus able to gradually learn all the Japanese government's secrets.

In December, the Roosevelt administration added aluminum, which is indispensable for the manufacture of aircraft, to the list of items prohibited from export to Japan, as well as magnesium, molybdenum, and any technical information or designs to be used in aircraft fuel plants or for the production of aircraft fuel.

President Roosevelt's most trusted advisor was his Treasury Secretary Henry Morgenthau.

Exactly one year prior to the outbreak of war between the United States and Japan, December 7, 1940, Morgenthau wrote in his diary that he had told President Roosevelt they should hand China "some long-range bombers with the understanding that they were to be used to bomb Tokyo and other Japanese cities," and Roosevelt responded that, "it would be a nice thing if the Chinese would bomb Japan." A plan to launch a surprise bombing strike on the Japanese mainland, entitled "JB-355," was drawn up by the Joint Army-Navy Board.

The Treaty of Commerce and Navigation had lapsed in January 1940, and Japan ultimately lost most of its foreign trade. On May 15, President Roosevelt officially ordered that plan "JB-355" be submitted to the armed forces. According to the plan, the United States would transfer bombers to China and would disguise them as Chinese planes by painting the emblem of Nationalist China on their fuselages. After finding American "volunteers" to pilot them, they would take off from Chinese airbases and launch bombing raids against Tokyo, Yokohama, Osaka, Kyoto, and Kobe.

The Joint Army-Navy Board was making detailed preparations to put the plan to bomb the Japanese mainland into action.

The now declassified planning document states that their objective would be the "destruction of Japanese factories in order to cripple munitions and essential articles for maintenance of economic structure in Japan." In other words, their objective was to destroy the Japanese economy.

It was decided that the bombers to be used to strike Japan would be the new Boeing B-17. These massive bombers, which were known as "flying fortresses," had four engines and a flight range of 3,300 kilometers.

### **The top-secret Special Research Division**

In June 1940, France surrendered and the German Army swept across the European continent. From that moment, Great Britain was forced to fight the war alone.

Roosevelt strongly hoped to have the United States participate in the war in Europe to save Great Britain, but America's prevailing noninterventionist sentiment proved to be an insurmountable barrier.

That is the reason why Roosevelt schemed to quickly force Japan into a war with the United States, thereby entering the war in Europe "through the back door."

In February 1941, the Roosevelt administration secretly established the Division of Special Research within the State Department in order to investigate the question of how the United States would deal with Japan after defeating it in war. This occurred nine months prior to the attack on Pearl Harbor.

Within the US government, this division was simply known by the acronym "SR".

During the 1960's and 1970's, I went to the United States to interview members of the US occupation regime in Japan and many wartime government leaders. That was how I first learned about the existence of SR.

After the outbreak of the war between Japan and the United States, the US Army began participation in the State Department's Division of Special Research and it became the Advisory Committee on Postwar Foreign Policy.

In March 1944, a report was completed which included the recommendation that the United States authorities leave the Emperor on the throne during their occupation in order to use him for their own ends and retain the Japanese government so that they could rule indirectly.

They also planned to have the United States recognized as the sole power occupying Japan and to carry out a thorough demilitarization and "democratization" of Japanese society. After this, they would sign a peace treaty which would grant Japan nominal independence while ensuring that Japan would be effectively under America's thumb.

SR was also given the task of producing a draft peace treaty.

After Japan's defeat, the subsequent occupation went exactly according to the plans that had been drawn up by the Postwar Foreign Policy Committee.

In its first draft of the peace treaty with Japan, Japan was permanently forbidden from maintaining any military capacity. Elaborate safeguards were to be put in place after that to ensure that Japan would never be able to rebuild its military strength.

Japan would not be permitted to have a single aircraft, which included not just military aircraft but even civilian ones. Among many other things, Japan was also completely prohibited from stockpiling strategic materials, undertaking military research, and researching the peaceful use of nuclear power.

Even after the peace treaty was signed, some of the highest-ranking Japanese who were purged during the occupation were to be permanently banned from public service in Japan.

However, merely binding Japan by a treaty did not set their minds at ease, so they also mandated international inspectors to monitor all Japanese territory for twenty-five years from the signing of the treaty in order to ensure that Japan had not acquired any capacity to produce armaments or war material.

