

11/30/44 #2 (Final).

By Joint Resolution of the Congress, approved June 13, 1944, the Secretary of War and the Secretary of the Navy were severally directed to proceed with an investigation into the facts surrounding the Pearl Harbor catastrophe of December 7, 1941, and to commence such proceedings against such persons as the facts might justify. In order to meet the wishes of Congress as expressed in this resolution, I have conducted such an investigation. In order to assist me to this end, there was appointed by order dated July 8, 1944, a Board of three general officers which was directed "to ascertain and report the facts relating to the attack made by Japanese armed forces upon the Territory of Hawaii on 7 December 1941 and to make such recommendations as it might deem proper."

This Army Pearl Harbor Board has conducted an extensive and painstaking investigation. It has held hearings in Hawaii, San Francisco and Washington. It has examined a total of 151 witnesses and received many exhibits. I have read its report and reviewed the recorded evidence. The Judge Advocate General of the Army, at my direction, has also examined the report and the record and has given me fully the benefit of his views.

I recognize the importance to any individual concerned of having a decision taken as to what, if any, action is to be instituted against him and, after weighing all the considerations, I am clear that the public interest as well as justice and fairness will best be served by a statement of my present conclusions. So far as they now may be made public, consonant with the public interest, my conclusions are as follows:

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The Army Pearl Harbor Board, although it recommended no disciplinary or other action, concluded that there were several officers in the field and in the War Department who did not perform their duties with the necessary skill or exercise the judgment which was required under the circumstances. On the recorded evidence, I agree with some but not all of the Board's conclusions.

So far as the Commanding General of the Hawaiian Department is concerned, I am of the opinion that his errors of judgment were of such a nature as to demand his relief from a Command status. This was done on January 11, 1942, and in itself is a serious result for any officer with a long record of excellent service, and conscientious as I believe General Short to be. In my judgment, on the evidence now recorded, it is sufficient action.

Furthermore, I am satisfied that proper steps were taken to correct such inadequacies of either personnel or organization as were shown to exist either in the War Department or in the field at the time of the Pearl Harbor disaster. My conclusion is that under all the circumstances the evidence now recorded does not warrant the institution of any further proceedings against any officer in the Army.

In accordance with the opinion of the Judge Advocate General, I have decided that my own investigation should be further continued until all the facts are made as clear as possible and until the testimony of every witness in possession of material facts can be obtained, and I have given the necessary directions to accomplish this result.

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Some of the testimony may be much delayed where witnesses are engaged in combat in active Theaters of Operation. My present decision will be reviewed when the investigation has been finally completed.

Finally, I am absolutely clear that it would be highly prejudicial to the successful prosecution of the war and the safety of American lives to make public during the war the report of the Army Pearl Harbor Board or the record on which it is based.

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