

Takeo Iguchi
Demystifying Pearl Harbor
A new perspective from Japan

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What led Japan to its disastrous war against the United States and Britain? Why was the notification delayed, giving rise to American vilification of Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor without a declaration of war?

In this ground-breaking book, former Japanese diplomat Iguchi Takeo looks at the failure of diplomacy before examining in depth Japan's final memorandum to the United States and its delayed transmission to the Japanese embassy in Washington and thus to the US State Department. He finds that individuals in the military (and possibly the Foreign Ministry) colluded to delay Foreign Ministry telegrams to Washington to protect the surprise attacks on Pearl Harbor and in Southeast Asia; the necessity of responding to an eleventh-hour telegram from President Roosevelt to the emperor also contributed to the delay. After Japan's defeat, and faced with the International Military Tribunal for the Far East (the Tokyo Trial), such collusion was covered up in order to evade personal responsibility and protect superiors. Thus the whole issue of responsibility was left in a maze of silence and conflicting testimony.

Postwar conspiracy theories lay the blame for war on Roosevelt's provoking Japan into war and questioned the "victors' justice" of the Tokyo Trial. And the blame for the delay in notification of termination of negotiations was placed on the Japanese embassy in Washington. Although such myths might be politically expedient and psychologically comforting, Iguchi believes it is crucial to move beyond "victors' history" or "losers' history" to uncover the impartial historical truth—both for their own sake and for future generations at home and abroad.

Demystifying Pearl Harbor will mystify those expecting a book about an American symbol which ranks with Gettysburg as an icon of patriotic sacrifice, and rivals the Kennedy assassination as an incubator of conspiracy theories. Originally published in Japan, the book has been repackaged as well as translated. "Pearl Harbor"™ adorns the English title, because it resonates in anglophone ears. The contents, however, are more accurately conveyed by the original subtitle: why was the memorandum to America delayed? The Attack on Pearl Harbor was a surprise attack by Japan against the neutral United States naval base at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii on the morning of December 7, 1941. It led the United States into World War II. Japan was planning a war in Southeast Asia, against Britain and the Netherlands, as well as the U.S. in the Philippines. All these countries refused to sell petroleum and other war supplies that Japan needed for the Second Sino-Japanese War. Japan attacked so that the U.S. Pacific Fleet, which was Pearl Harbor summary: On December 7, 1941 the Japanese launched a surprise attack on the US Naval Base Pearl Harbor in Hawaii, using bombers, torpedo bombers and midget submarines. On December 8, President Franklin D. Roosevelt delivered his "Infamy Speech" to American citizens, informing them that this occurred despite the fact that the US was in the midst of talks to keep peace with Japan. That same day, with congressional approval, America entered into World War II.