This first draft of the peace treaty was far harsher than even the Treaty of Versailles forced upon Germany after World War I. General MacArthur, the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers, was ordered to impose a new constitution on Japan using this draft as its model.

**A sneak attack that hoodwinked even the American people**

Thus, Japan's current constitution can barely be called a "constitution" at all. Rather, it is an unequal treaty in the guise of a constitution.

Let's return to 1941. Negotiations between Japan and the United States commenced with a meeting in April between Nomura Kichisaburo, the Japanese ambassador to the US, and Cordell Hull, the US Secretary of State, at Hull's private residence in Washington, DC.

Nomura spoke with Hull again on April 16. In May alone Nomura met with him on May 2, 7, 11, 13, 14, 16, 20, 21, and 28, but of course no notable progress was made.

President Roosevelt is recorded as telling his advisor, "I think I can baby them [the Japanese] along for three months." In other words, Roosevelt was not negotiating in good faith.

On July 18, after the US Army and US Navy had jointly signed the plan to bomb the Japanese mainland, "JB-355," it was handed back to President Roosevelt, who approved the plan that same day.

This was five months before a Japanese task force struck Pearl Harbor.

Today, the documents which President Roosevelt signed, approving a surprise air strike on the Japanese mainland, have been declassified.

The plan was for the United States to supply 150 B-17 bombers and 350 fighter planes to Chiang Kai-shek by October 1, which were to be launched from Chinese airbases and attack Osaka, Kyoto, Kobe, and industrial areas of Tokyo and Yokohama.

By organizing a sneak attack on Japan, the Roosevelt administration was deceiving the American people.

In July, after obtaining the permission of French authorities, Japan stationed troops in the southern half of French Indochina, modern-day Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia.

The United States and Great Britain had been using French Indochina as a conduit to transport large quantities of weaponry to Chiang's government. Japan had troops stationed in northern French Indochina since August of the previous year with the permission of the French government in order to cut off Chiang's supply lines.

Today, many experts believe that Japan's forcible occupation of southern French Indochina on July 28 was the trigger that set off the war between the USA and Japan.

And yet, President Roosevelt had already approved a plan to bomb the Japanese mainland ten days before that.

Even so, Roosevelt's surprise air strike was never put into action. The war in Europe was reaching a critical stage and, because large-sized bombers had to be quickly dispatched to Great Britain, it was too late for the US to deliver them to China.

Even now, most Americans believe that the attack on Pearl Harbor was a despicable sneak attack, but this propaganda was itself a "sneak attack" on the American people.

### **Economic sanctions that throttled Japan**

In August, the US government froze Japanese assets within the United States and imposed a total trade embargo on Japan for all strategic materials, including petroleum. At that time, Japan had only two years' worth of petroleum reserves, including petroleum for civilian use.

Japan was dependent on the United States for petroleum imports. At that time, the United States was the world's largest producer of petroleum. For Japan's armed forces, their fuel supplies drained lower and lower with each passing day. Without a supply of petroleum, Japan's whole economy began to seize up. America was tightening its noose around Japan in the hopes of forcing Japan to fire the first shot.

After General MacArthur had been removed by President Truman as commander of the United States Army Forces in the Far East and returned to the United States, he testified on May 3, 1951 to the US Senate Joint Committee on Armed Services and Foreign Relations that, due to the US economic embargo, Japan had been left with no choice but to go to war in its own self-defense.

Because Japan was then under US occupation, MacArthur's testimony was never reported in Japan.

MacArthur mentioned that the United States had embargoed the export of raw material to Japan, including the petroleum and scrap iron that are essential in industrial nations, and stated that, "They [The Japanese] feared that if those supplies were cut off, there would be 10 to 12 million people unoccupied in Japan. Their purpose, therefore, in going to war was largely dictated by security."

At the time that Japan entered into negotiations with the United States, US-Japan relations were deteriorating, but no one in the Japanese military was yet thinking seriously about going to war. Naturally, the military also had strong expectations that the negotiations would succeed.



### **An unexpected war**

Japan was not at all prepared for a war with the United States.

If the war was to involve the United States, Great Britain, and the Netherlands, then their colonies in Southeast Asia would of course become battlefields.

Up to that point, the Japanese armed forces had not expected to fight in either the Asian colonies of the Western powers or the islands of the South Pacific. Judging from Japan's national strength, they would not have been able to plan for this sort of war.

If the Japanese had been planning to go to war with the United States from an early date, surely they would have fortified the islands which they had received as mandates after World War I, such as Saipan, Tinian, and Truk.

However, Japan erected no fortifications on its South Pacific island territories until 1944, long after the start of the war.

It was expected that if Japan had spent enough time building defense works on these islands, they would not have fallen to the United States in such a short period of time. Japan's soldiers would have been able to put up much more dogged resistance in the face of the American attack.

The Japanese Army was also thoroughly unprepared for military operations in southern Asia.

The Japanese Army did not start planning its invasions of the Malay Peninsula, the Philippines, Burma (modern-day Myanmar), and the Dutch East Indies until March 1941, nine months before the war began. For the Japanese Navy, planning did not begin until a mere four months before the war began.

Until then, the Japanese Army had never undertaken any training for jungle warfare.

At the time Japan decided to go to war, its military did not have any of the detailed maps which were always prepared in advance for the territories it would invade, nor did it have any of the military geography booklets which looked into things like the climate and local customs of the territories in question.

Japan lacked the necessary preparations for this kind of war. The Army was only ready to fight its acknowledged archrival, the Soviet Union, and the Navy was only expecting a decisive sea battle with the US Navy, similar to the Battle of Tsushima in 1905.

Because of this, by December 1941, Japan had only a very vague idea of how to end the war. The Japanese military hoped that after it had won the first stage of the war it could

fortify its newly occupied territories and construct an invincible defensive position, thus forcing the United States to eventually lose its will to fight and sue for peace.

### **Roosevelt's ploy**

President Roosevelt had already decided on going to war with Japan, and for this reason he did not desire to reach a settlement through diplomacy.

By contrast, the Japanese government believed that the United States wanted peace as much as Japan and wanted to ease the mounting tensions between the two countries.

The Japanese had no doubt in their minds that America was as sincere as Japan.

Thus, Japan played right into America's hands. It fell for the Roosevelt administration's ploy, was driven to a precipice, and was forced to choose war.

Japan's government and military were being made to dance to America's tune, with no knowledge that the Roosevelt administration's real intention was to force Japan to go to war with America.

On November 3, Joseph Grew, the US ambassador to Japan, reported to the State Department from Tokyo that, if US-Japan relations were not improved, "This would lead to what I have described as an all-out, do-or-die attempt, actually risking national *hara-kiri*, to make Japan impervious to economic embargoes abroad rather than to yield to foreign pressure. It is realized by observers who feel Japanese national temper and psychology from day-to-day that, beyond peradventure, this contingency not only is possible but is probable."

On November 25, twelve days before the attack on Pearl Harbor, President Roosevelt met in the White House with a group consisting of Secretary of State Cordell Hull, Secretary of War Henry Stimson, Secretary of the Navy Frank Knox, Army Chief of Staff George Marshall, and Chief of Naval Operations Harold Stark. They agreed that, "The question was how we should maneuver them [the Japanese] into the position of firing the first shot without allowing too much danger to ourselves."

Then, on November 26, the United States confronted Japan with the Hull Note, which completely overturned everything that had been agreed upon through negotiation up to that point.

Today, historians agree that the United States delivered the Hull Note to Japan in full knowledge that Japan would never accept its terms.

Ambassadors Nomura Kichisaburo and Kurusu Saburo strongly objected to the note immediately after they had received and read it in Washington, DC. They said, "We are unsure whether or not we should pass this proposal to our nation's government without

alteration. It includes terms which could never be accepted." Ambassador Grew read the Hull Note at the US Embassy in Tokyo and later commented in his diary that, "It was the document that touched the button that started the war."

The strongest advocate for peace in Tojo Hideki's cabinet was Foreign Minister Togo Shigenori. He later recalled that the moment he received the Hull Note, "I was struck by an overwhelming despair."

In spite of Togo's adherence to the pro-peace faction within the Japanese government, after the war he would be incarcerated as a Class A war criminal and would die of illness in prison. Togo was an ethnic Korean who was born in Kagoshima. In Japan's family registry his name is listed as "Pak Mudok." It was only after he passed the entrance exam of the Law Department of Tokyo Imperial University (now the University of Tokyo) that he changed his last name to the Japanese name *Togo*.

In his memoirs, which he wrote in prison, Togo states, "Because Japan's very existence was being threatened by both the US-instigated economic embargo and a military encirclement that grew stronger by the day, there was already nothing Japan could do but rise up... I have no doubt that Japan's position after accepting the Hull Note would have not been much different from our current position after being defeated in war."

Radhabinod Pal, the justice representing India in the International Military Tribunal for the Far East, is famous for submitting a dissenting judgment declaring all twenty-eight of the so-called "Class A war criminals" on trial to be innocent.

Pal strongly denounced the tone of the Hull Note, writing in his judgment that, "as for the present war, the Principality of Monaco, the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, would have taken up arms against the United States on receipt of such a note as the State Department sent the Japanese Government on the eve of Pearl Harbor."

### **Pearl Harbor: The Final Act**

In the early morning of December 7 (Hawaii local time), six Japanese aircraft carriers approached within two hundred miles north of Pearl Harbor. Their crews, lined up on both sides of the flight deck, cheered as the 183 planes of the first attack wave took off from the carriers, one by one, bound for Pearl Harbor.

The attack on Pearl Harbor ended a long exercise in futility on Japan's part. Between February 11, when Ambassador Nomura took up his post in Washington, and December 7, Nomura had met with President Roosevelt ten times and Secretary of State Hull sixty times. Roosevelt and Hull were only pretending to negotiate with Japan in good faith.

Concerning December 7, Secretary of War Stimson wrote that, "When the news first came that Japan had attacked us my first feeling was of relief... This continued to be my dominant feeling in spite of the news of catastrophes which quickly developed."

Roosevelt had deliberately provoked Japan to attack the United States, and succeeded in forcing Japan into committing suicide. The attack on Pearl Harbor was the final act in a puppet play, and Roosevelt was the puppet master.

In Japan, on December 8 at 6:00 AM (Japan time), a special news bulletin was broadcast by radio declaring that a state of war existed with the United States and Great Britain.

The announcer said, "We now give you a special news bulletin," and this was followed by the brief message, "Joint Army-Navy Announcement from the Imperial General Headquarters: The armed forces of the Empire of Japan entered a state of hostilities with the US and British Armies in the western Pacific before dawn on December 8."

That night, at 7:00 PM, Prime Minister Tojo Hideki invited eighteen military and political leaders to the dining room of his official residence for supper, including Chief of the Army General Staff Sugiyama, Chief of the Navy General Staff Nagano, Navy Minister Shimada Shigetaro, and Chief Cabinet Secretary Hoshino Naoki. The kitchen staff prepared Chinese food for them.

At the meeting, as soon as the Navy reported on the Pearl Harbor raid, Prime Minister Tojo beamed with joy and declared excitedly that, "This has greatly exceeded our expectations. Now even Roosevelt will finally fall from power."

Then Sugiyama added, "A little while ago, I paid a visit to Iwashimizu Hachiman Shrine and prayed that we would see this war through to its end without needing the help of the divine wind of the Gods."

### **Lindbergh's diary**

Even at the time, there were people in the United States who believed that President Roosevelt had forced the war upon Japan. One of them was Charles Lindbergh, who had become an American national hero in 1927 for piloting his airplane, the *Spirit of St. Louis*, on the world's first transatlantic flight.

The day after the attack on Pearl Harbor, Lindbergh wrote in his diary, "I am not surprised that the Japs attacked. We have been prodding them into war for weeks. They have simply beaten us to the gun."

Herbert Hoover, Roosevelt's predecessor as president of the United States, wrote the following in his memoirs, "Freedom Betrayed," about a discussion he had with MacArthur in 1946 during a trip to occupied Japan:

"I talked with General Douglas MacArthur alone for three hours on the evening of May 4th, for one hour on the evening of May 5th, and for one hour on the morning of the 6th... I said that the whole Japanese war was a madman's desire to get into war. He agreed and also

agreed that the financial sanctions in July 1941 were not only provocative but that Japan was bound to fight even if it were suicide unless they could be removed... The gigantic error in Roosevelt's statesmanship was the total economic sanctions on Japan... The sanctions were war in every essence except shooting. Roosevelt had been warned time and again by his own officials that such provocation would sooner or later bring reprisals of war."